

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

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**CHANGING GENDER ROLES IN HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC
RESPONSIBILITY IN NANDOM DISTRICT**



ANYATENGBEY GERTRUDE MAMA

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RESPONSIBILITY IN NANDOM DISTRICT**

BY

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**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL
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EQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
DEGREE IN INNOVATION COMMUNICATION**

JANUARY, 2016



DECLARATION

Student

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Master of Philosophy in Innovation Communication Studies and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study, examined the influence of changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibility in the Nandom District of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Purposive sampling technique was utilized to recruit 96 respondents and in-depth interviews were conducted to gather data for the study. Secondary materials on gender roles in household socio-economic responsibility were also reviewed. The findings revealed a wind of change on gender roles thus new gender roles or changing roles of men and women. Men in the study communities who are supposed to be the breadwinners and decision makers of their households are gradually losing this identity and women on the other hand who are to be care givers and home makers are gradually assuming new identity as breadwinners, decision makers and household heads. The study therefore revealed a worrisome absence of useful social and economic roles for men in the face of the current division of labour within households, high underemployment, and marginalization of men. What is clear from this study is that the entire household, (women, men and children) pay a high price for adjusting to new gender roles and deeply held notions of gender identity. Based on the findings of this study, attention is drawn to the need for developing approaches to both poor men and women to acknowledge that men and women's wellbeing are intertwined, and that to help women, it is also critical to understand men's roles and reach men.



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late mother for her profound support even in her difficult times, my brother, Anyatengbey Vitus and my children; Confidence Awen-yaatemi and Atigsichaab Benedict Azong.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CLO	Civil Liberty Organization
FIDA	Federation of Women Lawyers
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MOWAC	Ministry of Women and Children's Affair
NAWOJ	National Association of Women Journalists
NCWS	National Council for Women Societies
NGOs	Non-Governmental organizations
WHO	World Health Organization
WAED	Women and Africa Economic Development



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Over the years, the role and importance of men and women in society have remained issues of serious concern and debate. Globally, the discourse on gender equality in all aspect of life especially on roles in the household has attracted concerns over a considerable period of time. These concerns arose due to a shared understanding within the development community that development policies and strategies that fail to take gender inequality into account and do not address disparities between males and females will have limited effectiveness and serious cost implications (World Bank, 2003).

Considering that insufficient allocation of resources to gender issues is a barrier to development (UNPF, 2008), researchers, policy experts, and practitioners cannot claim genuine progress in development (Potts, Ryan, & Toner, 2003) if they do not ensure that gender equality is emphasized in development intervention programs, especially in rural communities. Gender equality cannot be ignored in international, regional and national efforts because there is no region of the world, especially in developing countries that women and men are equal (World Bank, 2003).

The transformation of gender relations since the beginning of the 20th century is one of the most rapid, profound social changes in human history. For more than 7,000 years of human history since settled agriculture and early states emerged, male domination has characterized the gender relations of these societies and their successors. Even at the





beginning of the 20th century, men and women were generally viewed as occupying sharply different roles in society: a woman's place was in the home as wife and mother; the man's place was in the public sphere. Men had legal powers over the lives of their wives and children. Women are not only perceived as inferior to men but are marginalized and denied equal opportunities as the men. In fact, women are treated as "lower gender" or "weaker sex" (Gornick and Meyers. 2009). According to Obioha (2009), the general belief is that, the role of women start and end with running of the home and nothing more. Ani (2004) also elucidated that women constitute the group at the foot of the ladder in many developing countries, especially in Africa, in respect of employment, poverty, education, training and status. Men on the other hand are perceived as the breadwinners, household heads, decision makers and the hold the power. Therefore, they have been responsible for the outside roles. Hence, in almost all societies, the male is seen as the principal provider and the female as the principal caregiver in the family.

According to World Health Organization, WHO (2009) differences in gender roles and behaviours often create inequalities whereby one gender becomes empowered to the disadvantage of the other. As noted by Kimmel (2000), gender is not simply a system of classification of biological males and females but also expresses universal hierarchy, power, and inequality between females and males. The World Bank Policy Research Report (2001) suggests that societal institutions like social norms, customs and laws as well as economic institutions shape roles and relationships between men and women and influences what resources they have access to and in what forms they can participate in the economy and in the broader society.



However, in the household men and women are involved in different activities to ensure the availability of goods and services for family consumption and wellbeing. Although these activities may be different, they are socially connected. An intricate and changing relationship of cooperation and exchange between men and women exists within the household, which is potentially conflictual. Despite the conflictual nature of this relationship, gender division of labour in households is the main economic strategy used to meet family basic needs for shelter, food, health, procreation and education. And yet, the nature of this division of labour is one that constrains development (Sikod, 2007).

The role of a man and a woman in society is influenced by a variety of factors. These factors vary with the region, religion, culture, climate, historical beliefs, living principles and experiences, across the globe. Gender role is therefore defined as the role portrayed by an individual with respect to a combination of factors or any one of them, depending on the living conditions. These factors can be categorized as roles based on the classification and their roles based on physical character and/or sexual and psychological orientation, either as a result of social bonding or self-preferences. For instance, males are more interested in or perform physically tough activities like, working in heavy industries, and defence services while females perform tasks like raising children, cooking and embroidery and so on. While these roles are defined and mostly classified in many societies, this distinction becomes rarer in developed societies like the US or Western Europe (Magar, 2009). The author noted that education, household work, child care, professional commitments, and societal issues are the various responsibilities or activities in a normal social framework. These roles were

segregated on the basis of sex, but now it is more of a choice and based on the interest of an individual.

There is a substantial body of research on the division of labour in the household. The ubiquitous finding is that women do the lion's share of unpaid labour within households (Coltrane 2000) no matter the employment arrangements. It is also known that tasks are gendered, with women's tasks taking more time (Coltrane, 2000). Although this inequality has decreased in recent decades, the household division of labour remains highly gendered (Bianchi, et al. 2000).

In many African societies, productive and parenting roles are clearly divided along gender lines. Gender roles, however, are complex and shaped by other factors, such as age and position in the family. For example, rural women in many parts of Africa are primarily responsible for child rearing, the nutritional and health needs of the family, food production and weed control in crop production, while men open up the land (UNEP 2005). Hyder et al. (2005) points out that, Men in Africa are responsible for the provision of the family needs; they earn the income for family. Therefore, they are the providers and hold the power. Women on the other hand are primarily responsible for subsistence farming and food preparation, including fetching water and fire wood. In Western Kenya, as in many other places, "...Women produce the bulk of the food that is consumed by their families (immediate or extended) or sold at the local markets for consumption" (Federici, 2004). UNEP (2006) reported that women and girls in rural Africa are almost always the exclusive suppliers of water for household use. They play a lead role in the provision of water for animals, crop growing, and food processing. It



is often women who decide where to collect water, how to draw, transport and store it, what water sources should be used for which purposes, and how to purify drinking water. This often means that women spent long hours every day providing for families. These traditional roles are not often easily negotiable on the individual level. Women's obligations are not only defined by their husbands but also encompassed in, and reinforced through, the gender ideologies promoted by religion and the State (Dolan, 2001). In some cultures, for example, men are not allowed to carry firewood (Hyder et. al. 2005) and in a strongly patriarchal society, access to resources can favour male members of society, even when laws relating to ownership of those resources are gender neutral (Kameri-Mbote and Patricia, 2006). Hence, rural women have less access than men to productive resources, services and opportunities, such as land, livestock, financial services and education.



Ghana is not homogenous and each community is highly influenced by the views of its leaders, tradition and religious doctrine. The gender division of labour in Ghana is evident across the country. Traditionally, there are strong divides between work that is acceptable for women and work acceptable for men. In rural as well as urban families, labour division remains largely unequal as household chores are exclusively women's and girls' responsibilities (GOG, 2011). However, gender division varies across different ethnic groups. Among the Akan, women assume the basic domestic and childcare roles. Both genders assume responsibilities for basic agriculture production, although men undertake the more laborious tasks and women the more repetitive ones. Women work on their husbands' farms and also farm on their own. Traditional craft production is divided according to gender. Men are weavers, carvers, and metalworkers



while women make pottery and engage in food processing. Petty trade, which is a pervasive economic activity, is almost exclusively a woman's occupation. Women independently control any money that they receive from their own endeavours, even though their husbands normally provide the capital funding. Wives, however, assume the main work and financial responsibilities for feeding their husbands and children and for other child-care expenses. Akan women also assume important social, political, and ritual roles (Schwimmer, 2009).

Among the Ga and Adangme, Schwimmer (2009) posits that women assume similar responsibilities for domestic chores. They do not do any farm work; however, they are heavily engaged in petty trade. Ga women are especially prominent traders as they control a major portion of the domestic fish industry and the general wholesale trade for Accra. According to the gender division of labour and responsibilities in northern Ghana, men are primarily responsible for growing the staples- maize, millet and yams. Thus, Commercial agricultural production is mainly a traditional male responsibility. Men usually prepare land, weed on crops, irrigate crops, and harvest and transport produce to market. They own and trade large animals such as cattle, and are responsible for cutting trees on the farm and in the forests. This is regarded as the most important contribution to the household's food needs. They are therefore mainly responsible earning income for the family and they hold the power.

Women and girls play an important, largely unpaid, role in generating family income, by providing labour for planting, harvesting and threshing crops, and processing produce for sale. Usually they are responsible for taking care of smaller animals. In fact, women have the primary responsibilities for maintaining the household. They raise

children, grow and prepare food, and collect fuel wood and water and are responsible for all the necessary expenses incurred in preparing the raw maize, and for providing soup ingredients (Pickbourn, 2011).

This is an indication that, in Ghana, culture plays an important role in the organization of domestic and communal activities. The behaviour of males in their families is influenced by expectations of their fellow men about what it means to be a man in the community in which they live and conformity with certain norms and practices. In order to ensure that males and females recognize and respect their appropriate gender positions in society, proverbs are often used in daily discourse to explain, describe and reinforce stereotypes about men and women. These expectations perpetuate masculine tendencies among boys and men (Boateng et al., 2006).

Ghana as a country has shown commitment to conventions and laws that aim at ensuring gender equality by ratifying them and making local provisions in laws and policies to meet the standards set by international conventions.

Some of the conventions and laws that Ghana endorsed are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the African Charter on people's rights (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2005). This commitment to ensuring gender equality has brought about new roles among men and women in the household. It is therefore important to carry a study on the gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities and to examine the effects on life circumstances of men and women.



1.2 Problem Statement

Traditionally in Ghana and for that matter Nandom district in the Upper West Region, men worked outside the home, and were primarily responsible for the provision of the family needs; they are breadwinners, household heads, and decision makers and hold the power. Women on the other hand stayed home, and were duty bound to manage the affairs of the household. They held positions that were secondary or marginal in importance (Bandiaky, 2008), which underpins the notion and expectations regarding household chores, responsibilities and decision making in families.

However, in recent times there have been a number of positive developments towards gender equality in Ghana. Through areas of demonstrated commitments such as women's rights, addressing violence against women, access to quality education, quality health care, economic opportunities and resources, there have been some significant changes in the traditional role of women, globally and in Ghana in particular. The social barriers of tradition and culture are gradually giving way to new ideas, new values and practices. Today, women are making giant strides and breaking new grounds in almost every field of human endeavour, including those occupations and professions that were once considered the exclusive preserve of men. As a result, some countries in the world, including Ghana can now, boast of women doctors, pharmacists, engineers, politicians, lawyers, bankers, military officers, and even commercial car drivers, among others. Others are self-employed as hair dressers, seamstress or traders. Women in parliament today are 8.3% (EC, 2012). Also 59.3% of women are in the labour force (GLSS6 2012). Some women are now breadwinners, household heads and decision



makers. The recent prospects of women and men in these diverse socio-economic activities create a vacuum as to what individuals in the households do and the implications of these on gender responsibilities on the life circumstances of both men and women.

1.3 Research Questions

Given the importance of gender equality to development, the study seeks to fill the gap by seeking to find answers to the following questions:

1. Which factors are responsible for traditional gender roles?
2. What are the changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities?
3. What factors are responsible for changing gender roles in household socioeconomic responsibilities?
4. Do young men and women consider changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities as having impact or influence on life circumstances of women and men?

1.4 Research Objectives

The broad objective of this research is to examine changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities in Nandom District of the Upper West Region.

From the premise of the broad objective above, the specific objectives this study sought to achieve include:

1. To examine the factors responsible for traditional gender roles



2. To explore changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities
3. To investigate the factors responsible for changing or otherwise in gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities
4. To determine kind of influence changing gender roles in household socioeconomic responsibilities has on life circumstances of women and men?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research is essential because there is a need to broaden perspectives on issues such as the traditional gender roles in Nandom District in which women are marginalized and subordinated to an inferior position via-a-vis the men. To understand this complexity from both male and female perspective the study included both male and female respondents. This will serve as basis for instituting interventions to alleviate the marginalisation of women and also serve as a basis for further studies. The outcome of the study would immensely benefit the Ghanaian society since it could promote the acceptance of changing roles of men and women as part of the dynamics of change in a globalized world thereby ensure gender equality and equity.

The findings from this study would enable policy makers, and NGOs to provide or develop appropriate legal framework and create the enabling environment that would enable the women consolidate on their new found roles, among others and would also inform policy intervention in the areas of investment in promoting gender equality and further harness the positive outcomes for economic growth.



1.5 Scope of the Study

The study is focused on: factors responsible for traditional gender roles, changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities, factors responsible for current or otherwise in gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities and the influence of changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities on life circumstances of women and men. Inquiry was made in selected communities based on the sampling plan of the study in the Nandom District.

1.6 Limitations

Limitations of the study refers to factors or issues that served as a challenge or constraint in coming out with appropriate data or information for this study. These limitations include: financial constraints, language barrier, co-habitation and lack of personal reflection.

- **Financial constraints**

A study of this nature should be conducted in all the Districts or regions in Ghana but due to time and financial constraints, it was limited to the Nandom District of the Upper West Region of Ghana. This does not give a better understanding on gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities since the research results is only limited to reflections that are based on the opinions, perceptions and experiences of an important yet limited sector of the Ghanaian society. Since it excluded the perspective of individuals from a broader range in terms of different ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds, it does not really give true picture of the situation in Ghana.



- **Language barrier**

Language barrier was a challenge in collecting the research data. Given the low level of education among some of the respondents, the use of self-administered questionnaires was not employed outright. To complete the questionnaires, additional man-hours was sought for, which resulted in employing the services of an interpreter. The interview was thus done in the local language recorded on tape before it was transcribed to the English language with the help of interpreters.

This was time consuming and the issue of interpreters' personal understanding and views of the issues raised by respondents cannot be rule out. This is because some words and statements in local languages may not have an exact meaning in the English language and so interpreters were force to coin their own views and understanding of issues during the course of translation to the English language

- **Insufficient data**

Another limitation of the study was that, there was insufficient baseline data on gender roles in the household. Without documentation, the researcher had to rely on oral reports to assess the roles of men and women in the household and the influence on life circumstances of men and women. The statistical data collected as part of this study gave a fairly accurate picture of the present status of gender roles in the District.

- **Co-habitation**

The selection criterion of co-habitation can be rationalized by the view that having lived with a partner is likely to give respondents a relevant frame of reference when talking to issues such as household task division. However, as Smock (2000) points out, Cohabitation tends to be selective of people who are slightly more liberal, less religious,



and more supportive of egalitarian gender roles and non-traditional family roles. This factor can essentially be viewed as both strength and weakness. While it allows for a deeper understanding of more egalitarian discourse, perhaps rather less information was received on traditional gender role ideology than would have been attained from individuals who belong to different sectors of society, such as those who are married or choose not to co-habit until after marriage.

- **Lack of personal reflection**

Respondents in the study were not requested to reflect on personal experience but rather to give a general opinion of the issues related to gender role formation. This process may have allowed them to reflect more clearly on the social rather than the personal aspects of the study.

Nonetheless incorporating personal experience into the study does allow for a richer sense of the individual level engagement with gender issues and perhaps more reflection on the internalized aspects of gender role ideology. Thus, while a definite strength of the study is an inclusion of the social factors which impact on gender role formation, a more personal reflection of how these have an impact may have been beneficial.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five chapters. Chapter one is the general introduction and it provides information on the background of the study, problem statement, main and sub-research questions, main and sub-research objectives, the scope of the study, limitations of the study and significance of the study.



Chapter two focuses on a review of the literature. This chapter looks at social constructionism as a theory as well as the link between social constructionism and gender roles more specifically. Existing literature on relevant areas to study was reviewed. The chapter concludes with specific focused on changing gender roles and factors of change.

Chapter three looks at the research methods employed in the study and includes information on the research aims and questions, the methodological approach, respondent selection, the data collection process as well as reflexive and ethical considerations. Chapter four presents the results of the research as well as the discussion of those results.

Chapter Five presents the conclusion of the study and makes recommendations for policy makers, human right activists and the general public. This chapter also confirm or disagree with conclusions by other researchers as identified in the course of reviewing existing literature relating to the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the underpinning theoretical frameworks upon which the study is conceptualized. The chapter existing literature reviews on traditional and current household socio-economic responsibilities in developing countries, factors that influence gender roles in household socioeconomic responsibilities, agent of change in gender roles and the influence of household responsibilities on life circumstances of men and women such as opportunities, constraints and risks.

2.2 Definition of terms

2.2.1 Gender

Gender, as a social phenomenon, is viewed differently by different people. In general gender defines the relationship between men and women and the way this relationship has been socially constructed and institutionalized.

Gentry et al, (2003) defined Gender as the symbolic role definition attributed to members of a sex on the basis of historically constructed interpretations of the nature, disposition, and role of members of that sex. According to Akpabio (2005), gender refers to the socially and culturally defined and constructed roles that men and women play in societies; roles which are shaped by economic, historical and cultural determinants. In the same way, Ogbuagu (2005) had explained that: "Gender is socially constructed for the purpose of allocating power, duties, responsibilities, statuses and





roles in any given social milieu or context. It is universally conceptualized either as an organizing concept which can be innocuously interpreted as neutral (that is without bias) or as a value-laden concept which is applied to impose discriminatory practices against one group by another within a given setting”. From the above explanations, it can be said that the role men and women execute in society, especially in the traditional society, is grounded on the assumptions or perceptions of their skills and abilities as culturally constructed and determined by the society.

2.2.2 Gender Roles

Gender role is the responsibilities or the way of living of a person in society, with respect to their lifestyle (Magar 2009). In other words, Gender roles are behaviours, and attitudes socially prescribed for women and men in a given culture. Many studies revealed that all known societies regard some behaviour as more appropriate for one gender than the other, and in all known societies males and females are socialized differently. In this study therefore, Gender role is everything a person does that indicates that he or she is a male or female in a given society, or the behaviour one puts up as an aspect of his or her gender.

2.2.3 Household Responsibilities

Household refers to individuals who comprise a family unit and who live together under the same roof and also share at meals. For purpose of this study, household responsibility describes gender division of labour in the household with respect to social and economic activities. In other words, it refers to the provision of socio-economic needs (food,

shelter, health, and educational needs) and all unpaid household tasks which include child care, preparing meals, washing dishes, housecleaning, doing laundry, shopping for groceries and doing repairs around the house.

2.3 Social Construction of Gender Roles

Both scholars and popular culture frequently reduce gender to biology, morphology and psychology and in so doing they deny its sociality and susceptibility to social construction. On the other hand, those who view gender in terms of social constructions encourage the idea that gender is a product of active human agents who can change gender and transcend the concept of gender roles (Martin, 2004).

The principal self-identification of an individual as a man or a woman, with host of attitudes, ideas and desires that accompany that identification, depends largely on what label is attached to that individual in childhood (Kilroe, 2009). The ways in which we are socialised into gender begin from a very early age. For example, studies of mother-infant interaction reveal distinct differences in the ways in which boys and girls are treated, even in situations where the parents believe their reactions to both are the same. In addition, male and female adults usually handle infants differently and by age two children have a partial understanding of what gender is.

Gender encompasses socially constructed and culturally based roles of women and men with a view to understand how unequal power relations between them are shaped and operate. Gender and its accompanying power relations are built in all institutions of society be it the family, educational institutions, work place, religious systems, beliefs, norms among others (Anita et al 2010). Clare explained that informational pressure on





the other hand refers to the fact that we rely heavily on social information as an adaptive tool to increase our knowledge of both ourselves and our functioning in the world. Essentially this concept suggests that at times conformity may come about not only as result of the fear of rejection but rather that many individuals are not aware of what they think, feel believe or do, without the guidance of others. The idea that genders are and should be different is so pervasive in society that we tend to assume these ideas are correct. It is important to note that the process of socialisation during which these two forms of pressure contribute to the adoption of traditional gender-roles is not something which occurs exclusively during childhood but that it is a continuous process which impacts on individuals throughout their lifespan (Pitt and Borland, 2008).

Kilroe (2009) agrees with the notion of gender as a social concept and suggests that patriarchy or the system of male domination is based on these socially constructed notions of gender, gender roles and gender relations. She sees patriarchy as being produced through private and public institutions such as the family, religious and traditional beliefs, practices and norms. She believes that it is also reproduced through ideological apparatus such as education and media. In light of this, the manner in which gender roles are constructed by these various institutions are explored in more detail.

2.4 Gender Roles and Culture

A crucial element in the process of gender role formation through culture is communication. Through communication with others we learn who we are and what that means in the culture into which we are born (Merriam and Ntseane, 2008). Society

uses the tool of communication to create and perpetuate perspectives on what is normal and right.

Sideris (2004) suggests that tradition or culture is closely tied to the practices of everyday life and in this sense plays a significant role in highlighting gender hierarchy and boundaries. The threat which such changes pose to male identity and privilege has created confusion for many men, who have consequently played out current gender struggles through the expression of a conflict between tradition and rights. Appealing to more traditional roles proposed by many cultures, provides a framework for behaviour. In this sense the return to more conservative gender role ideologies may lie in the appeal that they hold as a means of defending against anxiety as much as it acts as a defence of privilege (Sideris, 2004).

Another factor which is important in terms of the interplay between gender and culture is the recognition of the fact that culture is closely linked to issues of class, race and ethnicity. As Morrell (2002) points out, Race, class, geographical location and many other factors are constitutive of gender identities and affect the gender regimes which exist in the institutions and milieu of a country.

2.5 Gender Roles and Education

Gender relations do not operate in a social vacuum but are products of the ways in which institutions are organized and reconstituted (Anita et al 2010). Moreover, in the developing world's context where women are marginalized, gender concerns are very relevant and significant. Social norms, beliefs, values, behaviours, mind sets, policies,





processes etc. all disclose gross discrimination against women. All institutions of society exhibit this disparity as gender is rarely thought to be important and hardly understood and addressed. Such behaviours and attitudes especially in educational institutions and academic settings are a further set back to gender equity and equality concerns thereby promoting gender based discrimination in the overall processes and performance of educational institutions. Teachers and educators influence the gender roles of their students thus impacting their educational outcomes. When considering Education for All (EFA) goal 5, which aimed to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and now aims to achieve gender equality by 2015, it should be realized that teachers are a critical force for meeting the goal. Educationists and academicians influence gender socialization and mould gender roles of students, thus having impact on quality of life and power distribution (Anita et al 2010). The authors emphasise the power which schools hold as agents of socialisation. As institutions they are responsible for teaching children about the culture of the society in which they live. This includes aspects such as history, traditions, practices, beliefs, and values. In addition, schools teach us who holds status in society; who influenced the directions of history, science literature and social organisation as well as what opportunities and responsibilities are available for different members of society. As a result, schools are heavily implicated as socialising agents that communicate what opportunities are available to us both personally as well as in civic and educational arenas. The manner in which gender differentiation and equality is communicated through education occurs primarily in two arenas. Firstly, the example set by schools in terms of the roles of males and females unreservedly communicates a model of what is



considered normal life as well as the status of various people within that life. In these environments positions of power, such as that of principal or chancellor are most commonly held by men, whereas positions which traditionally hold less status and power such as cafeteria workers or secretaries, are most commonly held by women. This suggests that from our earliest experience of educational institutions through to tertiary level we are constantly exposed to the idea that men hold positions of status and that women belong in more subordinate roles. In circumstances where this discrepancy does not occur, for example in all girls' school where women hold positions of power, it has been observed that individuals develop higher levels of esteem (Wood, 1994 as cited Kilroe, 2009).

It also appears that teachers perpetuate gender inequality through the manner in which they interact with children. Several studies appear to support the idea that teachers pay more attention to their male students and spend more time interacting with them (Anita et al 2010). Stratification along gender lines is routinely reinforced in various ways, through participation in separate and different sporting activities, as well as through task assignment (e.g. boys being asked to move furniture and girls to clean up) and insistence on differences in school uniform. From a liberal feminist perspective, our socialisation practices (both in the school and in the home) still involve gender stratification attitudes and expectations from one generation to the next. Such attitudes are instrumental in, for example, the differential careers advice that teachers give pupils and the subject choices that girls and boys make (Kilroe, 2009).

In fact, these sexist attitudes appear to be so deeply ingrained in Western worldviews that at times they have been transmitted through the education system across cultures.



In a study conducted by Abidogan (2007) on the impact of westernised education on traditional Nigerian gender roles, it was found that a lack of social sciences in the curriculum and a very strong presence of traditional Judeo- Christian teachings as part of the curriculum had a significant impact on gender roles. Ultimately it seems to suggest the political power (although limited) which had been afforded women through more traditional practices, has been eradicated through exposure to higher levels of Westernised education. And although it seemed to increase the ability for girls to aspire to more individualised views, education became viewed as a tool to increase their chances of finding a good husband as opposed to being a catalyst for greater personal and economic independence.

To minimize these gender issues we need to start changing the mind sets of the younger generation of society as they are those who can bring about further change in society, with their innovative ideas, thoughts and practices. To do this we need good educated teachers who have sound knowledge regarding gender issues. It has been observed that teachers reinforce gender roles also in the different expectations that they have for boys and girls in their classes. Teachers may also create learning environment in which boys are encouraged to succeed while girls are allowed to fail. Many teachers may be completely unaware that they treat girls and boys differently (Anita et al 2010).

While it is true that school is not entirely responsible for gender inequality, it plays its part alongside other male-dominated institutions in perpetuating patriarchy. Consequently, while the school cannot be solely responsible for the eradication of gender inequality it must still bear some responsibilities and do what it can to make

changes. This would involve shifting education from its male baseline in a variety of ways (Anita et al 2010).

2.6 Gender Roles and Work

For the last few decades, feminists have examined the various ways in which gender roles are communicated and embedded in organisational practices. Gender is constructed by organisational processes such as social interactions between workers, segregation of occupations, discrepancies in salary, and the ways in which work is divided by paid and unpaid labour. In addition, inequity between men and women in organisations has been found to influence the structures and norms that informally create barriers to the advancement of women and significantly impact on the gender identity of females in the workforce. Also, the utilisation of family leave policies has compounded the problem of salary inequity. Ultimately this tends to lead to fewer women seeking advancement (Lester, 2008).

One of the major areas of study in relation to the issue of gender and work centres on occupational sex segregation. This refers to the degree to which men and women are concentrated in occupations in which workers of one sex predominate. In other words women are not equally distributed throughout occupational structures (Messing, 2006). In industrialised countries women and men commonly perform different tasks and work in different sectors, although some job titles in white collar work are occupied by both men and women (Messing, 2006). Men, tend to be concentrated in the skilled trades and operative jobs while women are mostly in teaching, clerical, and other service occupations (Maire, 2009).





In developing countries, women and men typically work at different tasks in agriculture (London et al., 2002; Kisting, 2005), mining, manufacturing and services (Acevedo, 2002). Women are more likely to work in the informal economy sector and often do specific types of informal work, such as street vending, sex work and domestic work (Acevedo, 2002; Shidvas, 2005 as cited in Messing, 2006). In addition to a discrepancy between occupations there also tends to be a discrepancy within occupations also termed vertical division of labour. As a result, in many countries women occupy lower ranks than men (Acevedo, 2002; Theobald, 2002; Anker et al., 2003). Generally, women tend to remain extremely underrepresented in high status occupations and largely over-represented in the jobs which have both the lowest wages and the lowest status. The source of this gender inequality within the workplace is once again believed to be cultivated in the context of job segregation and perceived roles associated with gender groups (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

In addition, women usually suffer discrimination and sexual harassment more frequently than men, particularly if they enter non-traditional occupations (Paoli and Merille, 2001). Furthermore, unpaid work, such as work based in homes does not include any protective legislation, social security, and is assigned low social status. The fact that no income is generated from such work can seriously affect women's ability to improve their lives (Messing, 2006). In addition, women usually suffer discrimination and sexual harassment more frequently than men, particularly if they enter non-traditional occupations (Paoli and Merille, 2001). Furthermore, unpaid work, such as work based in homes does not include any protective legislation, social security, and is assigned low social status. The fact that no income is generated from such work can



seriously affect women's ability to improve their lives (Messing, 2006). In general practices within organisations can serve to further perpetuate the inequalities which seem to coexist with traditional gender role division by reinforcing representations of what is masculine and feminine and widening further the divisions of gender within the organisation. Examples of such practices include use of language, style of dress and expression of emotions. As Lester (2008 p. 279) suggests that, "organisational narratives disguise and perpetuate the gendered nature of social practices. Narratives about gender and gendered traits support distinctions between masculinity and femininity and create a sense of objective reality"

In addition, within these occupations they perform relatively lower level work, with very few in decision-making positions. Consequently, the occupational structure of the public service positions has become skewed on the basis of gender. In addition, a significant gap in wages between men and women has developed. Even where women are well qualified and experienced, the predominance of males at management level has resulted in a culture in which male behaviour patterns are perceived to be the norm, and in which women often find it difficult to be accepted as equals by their male colleagues (Naidoo and Kongolo, 2004; Lester 2008) Wambugu (2004 p.1) believes that businesses will eventually recognize the value of creating environments more conducive to allowing fathers to increase their parental role. This is due to the fact that "as the stresses caused by the conflicts and challenges working fathers face in finding and maintaining a balance between work demands and rearing well-adjusted and secure children impact on fathers,, performance in the workplace, businesses will begin to count the cost of lost productivity and lost talent". Messing (2006) suggests that the



traditional sex contract has been altered through the forces used to bring women into the workforce, to formalise their rights in this context and to bring women's issues, as well as men's behaviour, into awareness. The greater the significance given to these issues by political forces, the more likely there is to be an increase in the confidence, ambition and creativity of women. While she acknowledges that the struggle between men and women for equality is far from over, the understanding appears to have been developed that for this balance to occur it is necessary for the public world of paid work and the private world of home-life to no longer be seen as unconnected. Social policies should be formulated to recognise and up-hold the role of men and women in both worlds if we are to move towards the greater goal of equality.

2.7 Gender Roles and Religion

As Castelli and Rosamond (2001) point out, the concepts of gender and of religion are both consistently changing and that any attempt to fix their meaning is tied to complex political, institutional and material interests. They suggest that the complexity of the topic is related to the fact that separate studies of each area have raised the question of voice and who should be in a position to speak about religion or about gender. Where these two areas intercept the question of voice and who constructs discourse becomes even more complicated an idea which can be seen clearly in the following statement, Religion,, as a category often cuts across the other categories by which identities are framed (gender, race, class etc.) and it often complicates these other categories rather than simply reinscribing them.



The works of Maire (2009) also reflects on the idea that religion can be interlinked to with other social factors. More specifically she suggests that the confusion created when individuals encounter rapid social change such as those seen in the case of gender roles often leads to a need for some people to return to the very clear guidelines for gender based interactions which are set out in most of the major religions. Interestingly her study reveals that there was no major difference in terms of gender role ideology between secular and non-secular members of society but that religion did provide far more detailed and specific guidelines for the nature of interaction. Over and above these complexities religion and gender are generally referred to in an effort to illustrate how religion can play a role in creating clear boundaries between men and women and the tasks which are perceived to be socially acceptable for each. For example, Morin and Guelke (2007) point out that there is a very clear relationship between women, religion and space in that the space which women occupy is significant within the realm of religion. This includes different elements such as the space in which women and men are allowed to worship is often separate in religions such as Islam and Judaism as well a strict limit on the occupation of social positions such as the limited opportunities afforded to nuns in Christian convents.

Ultimately religion appears to be another important factor in creating the social knowledge and discourse which constructs the individual's view of gender and the role and place of gender in society, and that like all other constructs religion and its relationship to gender roles is very much dependant on the input of the society in which it occurs and vice versa.

2.8 Theoretical Explanations of the Gender Division of Household Responsibilities (Factors that Influence Gender Roles)

Sociologists, economists and geographers have proposed multiple theoretically informed explanations for the differences in gender division of labour, most of which consider the gender division of labour as the outcome of a rational choice process (Bianchi et al. 2000; Kroska 2004; Ettema and Van der Lippe 2009). These theoretical explanations revolve around five key factors. One pertains to men's and women's employment situation, their income and type of occupation and another to the space–time configuration of paid work as expressed through weekly employment hours, employment schedule and commute length (Bianchi et al. 2000; Presser 2003; Schwanen 2007). The time availability approach suggests that men and women participate in housework to the extent that they have time available. Thus, an individual who works full time would be likely to perform less housework than his or her spouse, depending on their employment status, because they lack the time to devote to household activities. The most commonly used indicators of this approach are employment status and employment hours for men and women. Studies carried out by many scholars (Kroska 2004; Bianchi et al. 2000) indicate that women's employment hours are negatively associated with the absolute amount of time spent doing housework.

Following Bianchi et al. (2000) and new home economics, much literature in economics and sociology assumes that a central mechanism in the production of the gender division of household labour is that the partner with the most economic capital (income



and occupational prestige) and/or least time available (longest employment hours or commute time) negotiates his/her way out of domestic responsibilities and especially the more repetitive and unattractive tasks. This assumes that higher income leads one to spend less time doing housework. In general, the smaller the differences in income between husband and wife, the more equal is the division of household labour (Bianchi et al. 2000).

In China, Lu et al. (2000) contend that the higher the income difference between husbands and wives, the less time the husbands spend doing household labour. However, a study of Tsuya and Bumpass (2004) discovers some support for the relative resources approach to gender-based differences in the division of housework. That is, the more income Japanese wives earn the less housework they do, while their husbands do more of the housework than do husbands of lower-income wives (Tsuya and Bumpass 2004). In South Korea, when husbands earn more than wives, the wives tend to increase their housework time while husbands tend to decrease theirs (Lee 2004). In Taiwan, Lee et al. (2000) find that the greater the relative income of married Taiwanese women, the more time their husbands spend doing housework.

A third factor is the household situation as reflected in the presence, number and age of children (Bianchi et al. 2000; Presser 2003); it has been suggested that in households with one or more young children the division of domestic labour is particularly unequal (De Meester and Van Ham 2009). The fourth factor is the gender role attitudes. Gender role attitudes approach assumed that the performance of housework reflects gender ideology on the part of women and men. The differences in the degree to which men and women hold egalitarian attitudes toward gender roles have been shown to explain



differences in the gender division of domestic responsibilities across households (Ettema and Van der Lippe 2009). Scholars hypothesize that women and men with more egalitarian gender role attitudes will exhibit a more equal division of household labour than those with more conservative attitudes towards gender.

Bianchi et al. (2000), report that women with more egalitarian gender role attitudes spend less absolute time doing housework. Other researchers have contradicted to support the effects of gender role attitudes on women's housework. Although gender role attitudes are measured in various ways and have led correspondingly to mixed results, most studies support the idea that gender role attitudes often provide a better prediction of household labour on the part of men than on the part of women.

Using education as a proxy in order to examine the determinant of gender role attitudes on housework, Lu et al. (2000) find that married Chinese men with higher educational attainment share in doing more housework than those with lower educational attainment. Other research finds, however, only partial support for the gender role attitudes approach. Tsuya and Bumpass (2004) indicate that Japanese men increase their share in doing housework only when their wives also hold egalitarian gender role attitudes. In addition, research shows that Taiwanese husbands share significantly in doing housework when both husband and wife hold egalitarian gender role attitudes (Lee et al. 2000). Having even one member of a couple with strongly egalitarian gender role attitudes also positively affects the husband's participation in housework in Taiwan (Lee et al. 2000). In South Korea, highly educated married women perform less housework than do women with a junior high school education or less (Lee 2004). The



husbands of highly educated South Korean women tend to share somewhat more in doing housework than the husbands of less-educated women (Lee 2004).

Finally, geographers have highlighted the importance of space, as the gender division of household labour is more balanced in urban, higher-density locations, at least in north-western Europe (Ettema et al. 2007; De Meester and Van Ham 2009). Whilst this difference may follow from more egalitarian attitudes about gender roles it also reflects variations in accessibility and space, time constraints among urban households (Ettema et al. 2007). In locations offering good accessibility to jobs, childcare providers, shops and other facilities, it is easier for women to combine longer employment hours with domestic demands. Households elsewhere may cope with poor accessibility through role specialisation with one partner usually the woman conducting more domestic work and the other specialising in paid work.

Whilst useful, the above explanation has been criticised. It is not evident whether attitudes towards gender roles drive or follow from the actual division of household labour, and whether discrepancies between attitudes and actual practices often exist (Vincent et al. 2004; Schwanen 2007). Additionally, the distribution of domestic responsibilities is sometimes considered to be a function of employment-related factors. However, it is critical to consider the two-sided nature of employment and domestic relationships. Housework and childcare impose significant constraints on individuals especially women's paid work, commuting and activity space (Schwanen 2007). Moreover, previous research has not considered differences between domestic responsibilities. This is nonetheless important as different responsibilities vary in the rigidity of space, time constraints they impose and because men's participation varies



considerably between types of housework and childcare (Schwanen et al. 2008). Such activities as repair, gardening and other homework outside the dwelling are often more male oriented or masculine.

Finally, the literature discussed so far tends to side line the non-rational aspects of the gender division of household labour. For cultural geographers and sociologists housework, childcare and paid labour is not neutral activities but symbolic performances through which proper gender identities are enacted (McDowell et al. 2005). Hence, housework and childcare are not necessarily to be allocated or avoided. They can be expressions of love and care, allowing men and women to craft identities that are in keeping with wider societal norms.

2.9 Household Socio-economic Responsibilities

Coltrane (2000) noted a variation in the methods used for measuring household labour. Housework most often refers to unpaid work done to maintain family members and a home. Therefore, emotion work and other invisible types of housework are generally excluded from the analysis, although some researchers argue the importance of these two types of household responsibilities (Erickson 2005; Minnotte et al. 2007).

Household responsibilities include time-consuming household tasks and occasional household tasks. Bianchi et al. (2000) and Coltrane (2000), identify preparation of meals, washing of dishes or cleaning up after meals, housecleaning, doing laundry, and shopping for groceries as the five most time-consuming household tasks. Occasional household tasks according to them include the tasks such as paying bills, household



repairs, garden and animal care, and driving other people. However, other studies divide household tasks into three groups: traditionally female tasks (preparing meals, washing dishes, housecleaning, and doing laundry), gender-neutral tasks (grocery shopping, paying bills, and driving other people), and traditionally male tasks (automobile maintenance and repair, yard work, and household repairs) (Kroska 2004).

2.11 Gender and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

Women are a cornerstone of African economic development. Approximately one third of all rural households in Sub-Saharan Africa are headed by women. Women provide circa 70 per cent of agricultural labour and they produce circa 90 per cent of all food. Thus, women's economic rate ranks highest in the world, compared to other regions, with the value of 61.9. However women employ mostly the informal sector or they occupy low-skill work (WAED, 2010).

In Sub-Saharan Africa there exist several common issues, which raise concern for women in the whole region. Issues such as: female genital mutilation (FGM), the current HIV/AIDS pandemic affecting young women, bride price and early marriages, polygamy, exclusion of women from land ownership, and existing patriarchal systems.

Polygamy and female genital mutilation are still pervasive in many African countries, and FMG remains prevalent especially in rural areas and among illiterate women. In addition, some communities practicing FGM appreciate the nexus between the practice and the increase in new HIV infections especially among the girls and women who have gone through FGM (Wold Vision 2007).





When discussing about gender development issues in Sub-Saharan Africa, cultural differences in gender roles can highlight the ways in which gender norms are socially constructed. Many studies have shown that women in Sub-Saharan Africa are more disadvantaged than in any other region in the world. Research findings also from North Africa have also revealed that the African continent entails set of obstacles that prevent women from enjoying the full range of political, civil, economic, and legal rights, although some positive development trends have been seen happening during recent years (Kelly, 2010). In many African societies and in different production systems (that is. agricultural/pastoral) traditional roles imposed on men and women affect deeply the different aspect of gender equality and role of gender.

Poverty rate and low per capita GDP have a profound impact on women's lives in Africa. This affects women's lives by making for women reduced chances of getting good education and/or achieves higher-education; lower education level means also higher illiteracy among women than men in Sub-Saharan Africa. Generally it is known that literacy is an important determinant of health. Africa has the literacy rate with wide disparities. For example, South Africa and Zimbabwe have a literacy rate close to 80%, while in some of the poorest countries, such as in Niger and Burkina Faso from West Africa; only 10% of women can read and write (www.heapro.oxfordjournals.org...). In Sub-Saharan Africa the situation of women in domains such as that is education and health disparities are still persisting and gaps are widening.

The 2010 Human Development Report presented the Gender Inequality Index (GII), which is a new measure index to illuminate differences in the distribution of

achievements between women and men. The losses in achievements such as reproductive health, empowerment and labour due to gender inequality range from 17 per cent to 85 per cent, larger losses are found in Arab States and South Asia (www.hdr.undp.org). Among indicators such as maternal mortality rates and women's representation in parliaments, the GII shows that gender inequality varies tremendously across estimated 138 countries in the world.

The 10 least gender-equal countries (in descending order) are Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Central African Republic, Papua New Guinea, Afghanistan, Mali, Niger, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Yemen, with an average GII of 0.79. Seven of these countries are situated in Sub-Saharan Africa. Human Development Report 2010 indicates that countries with unequal distribution of human development also experience high inequality in Burkina between women and men. It also states that countries with high gender inequality experience unequal distribution of human development. Countries doing very poorly in both gender inequality and human rights categories include the Central African Republic and Mozambique from Sub-Saharan Africa (Human development report 2010, UNDP).

Ensuring women's economic empowerment and access to control over resources will have an impact of risen human development issues in Sub-Saharan Africa. International human rights instruments make some obligations to ensure that African women and men enjoy the same rights (de jure and de facto rights) such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant of Civic and Political Rights (Lindstrom 2001:3).



Most fundamental convention is the Convention on the Elimination of all forms Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Convention and its General Recommendations made by the CEDAW Committee and its Article 1 of the African Charter. Another one is the African Charter adopted in 1981 and it is article 18(3), which states that “State shall ensure the elimination of every discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of the women... stipulated in international declarations and conventions” ([www1.umn.edu/humanrts/...](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/)). Kenya has also proposed Equality Bill, year 2000 that would recognize equal pay for equal work and antidiscrimination requirements. Furthermore in all Sub- Saharan African countries gender responsive budget initiatives can be instrumental in promoting change in budget policies and thus have a positive impact on gender equality in many African countries (UN 2009).



Gender policies have been usually framed in notions of gender equality and the empowerment of women and in order to set out to support women by increasing opportunities for employment, education, health and improving other basic socio-economic conditions (Tvedten & Paulo & Montserrat 2008/13, 5). Studies done by the IMF and World Bank, among others, suggest that countries, like in Sub-Saharan Africa, should implement economic and social policies that address and rectify gender inequality because reduced gender inequality leads to overall higher rates of economic growth (Dennis & Zuckermann 2006).

Solution for changed gender policies in Sub-Saharan Africa could be found from the comment of Zambian researcher



Longwe (2000: 28) who expresses herself that “The struggle for women’s empowerment is not merely about pushing ourselves into positions of power.... it is equally about using these positions of power to release African women from their present subordination and servitude”. This would mean ending the discriminatory practices for women in access to credit, technology, skills, and land. At country levels the most important act would be to mainstream a gender perspective for both women and men in legislation, policies and different programmes in, all areas and all levels (UN, 1997).

2.12 The Ghanaian Context

According to the 2010 population and housing census provided by the Ghana Statistical Service (2012) women constitute 51.2% of the total Ghanaian population of 24,658,823 while that of men is 48.8%. Rural women in Ghana produce about 70% of food crops and are key stakeholders in agroforestry, fisheries, and major actors in processing and food distribution (MOWAC, 2012). Even though agriculture continues to be the backbone of Ghana’s economy, its gendered facets, such as the sexual division of labour; sex differences in access to land, labour, technology and credit and differences in marketing of produce, have not received much attention and thus continue to thwart the development of the sector (Boateng et al, 2006; MOWAC, 2012). Ultimately, this impedes women’s development and welfare in rural areas because their incapability to access both farm and non-farm activities could reinforce their poverty.

Various traditions in Ghana promote stratification of gender roles. These are reinforced by passing these traditions from one generation to the next (Boateng et al., 2006). Rural



households in Ghana are therefore shaped by several factors because they are complex, culturally varied, and guided by dynamic institutional arrangements (MOWAC, 2012). Culture plays an important role in the organization of domestic and communal activities in Ghana. In the economic and social spheres, men are often assigned responsibilities that involve leaving home and the emphasis in their training is on public activities while girls' tasks are home based (Boateng et al., 2006; Barry, Nabila, 2001 as cited in Dako-Gyeke et al, 2013). Boateng et al (2006) argued that girls are taught to look up to men and boys as stronger, wiser, and more responsible and boys are socialized to lead and control women. In this regard, girls carry the greater burden of domestic work and boys are permitted more time for play and to be away from home. The authors(2006) therefore conclude that though there are constitutional and legal guarantees in Ghana, the reality on the ground does not measure up to equal rights for both males and females, especially in rural areas.

As explained earlier in the general introduction of background of the studies, Ghana as a country has shown commitment to conventions and laws that aim at ensuring gender equality by ratifying them and making local provisions in laws and policies to meet the standards set by international conventions. Some of the conventions and laws that Ghana endorsed are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the African Charter on people rights (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2005). This commitment to ensuring gender equality has brought about new roles among men and women in household.

2.13 Changing Gender Roles

In relatively recent time, there have been some significant changes in the traditional role of men and women, globally and in Ghana in particular. The social barriers of tradition and culture are gradually giving way to new ideas, new values and practices. Today, women are making giant strides and breaking new grounds in almost every field of human endeavour, including those occupations and professions that were once considered the exclusive preserve of men. As a result, some countries in the world, including Ghana can, today, boast of women doctors, pharmacists, engineers, politicians, lawyers, bankers, vice chancellors, military officers, pilots, wrestlers and even commercial car drivers, among others.

According to Ekong (2010), women are said to contribute a substantial part of the armed forces in China, Cuba, Israel and Russia, while 12% of labourers at building sites and 25% of Asian and Latin American miners are women. According to This Day Newspaper of March 10, 2002, out of the 24 newly appointed judges in Lagos State of Nigeria, 18 were reported to be women while 40% of the Permanent Secretaries in the State were also women. In Ghana, women in parliament today are 8.3% (Ghana 2012 election,). Also 59.3% of women are in the labour force (GLSS6/LFS 2012/2013). Globally, there has been a steady progress, though slow, in the role played by women in politics. The per cent of women in politics worldwide rose steadily from 5.034 per cent to 7.195 between 1999 and 2006 (Inter-Parliamentary Union: In United Global Partnership for Development, United Nations Development Programme Annual report, 2006).



2.14 Factors of Change

Friedman, (2006) and Maire (2009) have suggested that rather than being a constant concept, gender roles are continually changing and evolving in relation to the socio-political context. According to Nwosu, (2012), there are some identifiable factors which have facilitated changes or transformations in the traditional role of men and women in Africa and Ghana in particular. These include the influence of western civilization, urbanization and industrialization, as well as legal reforms, human rights activities. With its powerful tools of education, urbanization and industrialization, western civilization is believed to have seriously influenced the traditional social institutions particularly the traditional family institution. The implication is that since women's fundamental roles are traditionally located within the family, many or some of these roles and values which they held must have undergone some drastic changes.



With the increasing tempo of urbanization and industrialization, women, like their male counterparts, are increasingly migrating to urban centres to take advantage of economic opportunities in the government establishments, commercial outfits and in the private/industrial sector. Education has also facilitated and enhanced women's social status; equipping them with, new skills, knowledge and competences to compete favourably with men in different professions and to assume roles outside their domestic domain. Furthermore, through legislation and other governmental legal reforms, there have been some noticeable changes in the traditional role of women in Ghana. It is through these processes that some of the obnoxious practices against the women such as female circumcision, non- inheritance of property and widowhood practices have been

challenged in law courts. Admittedly, too, some women organizations, human rights and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Ghana including the National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), the Federation of Women Lawyers

(FIDA), Civil Liberty Organization (CLO), National Council for Women Societies (NCWS) among others, have remained committed to women liberation and gender equality in Ghana. It must also be stated that the United Nation's proclamation of 1975 as International Year for Women, the 1975-1985 as “the decade for women”, as well as the Regional Conference on women empowerment held in Dakar, Guinea in 1995 and the 1996 Women Conference in Beijing,

China, have all added impetus to women’s awareness for change globally and in Ghana in particular. One other factor which has facilitated and influenced change in gender role performance by women in Ghana is the nomination of women representatives to fill perceived gap in gender roll.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research methods, including the approaches adopted for data collection in order to answer the research questions and objectives. It outlines the research design, research study area, the study population, sample size determination, sources of data and methods of data collection techniques, methods of data analysis and presentation.

3.2 Review of Research Methodology

Qualitative method has been utilised in this study in order to allow for a more in-depth understanding of the respondents views or experiences. In addition to this, the context of these respondents is a central aspect in informing the various ways in which they perceive culture to impact on gender roles in household socioeconomic responsibilities as well as the impact of changing gender roles on life chances of men and women. As Ritchie and Lewis, (2003:7) point out, “those practicing qualitative research have tended to place emphasis and value on the human, interpretivist aspects of knowing about the social world. Understanding the social and psychological phenomena which are so central to this study from a perspective of meaning making and understanding, is important if this research is to make any contribution whatsoever to understanding the complexities of changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities. As Patton, (2002) puts it, qualitative research methods give an understanding of the



situation in its uniqueness, presenting what respondents perceive about the situation and what their meanings are.

Scholars contend that qualitative research can be distinguished from quantitative methodology by numerous unique characteristics that are inherent in the design. Such characteristics according to Creswell, (2007) include:

- Qualitative research occurs in a natural setting, human behaviour and events occurs.
- The researcher is the key instrument because the researchers collect data themselves through examining documents, observing behaviour or interviewing respondents.
- It makes use of multiple forms of data such as interviews, observations and documents rather than rely on a single data source.
- It employs inductive data analysis. Thus qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories and themes from bottom up.
- The focus of qualitative research is on the meaning that respondents hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that researchers bring to the research work.
- The research process for qualitative researchers is emergent. This means that the initial plan for the research cannot be tightly prescribed and all phases of the process may change after the researcher enters the field and begins to collect data.
- Qualitative researchers often use lens to view their studies, such as the concept of culture, central to ethnography, or gendered, racial or class differences from theoretical orientation.



- Qualitative research is a form of interpretive inquiry in which researchers' make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand.
- It involves a holistic account. Thus researchers try to develop a complex picture of the problem or issue under study.

However, while the richness of the data which is achieved using this method is of great importance to this study, it is also important to bear in mind that qualitative methods of analysis can be problematic in terms of their reliability and validity. As Miles and Huberman, (1994) point out what is often considered as factual becomes ramified by the explanations of respondents, a problem which is further compounded by the various interpretations of the reader. They also refer to the issue of impression management in which the respondents only present certain aspects of themselves to the researcher.

To counter act this issue as much as possible, a form of projection utilisation is hoped to have been advantageous. Thus, by asking respondents to reflect on the issue of gender roles and relationships more generally, it is hoped that a more realistic picture has been highlighted than would have been achieved if respondents were assigned the more threatening task of reflecting on their own interaction with their partner.

3.3 The Research Resign

This study utilised ethnographic design which emerged from the field of anthropology, largely from contributions of Bronislaw Malinowski, Robert Park and Franz Boas (Jacob, 1987). The intent of ethnographic research is for the researcher to have collaboration with his or her research respondents and to obtain a holistic picture of the subject of study with emphasis on portraying the everyday experiences of individuals



by observing and interviewing them on relevant issues This research design includes in-depth interviewing and continual and on-going respondent observation of a situation (Jacob, 1987)

3.4 The Study Area

The study was conducted in Nandom district, which is located in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The district is one of the eleven (11) administrative districts in the Upper West Region of Ghana and its strategic location fosters trade with other districts within the region. Until the creation of the new Districts, Nandom was part of the Lawra District Assembly in the Upper West region of Ghana with the administrative capital in Lawra. Nandom is largely a rural community with unique cultural systems and the predominant occupation of the inhabitants is farming.



The District lies in the north western corner of the Upper West Region of Ghana between Longitude 2°25 W and 2°45W and Latitude 10°20 N and 11°00 S. It is bounded to the East and South by the Lambussie and Jirapa Districts respectively and to the North and West by the Republic of Burkina Faso. The total area of the District is estimated to be 567.6 square km. This constitutes about 3.1% of the Region's total land area. The District is constituted by 84 communities with 86% of the inhabitants living in rural areas. The population density is about 89 per square kilometre. It is the most densely populated District in the region. Figure 1 is a map that shows the location of the District in Ghana. Its closeness to Burkina Faso offers it a strategic location for international interactions and exchanges. It however poses a challenge related to the influx of Fulani herdsmen into the district from the Sahel (DPCU 2014).



Figure 3.1: A map of Ghana showing the location of Nandom

The estimated population of the District for 2014 is 49675. This comprises 25,620 women and 24,055 men (DPCU 2014). The distribution of the population into rural and urban is 41,916 (86%) and 6,824 (14%) respectively. The population is distributed among eighty four (84) communities. Only ten localities in the District have population above one thousand (1000). Nandom is the largest locality with a population of 6,898 (DPCU 2014).



The provision of social facilities in the District will therefore take into consideration the population of the District in according to sex to ensure equitable and fair distribution of resources. There is intense pressure on natural resources particularly land for agricultural production as well as socio-economic facilities. This therefore implies that, land for agricultural and other economic activities in the near future will be exhausted indicating the need for alternative source of livelihood for the populace mostly engaged in agriculture.

3.5 Sample Frame and Respondent Selection

Due to the specific nature of the respondents group required, purposive sampling method was used to select town/Area councils and respondents.

The idea behind qualitative research is to purposively select respondents or sites that will help the researcher understand the problem and the research questions. Neuman (1994) suggests that for purposive sampling to be deemed appropriate the sample should involve subjects who will be particularly informative, and who have been identified for the purpose of in-depth investigation. The purposive nature of the sampling procedure relates directly to the fact that the selection criteria for this particular sample are fairly specific in nature. As part of the selection criteria, respondents were required to be:

- Married and unmarried men and women
- Educated and uneducated
- Employed and unemployed

- Age group of 15 and above
- Currently, or have experience of, co-habiting with their partner

Respondents consist of 96 individuals, 46 males and 50 females representing 3 town/Area councils within the District and 4 key informants made up of the assembly man (a community representative at the District Assembly), the District planning officer, the District gender desk officer and the head of community development for the Nandom district. This allowed for the selection of individuals whose experiences would be useful for the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002). The use of these particular selection criteria can be rationalised in the following ways.

Married and unmarried men and women are specified as a result of the fact that gender roles are constructed in relation to the other. In light of the fact that this study aims to understand the tension and negotiation which takes place in terms of the deconstruction of traditional forms of gender roles, and the movement towards greater levels of equality, it is necessary to include opposite gender relations in order to gain greater understanding of this dynamic.

Educated and uneducated persons are also specified in order to determine the influenced of both literacy and illiteracy on gender roles within the household. In addition to this, employed and unemployed respondents are selected to help understands the tensions and negotiations of gender roles in the household. The age of the respondents included age groups such as adolescents, adults, middle aged, and elderly which ranged from 15 to 55+ years with most of the respondents aged between 35 and 44 years. The age group of 15 and above is specified due to the fact that individuals within this age group are



generally making decisions around education, careers, marriage and negotiating these factors and their impact on relationships may be influenced quite significantly by gender roles. Older persons who had lived in the community for a long time were purposively selected because they had experience regarding cultural relevant norms related to gender issues.

Co-habitation has been included in the sample requirements because as the literature shows, gender roles often play out in practical issues such as divisions of labour. Partners who live with one another are also likely to have to negotiate major life decisions regarding issues such as career paths or financial issues. All these elements are therefore likely to provide a larger frame of reference for respondents to draw on than individuals who do not co-habit with their partners.

Once again it is hoped that this has allowed for the provision of richer data. In terms of selecting respondents, a network correspondent was utilised in order to gain access to a network of individuals who meet the criteria. A network correspondent refers to an individual who is known to the researcher and who approaches individuals on behalf of the researcher and requests their participation in the study. A network correspondent is used to find respondents who, for ethical reasons, are not known by the researcher within a personal capacity. It is important to note that the network correspondent has not been informed directly of who has accepted or refused the invitation to participate as these individuals were able to contact the researcher directly through a telephonic means of responding to the request.



Table 3.1: Proportion of Sample Units Selected from each Town/Area Councils

Communities	Number of people as at 2012	Number of Sample Unit Selected	Male	Female
Nandom Area Council	17,093	53	25	28
Ko Area Council	6,780	21	10	11
Baseble Area Council	7,151	22	11	11
Total	31,024	96	46	50

(Source: District population report 2014)

3.6 Data Collection Techniques

This study used both primary and secondary sources of data. The use of secondary data provided a useful understanding to key concepts like household response, traditional and current household socio-economic responsibilities in developing countries, factors that influence household decision to engage in one socioeconomic responsibilities or the other. Secondary information relevant to the study (both published and unpublished) was mostly obtained from online articles, journals, reports, books and theses.

Primary data was collected during field survey conducted by the researcher involving all 96 respondents. Data was collected from October, 2014 through February, 2015. Data was collected through the use of individual semi-structured questionnaires. As Ritchie and Lewis (2003) point out, this form of interview is most useful if a key objective of the study is to understand how respondents' conceptions emerge through their narrative. Understanding respondents views on contextual factors which impact on





the development of gender roles, as well as personal reflections on the way in which these gender roles impact on relationship dynamics, can be most adequately explored through the narrative of the individual. In order to facilitate a greater degree of expression regarding narrative, the questions used in the semi-structured questionnaires were mainly open-ended. This was used to encourage the respondents to give a more in-depth and informative answer and to allow for deeper exploration of particular points of interest as is the general procedure for a semi-structured questionnaire (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). However, few closed-ended questions were also included to avoid unnecessary responses and to save time. The consent of the respondents was sought before the semi-structure interviews were conducted. Participation in the study was voluntary and respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality regarding the information they provided.

The interview guide which can be found in appendix B was formulated based on the research aims and questions. Initially the questions are based on gaining an understanding of the respondents' views on traditional gender roles and factors responsible for such gender roles. Questions were also asked on changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities, factors responsible for changing in gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities or otherwise, its influence on life chances for women and men. Other questions on the changing nature of gender roles are utilised to establish how such changes might impact on both genders as well as their perception of such impact on relationships. The other questions looked specifically at certain social constructs which were identified as significant in the literature in an

effort to link these findings to the aim of establishing perceptions of the manner in which they might link to the construction of gender roles.

Interview guides were used to collect data from 96 people who served as the respondents of the study. Key information that came up in the course of the interviews and observations were recorded into notebooks. With the consent of respondents, an audio tape was used to record the views and expressions of respondents.

3.7 Data Analysis

During the data analysis, the data was organised categorically and chronologically, reviewed repeatedly and continually coded. The data gathered from the interviews using a voice recorder was played and listened to several times before the actual transcription was done. Field notes and diary entries were regularly reviewed. Also, because most of the interviews were conducted in Dagari (local language) the data was translated into English language by the researcher's assistants who are fluent in the Dagari language. The raw data was analysed inductively because it enabled the dominant or significant themes to emerge without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies (Thomas, 2008). The transcribed data was categorized into themes by looking for fits and recurring patterns in the data. The researcher analysed specific statements and searched for possible meanings that made the information more meaningful (Creswell, 1998). The most illustrative quotations were extracted and used to support important points that emerged from the data gathered from respondents. The SPSS version 20.0 was used to generate tables and charts for the study.



3.8 Reflexive Considerations

The researcher was also aware that pertinent issues with regards to reflexivity required attention in so far as this particular piece of research is concerned. Firstly, in terms of the way in which respondents and the researcher related to each other it is important to acknowledge the fact that the researcher is a female and that as such, female and male respondents related to me in a specific way in terms of how they talked about gender.

The researcher also needed to be very aware of personal opinions and understanding of the matters being explored in the study and aimed at all times not to allow these opinions to be reflected to research respondents, as this may have directly impacted on the answers or information provided. As Hook (2004), points out, the ability of a researcher to reflect on their own emotional investment and any power dynamics which may influence the research, should be regarded as having a positive rather than a negative impact on the work. Bearing this in mind and armed with the knowledge of any personal impact upon the study the researcher aimed to do the utmost to understand respondents from their point of view, rather than imposing a personal interpretation upon them.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

For this study, as with any other study of a qualitative nature, the process of the research requires that the respondents reflect on and express personal views and opinions. Thus although no negative consequences were anticipated the researcher took precautions to avoid emotional stress to the respondents as much as possible by using the psychological skills and knowledge gained thus far.





The sampling method was also voluntary in nature, in addition potential respondents were informed that there was no direct benefit to participating in the study and that they may choose to drop out of the study at any time, or refuse to answer any question posed to them, with no negative consequences. All of this aimed to contribute to preventing individuals feeling obliged to participate in a study which may involve content that is personally emotionally sensitive or to provide them with the option of not discussing a particular aspect which they felt causes any degree of emotional distress.

It was also necessary to obtain consent to record the interviews on an audio-tape recorder, and to use the information acquired in the interview for academic purposes. This aspect also included making respondents aware that direct quotes may be used in the research report. As a result, respondents were made aware of the limits to confidentiality in terms of the use of direct quotes as well as the use of a network executive. However, confidentiality was maintained as much as possible by removing any identifying data from the final report and allowing respondents the opportunity to agree or refuse to participate without having to inform the network executive directly. The tapes of the interviews were kept in a secure location by the researcher and were destroyed upon completion of the report. In addition all interviews were conducted in a location which allowed for privacy during the interview.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussion of results of data collected from the field on gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities in the Nandom District. The results were presented to reflect the objectives of the study.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

4.2.1 Sex of Respondents

As shown in Table 4.1 below, 52.1% of the respondents were females whiles 47.9% were males.

Table 4.1: Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	46	47.9
Female	50	52.1
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.2.2 Age of Respondents

Age of respondents play significant role in determining households' responsibilities and therefore have an important contribution in the discussion. Regarding age, majority 94.8% of the respondents were above 24 years of age. This shows that the study involved the most experienced people regarding gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities.



Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-24	5	5.2
25-34	23	24.0
35-44	45	46.9
45-54	18	18.2
55+	5	5.2
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.2.3 Marital Status of Respondents

From figure 4.1, it is clear that majority (63%) were married. 16% were single and widowed respectively and 5.2 % of the respondents interviewed were divorced.

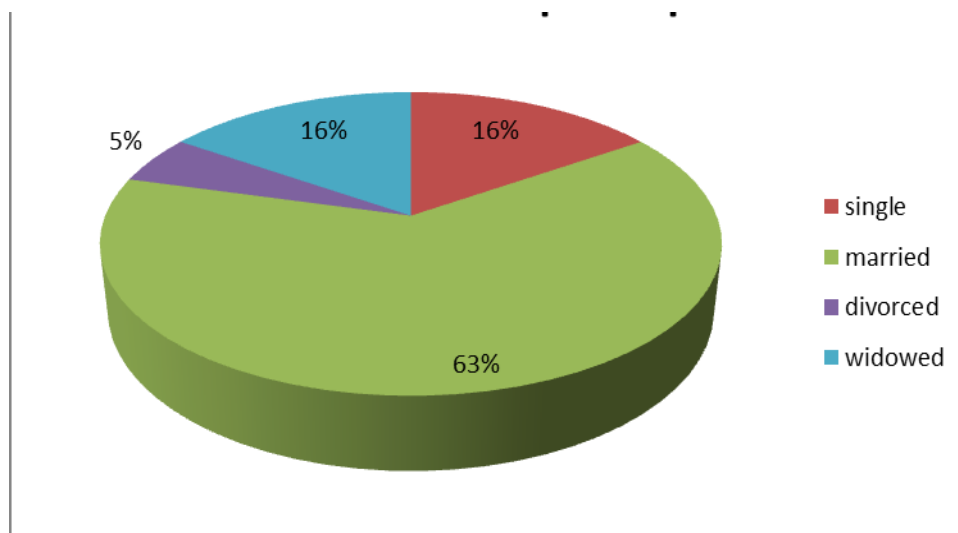


Figure 4.1: Marital Status of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.2.4 Respondents Household Size

The results in table 4.3 suggest that, 26.6% of the respondents had a fairly large family size of six and above members. 68.8% were between 2-5 members 5.2% of the respondents have a family size of 10 and above.

Table 4.3: Household Size

Household size	Frequency	Percentage
2-5	66	68.8
6-10	25	26.0
10+	5	5.2
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.2.5 Number of Children of Respondents

The findings in table 4.4 shows that, majority of respondents (65, 6%) have 4-6 children, 24% have 1-3 children and 10.4% over seven children.

Table 4.4: Number of Children of Respondents

Children	Frequency	Percentage
1-3	23	24.0
4-6	63	65.6
7+	10	10.4
Totals	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014



4.2.6 Educational Level of Respondents

Education plays a significant role in the status and the knowledge of an individual. From the total number of 96 respondents interviewed, 10.4% of respondents have no formal education, 5.2% had non-formal education while 47.9% of the respondents had primary/Junior High/Middle education. Also 22.9% of the total respondents attained senior high school level and (13.5%) of the respondents had tertiary education. It is evident that the level of education of the respondents declines as we move from basic level to tertiary.

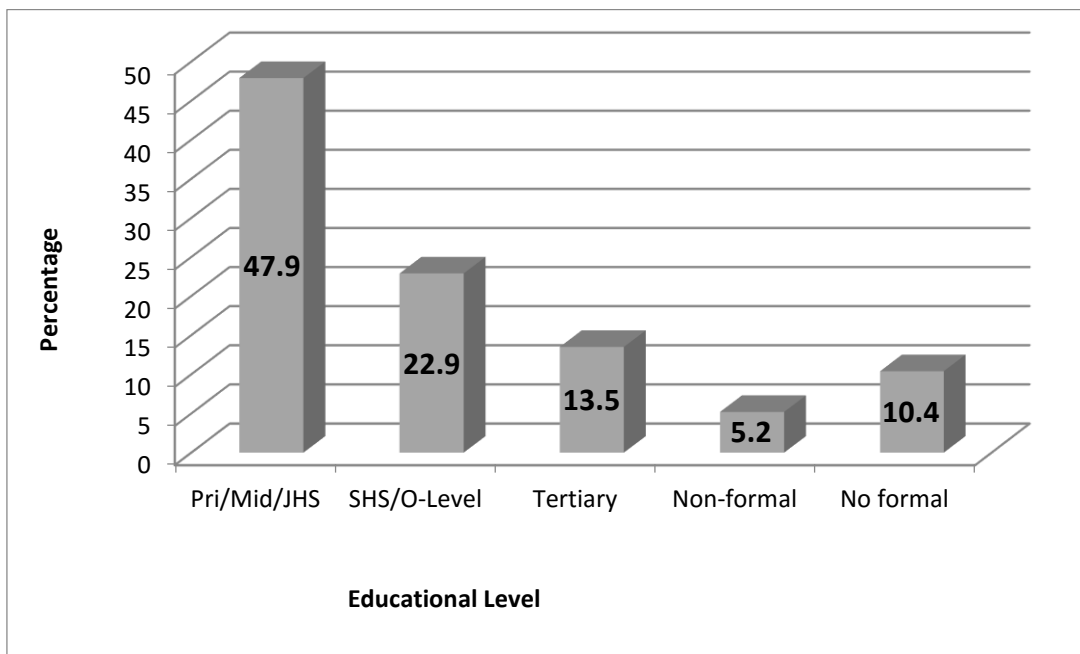


Figure 4.2: Educational Level of Respondents

Source: Field Survey, Feb, 2015

4.2.7 Religious Denominations of Respondents

As indicated in figure 4.3, majority (85%) of the respondents were Christians,



5.0% of the respondents practice African traditional religions, 6.0% were Muslims and 3.0% represent those with other faith apart from the three dominant religions. Religion contributes significantly to the type roles play by males and females in a household.

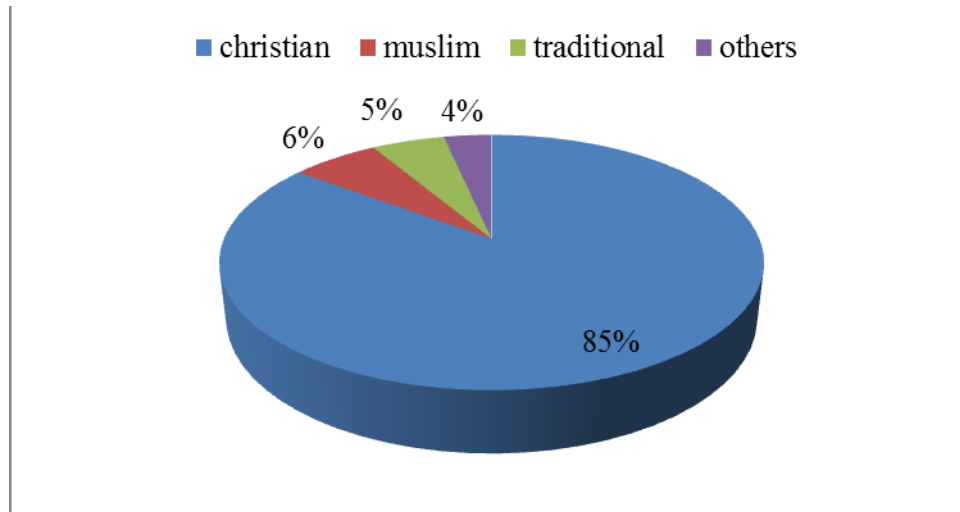


Figure 4.3: Religious Denominations of Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2014



4.2.8 Main Occupation of Respondents

As shown in table 4.5 below, 34.4% of the women respondents were into petty trading and hand work (such as hair dressing, dress making and weaving of cloths) while about 3.1% of male respondents also partake in petty trading and hand work. The female respondents were not only engaged in petty trading and hand work but also join their husbands to farm during the farming season. Approximately 36.5% of the male respondents were mainly into subsistence farming whereas that of females was 9.4%. Regarding paid profession, 8.3% were males and 5.2% were females. In all 3.1% of female respondents were not into any occupation.

Table 4.5: Main Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Petty trading and hand-work		
Male	3	3.1
Female	33	34.4
Subsistence Farmers		
Male	35	36.5
Female	9	9.4
Paid professionals		
Male	8	8.3
Female	5	5.2
Not working		
Male	-	-
Female	3	3.1
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.2.9 Extra Income Generating Activities

A question asked to find out whether respondents had extra income generating activities showed that majority of the women (74%) were into extra income generating activities such as Shea butter (14%) processing, charcoal and fire wood business (6%). It was interesting to know that many of these women (54%) in the community brew pito in turns for sale as an extra income generating activity. Surprisingly none of the male respondents had extra income generating activities. This is important because, it determines the kind of roles that play by individuals.



Table 4.6: Extra Income Generating Activities

Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Shea butter		
Male	-	-
Female	7	14
Pito brewing		
Male	-	-
Female	27	54
Charcoal and firewood business		
Male	-	-
female	3	6
Not into income generative activities		
Male	46	48
female	13	26
Total	96	
Male	46	-
female	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

4.2.10 Income Status of Men and Women

Table 4.7 represents the views of respondents regarding which of the spouses earn more income, and possibly contributes more to household income in the district. The results show that majority (73%) of the respondents agree that wives earn more than their husbands. Mr Dong, a male respondent recounted that:

“my wife earns more income than me because we do the farming together and so all produce from the farm belong to both of us”. Aside that, my wife brews pito for sale earning her more income than I do” (Field survey, February, 2015)

Adding to the statement of Mr Dong, Polo a truck pusher said that:

“The women are generally into so many income generating ventures while the men in our rural settings mainly relied on their farming of which women are partners and so they earn more income than us” (Field survey, February, 2015).

Also a female respondent Mad Abiba indicated that:

“My husband only earns income seasonally but I earn income throughout the year since I am into petty trading in order to support my husband to care for the family needs” (Field survey, February, 2015).

Table 4.7: Opinions on Spousal Earning Capacity

Spouses	Frequency	Percentage
Husband	26	27
Wife	70	73
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014



Weaving



Shea butter processing

Figure 4.4: Economic Activities
Source: field survey, 2015

4.3 Factors Responsible for Traditional Socio-Economic Roles of Men and Women at the Household Level

The findings revealed that four factors are mainly responsible for the traditional gender roles at the household level. These were culture and religion, gender socialization, poverty and discrimination in access to land. These findings are presented and discussed below.

Culture and Religion

This looks specifically at the constructs which were directly investigated during the interview process. Respondents were specifically asked to share their thoughts on these constructs as both culture and religion play an important role in terms of their impact on the individual development.

The findings revealed that, culture prescribed authoritative roles for males whereas females were responsible for caring roles within the household. Respondents recognised culture as playing a very significant role in gender roles, both as a continuing influence and as a strong factor in the formation of attitudes and beliefs about gender roles. Some respondents made the following statements

Mr Martin, a male respondent said that “People are brought up according to their culture and how flexible that culture is. Your culture basically determines how you are going to interpret changes into what your partner needs and what you should be doing to maintain peace in the marital relationship. Depending on your culture and what the roles in your culture are will relate to how you view the other person and how you view yourself in terms of gender roles”. (Field survey: February, 2015).



Mrs Galyouni, a female respondent also added this. “If you are brought up in a culture that is very gender role intensive, it teaches you that direction. I think there will be a lot more to it than a culture that doesn’t have that effect. I think it is a very big part of it because it is a taught thing” (field survey: February, 2015).

Mr Kpema also added his voice: “I think cultural groups do set out a path for the gender groups, whether it is intended or whether it just happened at the time or it is just the way it is. In our daily lives and activities, references are always made to how things were done in the past and what should be done to follow suit. It is mostly like, you know mother and father did this, this is our culture it is been done forever. So I think it is a contributing factor but it is a factor in the same way that as saying that your gender roles are formed by your environment and culture is your environment so it is a major contributing factor to your idea of gender roles” (field survey: February, 2015).

In addition to the recognition by respondents of the impact of culture in a general sense, respondents also referred to specific cultures. As the extract below illustrates there is an understanding that while culture is generally perceived as a factor in the development of an individual’s gender role norms, the outcomes of this process are not universal. Rather each culture is recognized as having a different set of norms which consequently impact in different ways.



“Cultures are very different, you find that other people are going to be more tolerant on certain things and others not. It is always like, this is how things are done in this community and will be passed down to the next generation”. (A male respondent, field survey, February, 2015).

In a more definite sense respondents appear to reflect on the traditional approach to gender roles amongst African men. A female respondent in particular reflected a great deal on the issue.

“African men will always want to play roles that they were taught when they were growing up. Most of them also act in accordance with their religious doctrines or what has been preached to them on roles of men and women. African men I have had an opportunity of talking to or getting a view from, were really very positive or were very happy with how things were. Some wanted it to be that way because they still think women are incompetent, they base it on whatever their past was like. I really have not come across one who feels the way women feel that we were oppressed and we could have contributed a lot more had we been given the opportunity” (field survey: February, 2015).

While there is a great deal of literature which focuses on the patriarchal elements of African masculinity it is important to caution against labelling African men so broadly. Rather it needs to be understood that within African society there are a multitude of cultures and individuals with a variety of nuances and gender related belief systems (Morrell, 2001, Shefer, 2002). A female respondent, Madam Martha stated this,

“You still get men today who will tell you that they are African men and should not be seen cooking food for family consumption or taking care of domestic



chores. The African man will always say that girls should be with their mothers to learn caring roles”. (Field survey: February, 2015).

“Well I feel as though because of the changes, some people depending on your cultural standpoint it is going to be hard for other people to come to terms with it. Looking at a typical man from say Zululand if in his whole life he knew that a man is more superior to a woman and then you preach gender equality to him, it will not go down well with him. That is what I feel” (A male respondent, field survey: February, 2015).

The issue of African men as being viewed as patriarchal is a complex issue, especially within the Ghanaian context. Morrell (2001) as well as O’Sullivan (2006) recognize the significant impact which the subordination of black men during apartheid has had on African masculinity and suggest that being treated as an inferior form of masculinity may account for the widespread need amongst African men to establish a power position in relation to women.

Regarding religion, there was a similar acknowledgement of the idea that religion plays an important role in shaping the individuals belief system with regards to gender role. A female respondent who believed she was bringing out much information on how religion shapes individual gender roles shares her views:

“You have this view of how you are supposed to be doing things in terms of your gender according to your religion. Religion, whether Christianity or Islamic teaches women to be subservient to their husbands and this idea of women being subservient is continued (field survey: February, 2015).



Religion was also spoken about with direct reference to Christianity and Islam. Interestingly there were differing opinions with regards to the way in which Christianity may impact on gender role formation. One respondent was of the view that Christianity has the tendency to perpetuate traditional gender role and the consequent inequality:

“Christianity perpetuates gender inequality. If a woman is to be submissive to her husband, then there is not equality there... Also, I know in the Catholic Church that women (reverend sisters) cannot serve a full mass as their male counterparts (reverend fathers) do. This does not promote gender equality. I mean the actual workings of relationship might be very different but if those are the rules then it pulls down the level of equality” (A female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

However, other respondents viewed Christianity as significant contributing factor in creating a greater sense of equality between the sexes.

“Sincerely speaking, I think there is a lot more tolerance towards gender differences and gender equality in the Christian religion and... I think Christianity promotes a balance between men and women. You find that pastors, reverend fathers among other preachers are all preaching about unifying, being one and helping each other ...You find that even in recent times there are female pastors in some churches. They are really trying to help individuals to embrace gender equality” (A male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

Alternatively, Islam was perceived by 86% of respondents including all the six Muslims as a prime example of the manner in which religion can play a significant role in



perpetuating gender inequality. Women in this religion were seen to be particularly relegated to the background and men as being in a far greater position of power. Some respondents recounted the following:

Islamic doctrine does not encourage gender equality in many instances. At prayers in the mosque, women are made to stand at the back. This in itself is an indication of men superiority to women. Their doctrine teaches the wife to take a submissive role and an extreme instance is the stoning of a woman who commits adultery...which I think is an extreme case. I think that this does not promote gender equality in the household” (A female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

“For the Muslims, the man has to be the back bone of everything and I think that it holds them back from accepting changes in gender roles. I am saying this because most of my friends are Muslims. Many of them feel that women have no say in matters affecting the family. The men take decisions and the women have to just obey. Religion has very strong traditional values and that holds them back accepting what’s happening now” (A male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

“To some extent, I think religion plays an important role in gender activities... for example the Muslim religion I don’t know the religion very well but I stayed in Muslim places...I don’t think the burka allows freedom. There are certain people who abide by the rules in that religion and see it as a way to do things” (another male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015)



“A Muslim man in a marital relationship is the superior person in the relationship. A Muslim guy will always have problems with men who do not buy this idea of men superiority in a marital relationship”. (Madam Abiba, a female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).



While the role of religion in gender development is undoubtedly a complex and varied one, there is clearly a link between the historical development of traditional gender roles and certain religious doctrines. Read (2003) conducted a study on women participating in both the Christian and Muslim faith which supports this notion by suggesting that women who belong to and participate in conservative denominations typically have more traditional attitudes towards gender roles than those with weaker religious ties.

Another factor that perpetuates gender imbalances regarding household socio-economic responsibilities in the Nandom District is gender socialization. The study explored key aspects of socialization processes to find out how they influenced the expectations, responsibilities and roles played by females and males in the community. As Marinova (2003) opines, socialization processes and belief systems influence adherence to particular gender stereotypes and patterns of behaviour. In their responses, respondents did indicate the different ways in which they raised their male and female children as reflected in the responses below by Mr Kodaga a male respondent:

“. . . for the boys I encourage them to be serious about their education, so that they will be responsible in the future. This is because when they grow up; they will marry and would have to take very good care of their wives and children. For the females, men will come and marry them. The most important thing is for their mother to teach them how to take care of the home, for instance, they must

learn how prepare food, to scrub the toilet and the bath house, and the rest . . . anyway, their education is also relevant and they have to study” (Field survey: February, 2015)

Consistently, the respondents mentioned that for female children, teaching them caring roles and how to do household chores was very important. This was emphasized by both men and women because they believed it is essential for every girl, who hopes to get married and have children. In most societies, especially in Africa, there is deep stereotypical belief that only women can take care of children (Marinova, 2003). In consonance with this point, Boateng et al (2006) asserted that, girls carry the greater burden of domestic work while boys are geared towards more productive work and are permitted more time for play and to be away from home. In most societies, women are restricted because their mobility is truncated in public spheres as they are confined mostly to domestic activities and reproductive responsibilities (Kabeer, 2008).

More importantly, the knowledge gained by children through socialization further entrenches the disparities that exist between men and women as they are likely to hold these views throughout their lives. Stratification of gender roles are encouraged and are reinforced in some traditions in Ghana by passing on these traditions down from one generation to the next (Boateng et al., 2006). Not only are children taught but they also observe what unfolds at home and other environments like the school. Even though the process of socialization begins before school, it is an environment that conscious socialization takes place (Marinova, 2003). In this study, it was found that the education of boys was considered to be very important. With regard to the education of girls, majority of the respondents were concerned about teenage pregnancy which according to them, negatively affected girls’ progress and completion of school.





Poverty also determines gender roles at the household level. Norms, values, divisions of assets, work, responsibilities, power and control make poverty a gendered experience. It is therefore important to examine the links between gender roles and poverty (Sen, 2008). Most poor women enter the labour market with lower levels of health, nutrition, education, skills and fewer productive assets than poor men because gender norms and practices tend to worsen the effects of scarcity (Kabeer, 2008) especially in rural communities. Additionally, the influence of poverty does not only make a distinction between women and men, but also differentiates how care work burdens and responsibilities are experienced by different women (Sen, 2008). The author further argued that for poor women, time is often the most valuable resource for the reason that their time is so much taken up by caring work that they can remain caught in a vicious circle of poverty.

From the findings of this study, respondents indicated that in the past, most poor households men strictly maintained their positions as heads of family and treated women as subordinates since they did not engage in paid work and were unable to contribute to the family income. This assertion agreed with Wadesango et al (2011) as they suggest that role differentiation and expectations in society relegate women to inferior positions which have implications for vulnerability and exclusion. During the in-depth interviews, a male motor mechanic who had six children recounted:

“ . . . as a man, I work to bring in all the money that the family need thus I pay school fee, utility bills, health bills, provide food, clothing and any other thing that involve the use of money. I am in charge of the household decision making . . . my wife only play minor roles. If there is an issue I can choose to inform my

wife or not, but I the man is the one who plays an active role by taking care of the woman, family and even the woman's extended family" (Field survey: February, 2015)

It is interesting to know that this man sang a funny song to prove that men were in charge of all financial responsibilities in the past. The song goes like this:

*Polo ooo, Polo, Polo
Ka school fee, aeh polo
Awater bill, aeh polo
Ka light bill, aeh polo
Afood, aeh polo
Ka health bills aeh polo
Everything, aeh polo
Won't you kill polo?*

The meaning of the song is captured below.

*If you are a man, you shoulder
many financial responsibilities.
Talk of payment of children school fee,
it is the man responsibility.
Whether water bill or light bill
it is the man who see to it.
When it about food or health bills
it is still the man's duty.
Everything, man
Won't you kill man?*

Affirming the above statement Madam Adjoa, a female respondent said:

". . . in my house, my husband controls everybody. He provides money for the entire family so what he says is final. as you can see we are poor people . . . I have been advising my daughter to be serious with her education and to be careful of boys in this community . . . so that she will be empowered before she



can get married to an equally responsible man who will help her reduce her burden rather than become a burden herself if she becomes impregnated by any of the boys in this community. My prayer is that one day my daughter will be rich and get a rich man to marry, so that they will be able to share ideas and support each other financially” (Field survey: February, 2015).

The responses provided by the respondents signify that women could not fight for their rights and gender equality because they did not have the mean and power to do so. Their inability to possess material wealth actually relegated them to the background.

Also access and ownership of Land was found to affect the roles of individuals' socio-economic responsibilities at the household level. Within the Nandom communities, as in many rural communities in Ghana, land is a major resource that determines the livelihoods of people. This is because majority of people in Nandom communities are farmers who depend solely on agriculture. Gender discrimination in land is a common phenomenon because there is a wealth of evidence showing that fewer women own land (Alsop & Healey, 2008). In sub-Saharan African countries like Ghana, while the majority of women work in the agricultural sector, patriarchal traditions and practices often deny them the right to own and manage the land they cultivate (Drechslerb et al, 2008). Also, although different categories of land users face problems of access and control, women are most vulnerable, either as family members or wives due to discriminatory customary practices in Ghana (Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004).

In this study a 78% of women had access to land but only 4% own the land. It was found in this study that there were three major ways through which people had access to land for farming in the community and these were through (a) inheritance/family, (b)



leasing, or (c) purchasing. It was very difficult for women in the community to either hire or purchase land because both required huge capital investment which they do not have. In this regard, it became evident that women farmers in the study area go into joint farming with their husbands or acquired land through their extended families where the family heads of the various clans in the community distributed the land prior to the farming season. In the words of Mrs Abiuga, a male respondent:

“Every clan has its own farming area . . . so when the year comes to an end and some members of the family want to farm they sit down and discuss, having discussed they go to the land and share accordingly when it is farming season, they meet and everyone is given a portion of land to farm but as you know farming is for men, so they give men more land to farm . . .”. “. . . , since my husband passed on, things have been very difficult. Now I don’t have capital to farm on a large scale as my husband did. He controlled everything; the land, money and everything . . . it is difficult for me to start all over again, I have a small portion of land on which I farm in order to earn some money for my children and myself. . . .” (Field survey: February, 2015).

Although most of rural dwellers in Ghana are farmers, and majority of those who engage in farm related activities are women, the study findings indicated that compared to men, women were discriminated against in access to land. Even though, 78% of women were said to have access to land, the discriminatory practices ensure that women are often given land of poor quality and size. This is what a female respondent by name Mary said that:



“ in this community, when a woman needs land for farming her own crops either from the husband’s family or her nuclear/extended family, a small and poor quality land is mostly given out to her” (Field survey: February, 2015.

This finding is in line with that of Women’s Manifesto (2004) where it is stated that land discriminatory practices ensure that women are often given land of poor quality and size because those who control land gain social and political power and authority. Unequal access to and ownership of land could adversely affect opportunities rural dwellers, especially women could harness within their communities and would likely plunge them into poverty and consequently perpetuate already existing gender inequalities.

While there are constitutional provisions that protect women’s land rights in Ghana, women continue to face diverse forms of discrimination in access to land, among others (FAO, 2012; MOWAC, 2012). Most rural women face constraints than men in access to land and other structures and processes, such as credit, labour and appropriate technology that increase agricultural productivity (Augustin et al 2012; MOWAC, 2012). This gender gap hampers women’s productivity, reduces their contributions to the agriculture sector and hinders their achievement of broader economic and social development goals (FAO, 2011). In this regard, closing the gender gap in access to and ownership of land and other related farming needs could increase the productivity of rural women, which would reduce their poverty and ultimately enhance their well-being.



4.4 Current Socio-Economic Responsibilities of Men and Women

Social responsibilities of men and women at household level in this study include: child care, meals preparation, house cleaning, laundry, fetching of water, shopping and dish washing. Economic responsibilities of men and women at household level on the other hand include: food provision, payment of house bills, school fee, health bills, utility bills and from land preparation to marketing of Agricultural produce.

4.4.1 Social Responsibilities

Child care

Details of the results showed that, 10.4% of the respondents interviewed indicated that men take care of the child at the household level. 74% of all respondents also intimated that women are solely responsible for the upkeep of the child at the household level. Worthy of notice was the fact that 15.6% of the respondent interviewed agreed that child care at the household level was a joint responsibility of both men and women. The fact that 15.6 agreed that care is a joint responsibility means there is little changes in the gender roles regarding child care

Table 4.8: Distribution of Responsibilities of Men and Women at the Household Level- Child Care

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	10	10.4
Female	71	74
Both male and female	15	15.6
Total	96	100

Source: field survey, 2015



Meals preparation

The findings indicated that 11.5 % of the respondents stated that men take part in meals preparations in support of their female’s counterparts. They do that when the women are busy at home doing other equally important things. Majority (78.1%) of the respondents agreed that females at the household level were responsible for meals preparation. However, 10.4% of the respondents in the study area showed that both men and women do partake in meals preparation at the household level.

Table 4.9: Gender Participation in Meals Preparations

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	11	11.5
Female	75	78.1
Both Male and Female	10	10.4
Total	96	100

Source: field survey, 2015

Shopping

Current responsibilities at the household level include shopping. Out the total number of respondents, 21 respondents representing 21.9% indicated that males shop for the household. However, 41.7% of the respondents hold the position that shopping at the household level is the responsibility of females. Equally a significant number of responses indicate that both men and women play an important role insofar as shopping at the household level is concern



Table 4.10 Gender Participation in Shopping

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	21	21.9
Female	40	41.7
Both male and female	35	36.5
Total	96	100.0

Source: field survey, 2015

Washing of Dishes

Another important current household responsibility that was considered for discussion in the study was washing of dishes at the household level. Table 4.11 below shows that majority (84.4%) of the respondents stated that washing of dishes is a responsibility of a woman at the household level. Only few (9.4%) of the respondents stated that men also contribute in the washing of dishes at the household level.

Table 4.11: Gender Participation in Washing Dishes

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	9.4
Female	81	84.4
Both male and female	6	6.2
Total	96	100

Source: field survey, 2015

Personal Laundry

As indicated in table 4.12 below, 17.7% of respondents said males do personal laundry whilst 56.2% indicated that females do personal laundry. 26.1% indicated that both males and females in their households are responsible for personal laundry.



Table 4.12: Gender Participation in Personal Laundry

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	17.7
Female	54	56.2
Both male and female	25	26.1
Total	96	100

(Source, field survey, 2015)

House Cleaning

As indicated in table 4.13, 67.7% of respondents said only females are responsible for house cleaning whilst 27.1% said both males and females are responsible of house cleaning in their homes. The rest of the respondents (5.2%) agreed men are responsible for keeping the house clean.

Table 4.13: Gender Participation in House Cleaning

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	5	5.2
Female	65	67.7
Both male and female	26	27.1
Total	96	100.0

(Source, field survey, 2015)

Water Fetching

Table 4.14 shows that majority, 69.8% of respondents agreed that females are mainly responsible for fetching water for domestic use and for animals. Few, 30.2% of the respondents however believe that both male and female could fetch water for domestic and for animals use in their homes.



Table 4.14: Gender Participation in Fetching of Water

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	0	0
Female	67	69.8
Both male and female	29	30.2
Total	96	100.0

(Source, field survey, 2015)

A look at the finding on social responsibilities of men and women suggest that women perform more social roles in the household than their male counterparts. The changing gender roles in social responsibilities are not so significant since women are still overburden with household chores.

4.4.2 Economic Responsibilities

Food Provision

The provision of food which was the sole responsibilities of men has now become a share responsibility and is gradually becoming a female responsibility. As indicated in table 4.15, 27% of respondents said only males are responsible for providing food for consumption in the house whilst 43.8% said both males and females are responsible for food provision in their homes. The remaining 29.2% representing 28 respondents indicated that women are providing the food for family consumption.

Table 4.15: Gender Participation in Food Provision

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Males	26	27.0
Female	28	29.2
Both	42	43.8
Total	96	100

(Source: Field survey, 2015)

Utility Bills

Payment of utility bills is one of the vital responsibilities of men and women in the household. When a question was asked on who is responsible for paying utility bills



such as water and electricity bills in the house, 25% of respondents indicated that men are responsible for payment of utility whilst 30% said women are responsible. Majority (48.8%) of respondents however indicated that the women assist their husbands to pay utility bills in their household

Table 4.16: Gender Participation in the Payment of Utility Bills

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	24	25.0
Female	29	30.2
Both male and female	43	44.8
Total	96	100

Source: Field survey, 2015

Educational Bills

Educational bills here include payment of school and examination fee, provision of school uniforms, school bags, books, pens, tables and chairs, mathematical and drawing instruments among other educational requirements. A question therefore asked to ascertain whether men or women are responsible for payment of such bills shows that payment of educational bills which was the sole responsibilities of men has also become a share responsibility and gradually becoming a female responsibility. As indicated in figure 4.5, 24 % of respondents said only males are responsible for payment of educational bills of their children whilst 39% said both males and females are responsible for payment of educational bills. The remaining 37% of respondents indicated that the women are have been paying or providing their children educational bills or needs.



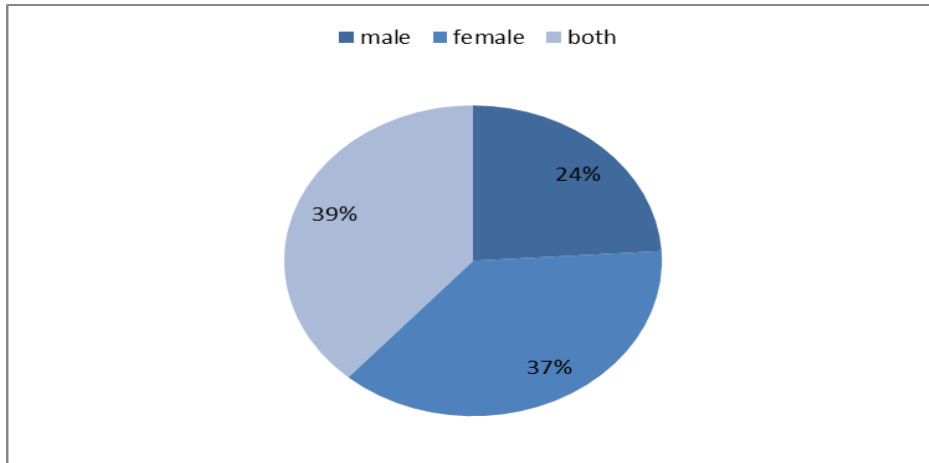


Figure 4.5: Payment Educational Bills
(Source: Field survey, 2015)

Health Bills

Results on payment of health bill in the household are not so much different from other economic responsibilities in the household. Figure 4.6 show that 52.1% indicated payment of health bills in their households is a share responsibility. These respondents agreed that women assist their husbands to care or provide the health needs of their families. Thirty-two per cent (32.3%) of respondents on the other hand agreed that men are currently responsible for the payment of health bills in their families. The remaining 15.6% of respondents indicated that women are responsible of paying the health bills of members of their families.



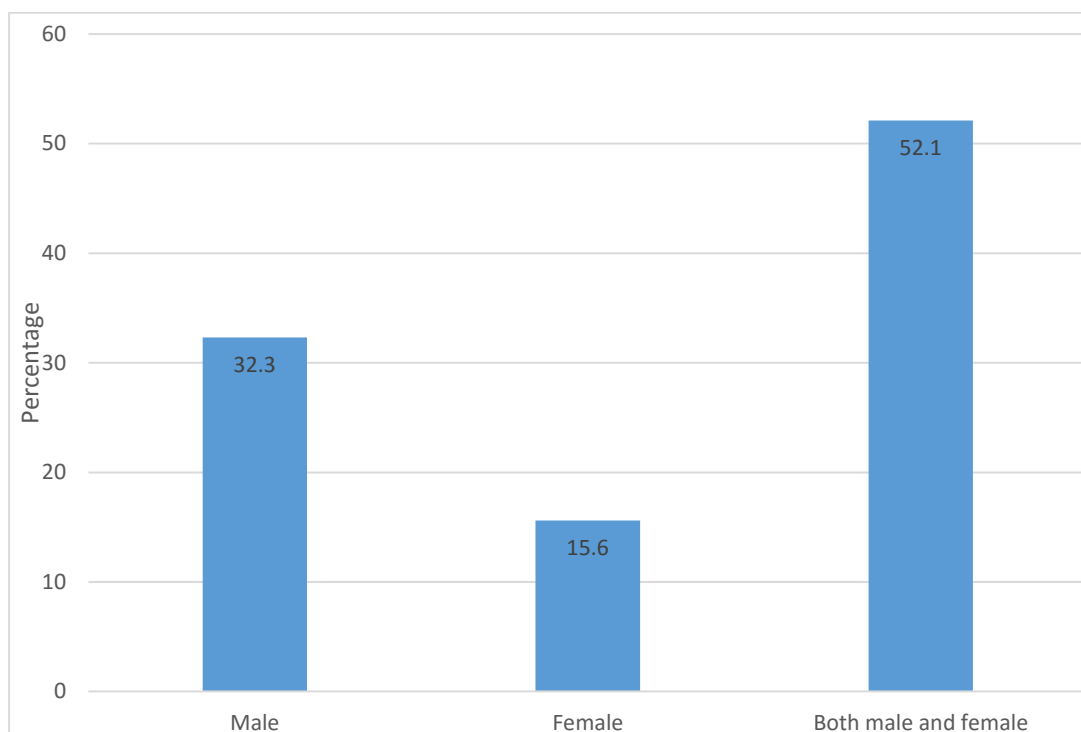


Figure 4.6: Responsibilities of Men and Women Regarding Payment of Health Bills

Source: Field survey, 2015



Land Preparation

As indicated in table 4.17 majority of the respondents agreed that only males are responsible for land preparation. About 22.9% of the respondents indicated that when it comes to land preparation for Agriculture purpose, both men and women are actively involved.

Table 4.17: Gender Participation in Land Preparation

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	70	72.9
Female	4	4.2
Both male and female	22	22.9
Total	96	100

Source: Field survey, 2015

Sowing

Concerning sowing of crops, the results in table 4.18 show that; 78.1% of respondents agreed that women are responsible for sowing of crops whilst 21.9% of the respondents indicated that sowing of crops is a share responsibilities since both men and women are actively involved in the process.

Table 4.18: Gender Participation in Crop Sowing

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Female	75	78.1
Both male and female	21	21.9
Total	96	100

Source: Field survey, 2015

Regarding farm cultural maintenance majority of respondents agreed that men are mainly responsible for that. When respondents were asked to tell whose responsibility it is to harvest and Store of farm produce, majority of them agreed that both male and female could do that. Majority of respondents also recounted that men are mainly found in marketing Animals and their Produce while women are involved in the marketing farm produce.

On a whole, the findings revealed a reversed on gender roles thus new gender roles or changing roles of men and women. Men in the study communities who are supposed to be the breadwinners and decision makers of their households are gradually losing this identity and women on the other hand that are to be care givers and home makers are gradually assuming new identity as breadwinners, home makers and care givers. The study therefore revealed a worrisome absence of useful social and economic roles for men in the face of the current division of labour within households, high



unemployment, and marginalization of men. A male respondent recounted: “Men used to enjoy higher incomes and be considered the family breadwinner and household head. This is no longer always the case, and men feel displaced when their wives earn more than they do.

In the study communities, women in their desperation to keep the family together and provide food for their children have emerged in large numbers in the informal sector, despite the risk and discrimination they face. The women in the study communities tended to devote virtually all of their income to the family (for food, medical treatment, school fees and clothing for the children). What emerges from this is that women are prepared to do jobs considered too demeaning by men to ensure that their children survive. For example, while women considered cutting of fire wood and burning of charcoal for sale crucial to survival, men did not work on them, as they considered it “degrading and inadequate”. Since majority of the men are not in extra income generating activities, households increasingly depend on women’s incomes earned through extra income generating activities, which are often considered marginal or degrading. Not only are majority of the women contributing economically to the household in non-traditional ways, they are maintaining their traditional roles as homemakers as well. The study revealed that women make a significant contribution to the household chores such as fetching water, collecting firewood, preparing meals, cleaning, washing clothes and dishes and looking after the children. In addition to all the household responsibilities, they also do agricultural labour and spin thread, and brew pito intends for sale which increases their workload considerably. As a result, women’s overall work burden has increased relative to that of men as majority of



females in the study communities perform more social and economic roles as compare to the men.

The theoretical explanations that pertains to men's and women's employment situation, their income, type of occupation and the space–time configuration of paid work as expressed through weekly employment hours, employment schedule and commute length (Bianchi et al. 2000; Presser 2003; Schwanen 2007) does not hold true in this study since women spend much time on income generating activities, earns more income relative to the husbands and yet does most of the house work.

4.5 Factors Responsible for Changing Gender Roles in Household Socio-

Economic Responsibility

This section refers specifically to whether or not respondents perceive gender roles as a changing construct and the factors responsible for the change. On the question of whether respondents have noticed any changes in the roles of men and women in household socio-economic responsibilities in the District or not, majority of the respondents indicated that there is a significant change in the traditional roles of men and women in household socio-economic responsibilities. The findings suggested that gender roles are continually changing and evolving in relation to the socio-economic context. The following statements were made respondents on their stand on whether roles of men and women are changing or not.

“Well I think these days compared to the past thus, if I compare myself now to my parents there are lot of changes. There is a lot more flexibility and willingness to do certain things, a lot of things that I do today, my parents, my



father in particular, wouldn't be able to do them” (A male respondent; Field survey, February, 2015)

Interestingly, all the extracts in this section appear to suggest that respondents perceive the changes seen in gender roles as being extremely recent developments. In other words they believe that a very significant shift seems to have taken place on an intra-rather than an inter-generational level.

“I think that now is probably one of the first time that gender roles are changing quite significantly. I think that with more information, more financial freedom and more options to men and women, roles are changing. There's less expectation to behave according to traditional gender roles than has ever been before, men are more free to perform roles that were once seen as a female activity and the vice versa. I think that there are those dynamics as well” (A female respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

The fact that attitudes towards gender roles and the way in which they play out in people lives appears to be changing extremely rapidly is strongly supported by studies such as the one conducted by Galinsky et al (2008), which suggests that the percentage of all employees who agree that man earns the money and the woman takes care of the home and children, has dropped significantly over the past three decades from 64% in 1977 to 41% in 2008, a decline of 23 percentage points. While this suggests a fairly short change over three decades, it is important to remember that the study was based on American subjects and that the rapidity of change in Africa especially in Ghana is not as comprehensively recorded. Results from a Sonke Gender Justice survey conducted in 2006 (Ambe et al, 2007), show slightly less extreme attitudes with 41.4%



of men feeling that the government is doing too much to end violence against women and 38.4% suggesting that the government is not doing enough in this regard. In terms of their personal involvement 50.1% felt they should be doing more to end violence against women. Thus the importance of measuring attitudes towards gender roles over time is a clear priority in assessing the movement towards equality in Africa.

Another significant element in this study is that respondents appear to suggest that their attitude and behaviour regarding gender roles is significantly different to that of their parents and that older generation do not value equality to the same extent.

It is definitely changing. They are only changing in the new generation not in the old generation and I think changing in a more equal level that basically each individual has to do both roles (A female respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

Interestingly, Galinsky, et al (2008), appear to suggest that while older generations are more likely to value traditional gender roles, the degree of change in such perceptions is greatest amongst older generations. In other words, while more older individuals value traditional roles than younger people they are also the sector of society whose attitudes towards gender equality is changing most significantly. In addition to an acknowledgement of the rapid pace of change, some respondents appear to be suggesting that these changes are not occurring as separate parallel processes for each sex but rather that the boundaries between the two in terms of levels of power and task division are becoming less distinct.



“Yes, what I’m saying is today gender does not limit you to what you can become. It is become part of your characteristic but it is not your determining factor like it used to be, the fact that you are a woman and responsible for preparing food for the family consumption does not mean you cannot in productive roles like men do” (A male respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

“It is not a fixed job that men are supposed to do this and females are supposed to do that. You do both, both genders do both” (A female respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

These results suggest the possibility of a movement towards some form of flexibility. In other words a condition under which the characteristics of the sexes are not rigidly assigned. A study by Guastello and Guastello (2003) made some interesting findings related to an increase in androgyny in college students in relation to their parents. They found that while there was a significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between men and women of the older generation, this difference did not persist in the younger generation.

This suggests that there is clear movement towards more ambiguous gender role definition, which has important implications for equality as it suggests that gender ideologies are not simply based on a movement towards the more socially beneficial position of masculinity.



When respondents of the study were asked to mention the changes in gender roles they have notice in recent times, they made the following statements:

“I have seen many women in my community who working very hard to earn income to supporting their husbands financially to provide food and shelter for the family, pay utility bills, health bills, and children educational bills among others” (A female respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

Yes, women are now included in decision making at the household level, political and chieftaincy level. Because many women contribute significantly to the up keep of their families and because many women are now also educated, they have a great say in household decision making. So in fact and truly speaking, these women contribute objectively to improve upon the general wellbeing of their family (A male respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

“Many of our girls are in school now as compared to those days. Besides, the government and some NGOs came out with many interventions to promote girl child education. At first, female education was not as important as that of the male children because they use to say that a woman belongs to her husband’s house and so no need to waste resources on her. The male child on the other hand was adored because he belongs to his family. He was considered the backbone of family because through him the family name will not die but continued. For that matter his education was vital to the survival of the family” (Female respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).





Well the changes I have seen include an improvement in the employment levels of women in both formal and informal sector. Many women are employed in the formal sector because of their academic laurels; some of them find themselves in the informal sector trying to make ends meet (Male respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

Some men are now sharing household chores with wives. In fact there is now a remarkable change in men participation in household chores such as child care, meal preparation, laundry, shopping and house cleaning. This is not to say that there a balance between women and men roles because most women still perform the chunk of the household chores and at the same time work outside to provide their families financial needs (A female respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

The study looked at several factors that facilitated changing gender roles. Education, work, media, urbanisation and globalisation, Government policies and intervention and human rights activists and women movements emerged as factors which seemed to facilitate the development of more contemporary views and gender ideologies. For example, media was identified as having the potential to create discourse around gender equality. A woman of today was considered more visible in the public sphere, having a different role in society as compared to previous generations.

“Media can play a significant role in bringing gender equity by portraying respect and freedom of both sexes equally”. The mass media such as radios,

television and published materials has exposed many to gender equality issues. Many at times we hear educational programmes in the form of drama, campaigns, seminars among other forms on radios and TVs. This in fact has helped to shape our way of thinking towards gender roles” (Mr Raymond, a male respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

I got to know the importance and the need to send the girl child to school, the need to allow both sexes do household chores and the benefits of women empowerment from radio programmes in our local dialect. This has help to shape how I trained my both male and female children (Madam Cecilia, an uneducated female respondent; Field survey, February, 2015).

Education, urbanisation and globalisation on the other hand all appear to be seen by all respondents as impacting strongly on a social movement towards gender equality. The nature of this role is directly linked to the issue of knowledge formation. In other words these constructs specifically seem to expose individuals to new knowledge around ways of being and the potential for social acceptance without the need for oppressive patriarchal forms of power. With the powerful tools of education, urbanization and industrialization, western civilization is believed to have seriously influenced the traditional social institutions particularly the traditional family institution. The implication is that since women’s fundamental roles are traditionally located within the family, many or some of these roles and values which they held must have undergone some drastic changes. (Ogunlade (1990) as cited in Nwosu, 2012) had explained



that since African societies came into contact with western civilization about four centuries ago, some of their cultural values and roles have undergone drastic restructuring and new roles have also emerged, at the same time. Some respondents made the following statements:

“Educated people are considered independent, trustworthy and mature. Education ensured future security by enhancing the capacity for women to fight for their rights. Generally, it was considered that an educated mother could act as a change agent towards a higher level of gender equity by enhancing her daughter's professional education. An educated man was considered to have a more supportive approach to education, and would help his wife manage the family: A good husband and an educated family give freedom to the wife to pursue higher education, and the woman's life will be good and fruitful” (A male respondent, Field survey, February, 2015).

“Yes, Past and present governments made efforts in coming out with Legal reforms, policies and interventions in the areas of gender equality. Interventions such as girl child education, micro credit to women groups and vocational training to women are seen to facilitate women empowerment and gender equality” (A female respondent; Field survey:

February, 2015).

“In this our world now, Human rights and gender activists are doing a lot to change certain bad norms and practices in our communities. If for instance, a man beat the wife or a parent intentionally refuse to send the girl child to



school, Human rights and gender activists will come to salvage the situation. In fact these people can take you to court for any violence against a woman or the female child. This is helping greatly to change the behaviour of people positively towards gender roles” (Another female respondent; Field survey: February, 2015).



On the question of whether the factors of change have a positive or negative influence on the roles of men and women in respondents household, majority of respondents agreed that the factors of change have a positive influence on gender roles in their households. These respondents asserts that the factors of change have positively imparted the promotion of girl education, women participation in decision making at the household level, balance the roles between boys and girls in the household and has also enhance women empowerment in their families.

The following are statements made by some respondents:

“The factors of change such as education, kind of work, income level and the media are positively influencing gender roles in my household. For instance my children, both girls and boys have to do the household chores. We don’t allow only the girls to do the sweeping, cooking, washing of clothing and bowls, both girls and boys do such chores in the house. We do this because looking at current and future trends of life, it is important for the boys also to learn so that they won’t be found wanting when they find themselves at the tertiary level of education or when they have to cope with this in their marital relationship. In addition to that, we are giving equal opportunities to both male and female



children in this household to access education because of the importance of education to both the female and male child. You see, because of my financial status in the house and there also because of government policies and interventions on gender equality, I do contribute significant when it comes to household decision making. In fact I see this as a positive influence on gender roles as it is helping to balance roles between boys and girls” (A female respondent; Field survey: February, 2015).

“Well, because several educational programs on the media such as radios, and televisions as well as human rights and gender activist interventions, many women are now empower economically. For instance, my wife had her seamstress apprenticeship training through such interventions and a result, she is now economically empower and has been contributing well in this household decisions. Also, because media educational programs on the importance of girl child education my wife and I are very serious with the education of both male and female education. In fact we give them equal opportunities to enable them climb to highest level of the educational ladder. So to me, that is a positive influence and I can confidently say that almost every household in this community is experiencing this positive influence ..., the community is small and I know what is happening in this most of this households.....

And I want to believe that the situation is not different elsewhere”(A male respondent; Field survey: February, 2015).

Few of respondents especially the males, however believe that these factors of change have a negative influence on gender roles in that career women or wives are not able to perform their basic roles at the household level. These respondents believe that traditional gender roles are more advantageous than the changing gender roles we are experiencing. So some reference was made to the fact that traditional gender roles are well known and consequently more clearly defined.

“Well I think the system as a whole...if you can call it a system...it worked pretty smoothly, you had somebody providing the income and you had somebody taking care of the house but...you know that’s disempowering to women and I suppose you could see it as being disempowering to men as well” (male respondent; Field survey: February, 2015).

“With change in gender roles, the roles of men and women are vague but with the traditional gender roles, I think that it is advantageous in that people know what their roles should be. There’s quite clearly defined roles, this is what I as a man I should be doing, this, is what I as a woman should be doing. They are very clearly defined and you know what you’re expected to be doing them” (Another male respondent; Field survey: February, 2015).

“With the new system, I mean with changing gender roles there appears to be less anxiety around how these roles are negotiated. As pioneers of a different approach to gender issues it quite clear that many young people are no longer able to rely on the examples laid down by older generations therefore the old



system is better because it is a fairly well walked path, there are less questions to it. You can somewhat relate back to what did mom and dad do, what did granny do. As soon as you break away from that you are kind of cutting more of your own path” (Mr Peter a male respondent; Field survey: February, 2015).



4.6 The Influence of Changing Gender Roles on Life Prospect or Circumstances of Men and Women

Economic changes and the changes they effect on gender roles produce significant household stress, humiliation, and conflict in both men and women. Unable to contribute adequately to the family, men feel powerless, redundant, burdensome, and may react violently. Women, on the other hand, continue to care for their families and sometimes walk out of abusive relations. Women gain confidence as they start earning and retaining cash incomes, yet due to their tenuous connections to employment they also remain vulnerable.

4.6.1 The influence of changes in gender roles on life Circumstances of men

The findings related to changes in gender roles on life Circumstances of men were essentially be divided into opportunities (benefits), constraints and risk.

Opportunities

On the issue of how changes in gender roles in influences life circumstances of men such as opportunities, majority (96%) of educated and employed respondents indicated that a movement away from the traditional roles of women is helping to reduce financial burden of men as many women are significantly supporting their husbands or

family members in terms of financial needs. This is what an uneducated but self-employed male respondent said:

“In fact, my wife is of great help to me when it comes to financial matters in my family. She pays the children school fee, buys ingredients, and helps to pay utility bills among others. This immense support is a great relief to me as I don’t worry so much about how to shoulder my financial burdens alone” (Field survey: February, 2015)

These respondents were also able to recognize that a movement away from traditional gender roles has been more beneficial for men other than financial merits. Interestingly there appears to be an acknowledgement that such changes have not only allowed for liberation in so far as they allow women to access new ways of being, but that for some men many more opportunities are available for them to pursue lifestyle choices that were previous limited to the female realm.

“Some men believe that gender equality is a good thing in that it helps to strengthen relationships especially marital relationships. It is beneficial to the men because when they help their women to do the house work especially that of cooking, bathing and dressing up the children for school, they would always gain the trust and confidants from their wives. I am proud of my husband because he helps me to perform my household chores for that matter I don’t do things to hurt him” (An educated female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015)





An employed male respondent, Mr Andrew said that: “Once again it is a case of guys now becoming parents and no longer the provider that they are meant to be. That’s just the way it is, it is just a case of levelling the things what you want to do. If you want to be the person providing you can be that person and if you want to be the person...even if both parties want to fulfil a career they can choose that. No one should prescribe anything” (Field survey: February, 2015).

In addition, educated respondents believe that changes in gender roles with respect to the choice to start families increasingly later in life appear to hold some benefits for men as well. While this specific choice has traditionally been analysed from the perspective of women focusing on their careers, men have also been able to enjoy a longer period without a great deal of financial or parental responsibilities

With new roles, couple have the freedom as to when to start having children, decide on the number of children and even the spacing of children. It does give men a bit more freedom to take it a bit easier in their first couple of years of their working life. There’s no mounting debts... diaper bills... there are no soap expenses, you have more financial freedom if you don’t drop into the family role (An educated male respondent; Field survey: February, 2015).

The findings show that, the educated and employed respondents shared similar views on how changing roles influence life circumstances of men. They believe that changing gender roles impact life circumstance of men more positively. To them, a movement towards more contemporary gender roles does not only promote the liberation of

women but also provides a environment in which men are able to discover new ways of being again given independence so you can choose.

Constraints

Majority (77%) of both male and female uneducated and unemployed respondents asserts that most men lose respect and their dignity when their wives largely provide the financial needs of their families. They believe that financial empowerment leads to the marginalization of men. As a consequence of their inability to contribute adequately to the family income, men feel “redundant” and burdensome to households; they experience disorienting challenges to their perceptions of themselves as providers and heads of families, often resulting in anger and frustration. These tensions contribute to family stress and disintegration. Women often blame their husbands for the family’s financial situation and criticize them for their lack of success in finding work. Poor or Unemployed and underemployed husbands feel powerless and irritated; some confess to losing their tempers and hitting wives and children. When some men cannot provide for their families, they will give up and neglect their families. Men expressed a sense of "social impotence," the inability to fulfil socially important roles as breadwinners for their family. Majority (61%) of female respondents felt that men had collapsed under the current tensions, while they, because of their sense of responsibilities towards their children and their greater psychological adaptability, had taken on greater burdens and become more proactive in their search for solutions. In short, the areas of concern appear to centre around the issue of power as well as the impact which such changes have on identity. Power was referred to by both male and female respondents in terms of its impact on men as the extracts below illustrate that a woman gaining power in a



relationship does not appear to create a sense of equal power relations. Rather, for both the male and female respondents any perceived sense of women having power is equated with a direct loss of power for men, a sentiment strongly promoted in the works of Morell, (2001) and Sullivan et al. (2006).

“The changes in gender roles are just a significant shift. Oh yes with men it is really connected more to power that’s why most relationships fail, because now you are paying the rent you are viewed as having more power in the relationship. That is an ego down grade for the male counterpart” (A uneducated female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

“Many guys including myself have been a bit resistant to give up the stereotypical roles because in essence they are giving up the power position. Maybe it is insecurity to go for a full power sharing concept” (A male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

“I have seen it among my colleagues; they’re really struggling with the concept gender equality because they are afraid of losing power to women. A friend once told me that it is not good at all for a woman to hold a position higher the husband because when it happens, the husband will not be able to control the wife and that he would never marry a woman whose educational or financial standing is better him. Many guys out there do say similar things. In fact, I think it is really hard for a lot of guys out there” (Mr James, an uneducated male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).



A friend of mine has been enslaved by his wife simple because his wife provides all the financial need of the family. Imagine a man doing all the household chores including washing of his wife's panties. In fact, this friend of mine has no say in any decision affecting is family (Mr Polo a male respondent recounted; Field survey: February, 2015)



Majority of the uneducated female respondents agreed that with the movement away from traditional gender roles, some men are losing power and dignity and that if care is not taken, men will eventually lose their titles as providers and heads of families.

Uneducated and unemployed female respondent also said that:

“Some women who contribute greatly to the financial needs of their families tend to treat their husbands like polythene bags or racks. Such men lose their dignity and power not only in their homes but in society as well. In fact, it is better for everyone when the man can provide all the financial needs of the family and the woman does all the house work” (Field survey: February, 2015)

The other major area in which gender roles are impacting on men is related to their identity. There appears to be a binary element to how men identify themselves as well as how they are identified by others. On the one hand there appear to still be many expectations of men to meet socially constructed ideas on what is appropriate or desirable behaviour for men.

“Changing gender roles has the potential of causing an identity crisis. This is because society expects that men to earn income, provide the family economic



needs and to also provide e the security needs of the family, that's like physical security if someone breaks into the house. Suddenly they are put into this position where they are not able to earn enough money to cater for the family's needs thereby not the sole provider. So where do they place themselves! Will they still be the breadwinners that society expects them to be, even when they know that they are in position to do so? This is an identity crisis” (Miss Sarah, an employed but uneducated female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

“Well you know what I am talking about here is true, you know that men feel that they have to live up to this stereotype and if they don't then they are compromising their integrity as a person...I think if they prefer doing things that aren't seen as fulfilling that stereotype then yes you aren't a good stereotypical man but you're also not a good person, which is bad” (A male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

On the other hand there is a general expectation that they should be more progressive in their thinking. Essentially men seem to be receiving a mixed message and are caught in a dilemma around the degree to which they should lend themselves to women's needs in relation to both dependence and independence.

Literature suggests that identity as it relates to masculinity can be fractured, multiple and contradictory and that this occurs because the various institutions in which an individual is embedded can often pull them in different directions. The following is a statement an educated male respondent represents this view and clearly echoes the issues of identity;

“Any particular man’s personality or character may represent a compromise between many different and contradictory influences. These tensions may become evident as he represents himself, either for others in the context of social interaction, or else for himself in the form of private voices, internalized dialogues or patterns of subjectivity” (Field survey: February, 2015).

This is in agreement with the idea mentioned previously in the literature which suggests that both men and women may be confused by the social expectation from some quarters of men to be more liberal in their gender ideology, while at the same time meeting more traditional expectations of protectiveness and dominance sought after in idealised notions of relationships.

“For myself I see guys actually struggling in relationships because they see themselves as being more on the masculine side and I think, take myself for example, my boyfriend sometimes really struggles because he thinks I’m too independent he doesn’t know what to do” (an educated female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

In addition, many men react to their inability to provide for the financial needs of their families by collapsing into drugs, alcohol, and depression, wife-beating or walking away. A female respondent recounted:

“He gets up in the morning; he looks at me, and he asks, is there any dinner? If I say there isn’t any; he starts drinking. He eats and sleeps then wake up and go drinking again” (Field survey: February, 2015).



An unemployed young man in Ko explained:

“As time passes . . . unemployment begins to undermine the young man’s self-esteem. He starts to see himself . . . as having failed in his supreme duty as father and head of household, and this may drive him to alcoholism and violence. When I don’t know how my children are going to eat tomorrow, I tend to get drunk whenever I can. It helps me forget my problems”(Field survey: February, 2015).

Because my husband didn’t have money for the family needs, he became an alcoholic. He started selling property to get money for alcohol. He had no shame. When I stopped him from selling things, he beat me. He chased me, and I came to Dondonmeteng (A female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).



Risks:

Majority of the respondents especially the uneducated and unemployed believe that changes in the traditional roles of men and women will lead to family breakdown or high rate of divorce. To them changing gender roles negatively affect life circumstances of men than improving their lives.

This is what a male respondent said:

“What do you think is cause of high divorces rate in this part of our world! It is because most women are now educated, empowered, know their rights too much

and are now refusing to be oppress by their male counterpart”(A male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

4.6.2 The influence of changing gender roles on circumstances of women

The findings related to changes in gender roles on life Circumstances of women is also divided into opportunities (benefits), constraints and risk.

Opportunities

The respondents in the study especially educated and employed women including those below the age group of 55 years, identified the positive impact of changing gender roles as being related to several significant social and personal elements. As a result there appear to be two interlinked components which have been part of the improved experience of women. These include independence and opportunity.

Opportunity as it relates to not only practical access to the workplace, legal rights, task division but also the opportunity to experiment with identity and ways of being.

“Alternatively I think that for people of my age I think there’s a more accepting view of gender roles. So gender roles are vague and as the woman, you don’t have to come home and cook supper because you share cooking or you share cleaning and stuff like that with your husband. It is more negotiable and it is kind of free in a younger person’s life” (an educated female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).





“I think that it is advantageous to a large extent and I think that women are feeling more advantaged by this than men are because there are more opportunities that are opened up to them. They have the ability in terms of not just not doing things to satisfy their own needs but in terms of social recognition so they are able to do things that they would not have been able to do before” (an educated male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

“It stands to reason that women who have access to more opportunities are no longer reliant on men to act as advocates for them but rather that these opportunities have allowed them to experience more independence in multiple spheres of life” (another educated female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

“For women that are more independent and for the bunch of friends that I know, being a career woman means a great deal of independence. You earn enough money, you have your own family; you do your own thing the way you want and not really deprived of many things. You enjoy your freedom... From my side I enjoy being independent doing my own thing” (Mrs Mark, an educated female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

In addition, Current roles of men and women in the Nandom District offer women a greater opportunity and brighter future in that their current circumstances positively influence their personality, lifestyle and health.

Respondents believe that a movement away from traditional gender roles positively Influence Personality. They believe that a change in gender roles where both men and women participation in decision making and where there is high resource investment in girls and women results in women empowerment. A female respondent recounted:

“When women are empowered through education and decision making, they will not be marginalized in society; I mean they will not be relegated to the background. They will be strong enough to reject oppression by their male counterpart. This will lead to poverty reduction among women, high level of confidence, high self-esteem and security thereby raising the standards of living in the country” (an educated male respondent, Field survey: February, 2015). .

Again, respondents identified that changing gender roles offers an opportunity to women which greatly influences their Lifestyle. A male respondent, Mr Dogma explained:

“Educated girls and women work outside the home and participate in income generating activities to earn income without jeopardizing the norms set for them. Their economic contribution is enhanced by higher investment in their education and skill building along with mobility freedom. They are empowered to make decisions and most at times don’t rely on the male members for every decision and action. These women are able to manage the challenges of the external environment as they are skilled to do so. However, they have to comply with the “Reproductive Role given to them” (Field survey: February, 2015).



Majority of the respondents also believe that the changes in the role of men and women help to promote good health among women. With the current economic standings of women the District, they are able to meet a fair amount of their nutritional requirements and are able to access health facilities for their health requirements. A female respondent recounted:

“Because I’m into extra income generating activities, I earned more income and I’m able to buy good ingredients for my food. When I’m sick or my children are sick, I’m able to access a good health facility and I get quality drugs for myself and my children” (A female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

Many (89%) of the educated and employed women respondents believe that changing gender roles will enable to cope well in divorce situation or loss of a husband. They indicated that when women are empowered economically, they are able to take very good care of themselves and their children as well. To them, women who are economically disadvantage are forces to stay in marriages in which they are being oppressed. Mrs John an educated female respondent made the following statement:

If a woman earns good income, she is able to cope very well when she loses her husbands as a result death or when her husband divorces her and fails to take responsibility of his children’s needs. Such a woman will not be so much frustrated compare to someone who does nothing to earn income and has nothing to offer her children. See it today my husband divorce me, I will not be so much bother. After all, I can take good care of myself and my children as well. Most unemployed women out there are actually enduring violence in their



marriages in silence, because they are afraid that when they speak out or try refuse oppression, their husbands will divorce them and they will have the place to go to, no one to cater for their financial needs like feeding their children and paying children's school fee (Field survey: February, 2015).

Miss Paulina, an employed but uneducated woman recounted:

Many of the divorce women are not into any income generating activities look malnourish as well as their and they are more frustrated than someone who works outside the home to earn income. They children are compelled to drop out of school and join the street children. Some of them push their children into child labour. But any time see a divorce woman who is economically empowered, they always look healthy, strong and even more beautiful. They are able to see their children through school without many problems.



Constraints

Despite the many positive outcomes of changing gender roles for women, respondents reported there were also several negative ways in which these changes have impacted on women.

One of these is the concern that rather than sharing equal responsibilities for unpaid work in the domestic sphere some women are taking on the responsibilities of paid work as well as the domestic related labour. This idea is strongly supported by Tsikata (2009) and Nwosu (2012). Tsikata (2009) who recognizes that within household division of labour, women continue to shoulder the burden of reproductive activities, commonly

known as household chores, within the household although more men are increasingly involved in some of these activities.

Living Standards Surveys point to the fact that women do the bulk of domestic work in addition to their income earning activities. These multiple tasks result in women's workload being far heavier than men's. Also, lack of time is a serious constraint for all women, but with varying degrees of severity depending on class, urban or rural residence and the quality of facilities such as water. This compromises their ability to accumulate resources from productive activities and participate in public life. Also Nwosu (2012) also recognised that while a great many more women are entering the world of paid work, research suggests that there has been little change in the amount of work men do in the home.

“I think at the same time women actually take on more stress, women can't let go. Eventually you feel that you're playing two roles. When you go out you feel like you're a male and when you're at home you feel like you're the woman you have to do everything you're supposed to do”(A female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

Another very significant impact reported by respondents relates to the impact which changing gender roles have had on women's ability to establish a relationship. The main difficulty appears to be that an increase in power and independence has the potential to result in a woman having trouble finding a partner. Mrs Mark and madam Christiana, female respondents recounted respectively:





“Some women actually even feel threatened by the fact that they have the money, or are highly educated; most actually end up by themselves and not in any relationship because many men out there are afraid of women with such power”

Also when an educated woman get married to uneducated man or a man whose educational background is lower than the woman and there is a confusion in the relationship, society tend to blame the woman for the problems in the relationship or the family. People actually always feel that because the woman is highly educated she is looking down upon the man and therefore maltreating him. If the worst happened; say divorce, they blame the woman for it. They say because her educational status is higher than her husband she feels that her husband is not within her class. So because of educational laurels or financial abilities in your family as a woman you are always being accused of being the cause of all problems in your marital relationship” (Field survey: February, 2015).

“Like you’re so independent you probably won’t find any man. That was stated, you probably won’t find a guy because guys don’t know what to do with you. So I’m fine I’ll just do my work and live my life” (Field survey: February, 2015).

Majority of the female respondents also reported that changes in their roles although is of great beneficial to them, it tend to create role conflict thus it equally poses a challenge because career women or self-employ women find it difficult to cope with house responsibilities and their career responsibilities at the same time.

The Women added that their workloads have consequences for their children. This is because long hours of work per day results in a neglect of children due to time constraints and fatigue. Some female respondent recounted:

“There are at times that you find yourself in a role conflict, for instance, I’m a hair dresser, and sometimes I get many people on the line waiting for me to braid their hair for them but then also I have to perform certain household chores like washing clothing, preparing lunch for children to eat upon return from school. This is a serious role conflict I have been facing almost every day” (Madam Mary a female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).

You see, haven to work outside the home have some negative consequence on our children. This is because you don’t have enough time to stay home to monitor your children and these children tend to go astray. Look at me I am dress maker, I have to get very early in the morning say 4:00am to perform my household chores before I go to my shop. When I do that, I don’t come home early enough because I have to finish some of the dresses I’m sewing for the customers that are waiting to collect. So I don’t really have time to monitor my children’s behaviour both towards their education or moral life” (Mrs Donglabo, a female respondent, Field survey: February, 2015).



Risks

Many female respondents stated that career women and self-employed women stand a high risk of losing their husbands to house maid who will discharge the household chores on their behalf and also stand a higher chance of losing well behave children since they are not always around to monitor the behaviour of their children. A female and a male respondent made the following statements respectively:

“As a woman, if you are to go out there to work to earn money for family, what it means is that you have to employ the services of a house maid to discharge the household chores and in that circumstance you stand a high risk of losing your husband because is the maid that is always available in the house to attend to the services of your husband, it only take a faithful religious husband to stay faithful to his wife” (Madam Dong, Field survey: February, 2015).

“Women who are employed especially in private companies and have to work from morning to evening especially closing around 6pm or stay at work longer that always have to employ house helpers to do the house chores. I’m a man and tell you, you can trust me, such women a stand high risk of losing their husbands to their house helpers. I know about three women that their marriages didn’t work well because their husbands end up with their house helpers” (Mr Menteng, Field survey: February, 2015).



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

In relatively recent time there have been a number of positive developments towards gender equality in Ghana. Through areas of demonstrated commitments such as women's rights, addressing violence against women, access to quality education, quality health care, economic opportunities and resources and women agency in formal and informal decision making institutions in the country, there have been some significant changes in the traditional role of women, globally and in Ghana in particular.

The objective of this study was to examine changing gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities in the study Area. Purposive sampling technique was utilized to select 96 respondents comprising of:

- Married and unmarried men and women
- Educated and uneducated
- Employed and unemployed
- Age group of 15 and above
- Currently, or have experience of, co-habiting with their partner





This study is mainly a qualitative one. Data for the study were purposely collected from respondents using in-depth interviews in three town and area councils of the Nandom District. The findings revealed a changed of wind on gender roles thus new gender roles or changing roles of men and women. Men in the study communities who are supposed to be the breadwinners and decision makers of their households are gradually losing this identity and women on the other hand that are to be care givers and home makers are gradually assuming new identity as breadwinners, home makers and care givers.

The study revealed that changing gender roles has both negative and positive influence on life circumstances of men and women. What is clear from this study is that the entire household, women, men and children pay a high price for adjusting to new gender roles and deeply held notions of gender identity. Based on the findings of this study, attention has been drawn to the need for developing approaches to both poor men and women to acknowledge that men and women's wellbeing are intertwined, and that to help women, it is also critical to understand men's roles and reach men.

5.2 Conclusion

Gender relations are in troubled transition in poor households. This basic fact needs to be a central part of poverty reduction strategies. In economically constrained environments, men appear to have great resistance to doing what are often considered demeaning jobs. Women on the other hand seem to have greater resilience and hit the streets and do whatever it takes to keep their families together. Many men react to their

loss of power as breadwinner by collapsing into drugs, alcohol, depression, wife-beating or walking away. Women may find a new confidence through often tenuous economic opportunities, expose themselves to risk and take on work in the informal sector in addition to their household responsibilities. Families may cooperate or eventually collapse.

The current economic situations reflect the weakening position of men rather than improvement of the economic opportunities for women. Taking on additional income earning roles has not necessarily led to the social empowerment of women or greater equity and peace in the household. The impact of employment on women appears to be ambiguous, with some women succeeding in gaining control over the affairs of the household, some women being able to establish their own male-free households, and some women continuing to subsidize men. At the same time, some women feel a sense of empowerment with the chance to take new roles. Some women reported that female economic independence had grown, improving their coping abilities and their capabilities, especially in terms of work outside the home. In addition, younger women noted changes in attitudes towards women, as well as some changes in gender roles in recent years. Despite the many benefits that women derived from changing roles, majority of them recounted that an increase in power and independence has the potential to result in a woman having trouble finding a partner. Some women also reported that society tend to blame economically strong women for all problems in a relationship or the family. What is clear from this study is that the entire household, women, men and children pay a high price for adjusting to new gender roles and deeply held notions of gender identity.



5.3 Recommendations

Since women are gradually becoming breadwinners, development projects in the District should be targeted at intervention that will also empower both men and women economically. Both, men and women in the District need greater access to economic opportunities, especially for profitable self-employment.

Men should be encourage in the District through educational programmes to engage in dry season gardening and other extra income generating activities rather than relying on subsistence farming in raining seasons only. This will enable them to earn enough money to support their families.

Also as individual women and men continue to struggle in negotiating change, to assist families, both women and men need social and psychological support to explore and navigate change which brings into question their worth as human beings. Deeply entrenched social norms will not automatically change with more women entering paying jobs. Gender relations need to become an integral part of all poverty reduction strategies. This needs to be reflected in institutional goals, design, incentives and criteria of success that are monitored and evaluated.

Implementing gender strategies implies accepting that women's and men's lives are interlinked. Hence discussion of gender issues must include both men and women to increase the probability of less traumatic transition towards gender equity. Whether conversations about gender identity and gender relations need to happen in separate gender groups or mixed groups; whether this should be done by religious leaders,



NGOs, governments or in the workplace is culture and context specific. A poor woman in Dondonmeteng of the Nandon District of the Upper Wa region of Ghana suggested: “Women and men should sit at a round table to discuss their rights. Unless men are included, these things will not be understood. It will be like bathing in mud again.

The recommendations for future research rely heavily on the limitations of the study. While the study has provided greater insight into the role which various social constructs play in the process of gender role formation, these reflections are based on the opinions and perceptions of an important yet limited sector of society. Thus while respondents represented only one of ethnic group and cultural background it may be beneficial for future research in this area to understand these processes from the perspective of individuals from a broader range in terms of different ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds, both class, religion and sectors which are traditionally viewed as liberal and less-liberal such as both urban and rural populations and those not involved in cohabitation.

Future research works should be done by researchers who understand the language of the people in the study area to in order avoid the inclusion of personal views and understanding of issues of the study by interpreters.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Schedule

Dear respondent I thank you very much *for* agreeing to participate in a research study. The study is design to examine gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities in Nandom District. The survey is for a Master of Philosophy Thesis.

Confidentiality of respondents and responses is strictly guaranteed.

A. Questionnaire on: Gender roles in household socio-economic responsibilities in Nandom District. GENERAL INFORMATION: (tick the appropriate answer)

Questionnaire No ----- Date of Interview ----- Name of
community --- ---





	Respondent Identity	Responses	Tick
1.1	Sex	1= male 2= female	[] []
1.2	Age		
1.3	Marital status	1=single 2=married 3=divorced 4= widowed 5=others specify	[] [] [] [] []
1.4	Religious Denomination	1= Christian 2= Muslim 3= traditional 5= others (Specify)	[] []] []
1.5	Level of Education	1=primary/Junior high/middle 2=Senior high/O level 3=Tertiary 4= Non formal education	[] []] [] []
1.6	Size of Household	1= 2- 5 2= 6-10 3= 10+	[] [] []
1.7	Number of children	1= 1-3 2= 4-6 3= 7+	[] [] []
1.8	Relationship of respondent to the household	1= head 2= wife 3= others (specify)-----	[] []

B. Occupational and Income Status of Respondents

1. What is your occupation?1= Subsistence farmer [], 2 = Petty trading and hand work [], 3= Paid professional [], 4= other....., 5= none []
2. Do you have any other income generating activities? 1= Yes[], 2= No []
3. If yes, what type of income generating activities are you engage in?
.....
4. If you compare the working hours between you and your spouse in one week, on average, who had the longest working hours?1=Husband,[] 2= Wife []
5. If you compare the income level between you and your spouse per annum on average, who had more money than the other?



C. Factors Responsible for Traditional Socio-Economic Roles of Men and Women at the Household Level

1. What are the traditional roles of a woman in a household?
.....
2. What are the traditional roles of a man in a household?
.....
3. In what ways do you feel that culture impacts on traditional gender roles?
.....



4. In what ways do you feel that religion impacts on traditional gender roles?

.....

5. What other factors or aspects of society do you feel impact on traditional gender roles?

.....

6. What are the current social and economic responsibilities of men at household level?

.....

7. What are the current social and economic responsibilities of women at household level?

.....

8. Who is responsible for the following social responsibilities in your house?

I) Child care (feeding, bathing, dressing, putting to sleep, playing with, taking to school or day-care) 1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

II) Meal preparation 1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

III) Laundry (washing of clothing and ironing) 1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

IV) House cleaning 1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

V) Fetching of water 1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

VI) Shopping1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

VII) Dish washing1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

9. Who is responsible for the following economic responsibilities in your house?

I) Food provision.....1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

II) Educational bills..... 1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

III) Health bills.....1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

IV) Utility bills.....1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

V) Land preparation.....1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

VI) Weeding1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

VII) Sowing1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

VIII) Cultural maintenance.....1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

IX) Harvesting 1= females [], 2= males [], 3= both []

X) Storage of produce



XI) Marketing of Agricultural produce

Do you have access to land for agricultural or other purposes?

11. If yes, do you own the land?

D. FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHANGING GENDER ROLES IN HOUSEHOLD

SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

12. Have you notice any changes in roles of men and women in household socio-economic responsibilities in your District? 1= yes [], 2= No []

13. In what ways do you think gender roles are changing or different to what they were in the past?

14. In your opinion, what factors have facilitated changes in gender roles or made them different from what they were in the past?

15. In what ways do you think the factors of change have positively or negatively influence gender roles in your household?

16. In your opinion how do these changes in roles influence life prospects or Circumstances of men such as :

I. Opportunities

.....

Constraints



II. Risks.....

17. In your opinion how do these changes in roles influence life prospects or

Circumstances of women such as:

I. Opportunities

.....

II. Constraints

.....

III. Risks.....



APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GENDER DESK OFFICER, PLANNING OFFICER AND ASSEMBLYMAN

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



1. What are the traditional roles of a woman in a household?

.....
.....

2. What are the traditional roles of a man in a household?

.....
.....

3. In your District, who is mainly responsible for doing housework?

.....1= males [], 2= females [], 3= both []

4. What are the attitudes of people in this District towards gender equality and equity?

.....



5. Do you have any programmes and projects designed and implemented to ensure gender equality and equity in the District? 1= Yes, 2= No

6. If yes, what are the programmes and projects put in place to achieve gender equality and equity in the District?

.....
7. Do women participate in decision making at the household level?

.....1= Yes, 2= No

8. If no why

.....

9. Do women participate in decision making on matter of national development?

..... 1= Yes, 2= No

10. If no why

.....

11. What are the problems/challenges and constraints in reaching out to men and women in your District to ensure gender balance in household socioeconomic responsibilities and national development

.....



12. Have you notice any changes in roles of men and women in household socio-economic responsibilities in your District? 1= yes, 2= no

13. If yes, give examples of the changes you have notice that are different from the past.

14. In your opinion what factors are responsible the change in gender roles?

15. In your opinion how do these changes in roles influence life prospects/ Circumstances of men such as:

I. Opportunities

.....

II. Constraints

.....

III. Risks.....

16. In your opinion how do these changes in roles influence life prospects/ Circumstances of women such as:

I. Opportunities.....

II. Constraints

III. Risks.....