

**UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, TAMALE**

**THE OUTCOMES OF FEMALE ADOLESCENTS' FUTURE ASPIRATIONS IN A  
PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY: A STUDY IN THE WA TRADITIONAL AREA IN THE  
UPPER WEST REGION OF GHANA**

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**(UDS/MSA/0211/15)**

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



**2018**

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THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLITICAL AND  
HISTORICAL STUDIES, FACULTY OF INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STUDIES,  
UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN  
SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION

MARCH, 2018



## DECLARATION

### Student

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

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

Name.....

### Supervisor

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

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name.....



## ABSTRACT

The adolescent stage is a critical transition period in the human development cycle in which a person undergoes personal, physical, and psychological development which shapes his or her goal attainment in life. However, in a patriarchal society which is characterised by a preference for a male child and male dominance over a female, most female adolescents' future aspirations are hindered. The study was conducted to explore the future aspirations of female adolescents, life experiences of women and its implications on the aspirations of female adolescents, and the perception of men on patriarchy in the Wa Traditional Area. The liberal feminist theoretical perspective guided the study, where a phenomenological design was employed. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select 54 respondents comprising female adolescents (16), male adolescents (8), women (13), men (13) and stakeholders (4) where content and thematic data analysis were used. The findings showed that both female and male adolescents share similar aspirations of attaining higher education, career goals, and marriage preference. Regrettably, female adolescents are far from achieving their aspirations due to patriarchal tendencies and the intermediating role of poverty. Also, most women are unable to achieve their perceived aspirations during adolescence whereas men are more able. Women however, showed a positive willingness to support their daughters despite the inhibiting role of patriarchy. The study recommends among others, that there should be community sensitisation, collaboration among stakeholders to reform patriarchy, and job creation to reduce the level of poverty which exacerbates patriarchal tendencies and affects females' aspirations.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to the Almighty God for how far he has brought me in my academics. I could not have accomplished this work without his knowledge, wisdom, strength, protection, and all provisions he made available for the successful completion of this work.

My sincere appreciation goes to my parents, Nana Kwame Afram II and Madam Lovemark Agbanyo, and my brothers; Stephen Asare Boateng and George Opoku for their support and encouragement.

My profound gratitude goes to my Supervisor, Dr Gideon Kofi Agbley, for his corrections, critiques and suggestions towards the successful completion of this thesis.

My sincere appreciation also goes to Justine Guguneni Tuolong for his direction for the successful completion of this thesis.

I also acknowledge Issahaku Karifa Rafique, my field assistant, for his sacrifice and support towards a successful data collection. I am also grateful to Sub-Lieutenant Osbert Nielemah Clarence Nuotuo for his motivation, encouragement and assistance in shaping this work; and lastly to all my friends who assisted me in diverse ways. God bless you all.



## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my parents Nana Kwame Afram II and Madam Lovemark Agbanyo for their support and for always believing in me.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Background of the Study .....	1
1.3 Research Objectives.....	10
1.4 Significance of the Study.....	11
1.5 Scope of the Study .....	12
1.6 Organisation of the thesis .....	13
<b>CHAPTER TWO.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.0 Introduction.....	14
2.1 The Concept of Adolescence .....	14
2.2 The Concept of Patriarchy .....	17
2.3 Feminist Approach to Patriarchy .....	19
2.4 Female Adolescents and Patriarchy .....	23
2.5 The Capability Approach and Female Adolescents.....	26
2.6 Gender Inequality and Patriarchy .....	28
2.7 Conceptual Framework.....	31





2.8 The Aspirations of Female Adolescents and the Obstacles they face in achieving them Aspirations in a Patriarchal Society.....	34
2.9 The Experiences of Women and Its Implication on Female Adolescents in Achieving their Aspirations in Patriarchal Societies .....	38
2.10 Men’s Perceptions on Patriarchy and Females Aspirations .....	41
2.11 Conclusion .....	45
<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>46</b>
3.0 Introduction.....	46
3.1 Profile of the Study Area .....	46
3.2 Research Approach.....	48
3.3 Research Design .....	50
3.4 Target Population.....	51
3.5 Sampling.....	51
3.6 Sample Size .....	51
3.7 Sampling Technique .....	53
3.8 Sources of Data.....	54
3.9 Data Collection Technique .....	54
3.11 Data Analysis.....	55
3.12 Ethical Consideration.....	56
3.13 Researcher’s Role .....	57
<b>CHAPTER FOUR .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>58</b>
4.0 Introduction.....	58
4.1 Socio- Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.....	58
4.2 The Aspirations of Adolescents and Obstacles in Achieving their Aspirations...	61
4.3 The Aspirations of Adolescents and Obstacles in Achieving their Aspirations...	75



4.3 The Experiences of Women in a Patriarchal Society and Its Implications on Female Adolescents' Aspiration.....	80
4.4 Men's Perception about Patriarchy and Female Adolescents' Aspirations.....	87
4.5 Linking the Theory and Conceptual Framework to the Findings.....	94
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>96</b>
5.0 Introduction.....	96
5.1 Summary of Findings .....	96
5.2 Conclusion .....	99
5.3 Recommendation .....	101
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1.....</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Appendix 2: .....</b>	<b>138</b>



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sampled Distribution of Wa Traditional Area communities, Informants, Sample Size and Techniques. ....	52
Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Adolescent Respondents.....	59
Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Men, Women, and Stakeholders.....	60
Table 4: Aspirations of Adolescents, and Capabilities and Obstacles in Achieving Higher Education .....	62
Table 5: Female and Male Adolescents Responses of their Career Aspirations and Obstacles faced.....	70
Table 6: Female and Male Adolescents Responses on their Marriage Aspirations .....	75
Table 7: Women Experiences in a Patriarchal Society and Its Implications on Female Adolescents' Aspiration.....	81
Table 8: Men's Perception about Patriarchy and how it affects Female Adolescents' Aspirations.....	88



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of How Patriarchy Affect the Emancipation of Women .. 31

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Capability Approach
GNA	Ghana News Agency
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
MOE	Ministry of Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHS	Senior High School
UKAID	United Kingdom aid
UN	United Nation
UNDESA	United Nations department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UWR	Upper West Region
UWRHC	Upper West Regional House of Chiefs



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background of the Study

The Adolescent stage is a critical transition period in the human development cycle which shapes the way of thinking and aspiration of the individual for the future. During this period, a person undergoes personal, physical, and psychological development that shapes his or her goal attainment in life (Blakemore and Choudhury, 2006). As a result, a treatment offered to one at this period is critical and determines one's future aspiration. However, in a patriarchal society most female adolescents are often undermined. This is because, a patriarchal society is characterised by male headed families, a preference for a male child over a female, and the total subordination of women to men.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2013), a person is classified as an adolescent if he or she falls within the age bracket, 10-19 years. From a psychological point of view, it is within this period a person prepares himself or herself to become an active and responsible member of the society, and also gains transformation from family dependent childhood to independent adulthood and integration into the society as a responsible citizen (Nurmi, 2004). During this period, adolescents develop an extended future orientation in which they are able to think, dream, and plan for their future (Blakemore and Choudhury, 2006). Again, literature suggests that a person anticipates common events, such as school completion,



career and the period to get married during the adolescent stage (Crockett and Bingham, 2000).

Also, empirical evidence underscores that during this stage, children become more focused and selective in their goal-directed behaviour, desires, and aspirations for the future (Cantor, 1990) which aids them to elaborate their sense of identity that affects their future plans (Eccles, 2003). Nonetheless, it is said that all these aspirations cannot be achieved especially in the case of female adolescents in a patriarchal society where the system does not allow women or girls to have a voice or contribute to decision-making in the family or society (Ezenwa-Ohaeto, 2015).

Patriarchy is a system of social structure and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women (Sultana, 2011). Similarly, Gamble (2001) opines that patriarchy is the mechanism by which all men institutionally oppress all women. Okpe (2005) also submits that patriarchy is a broad network of hierarchical organisation that cuts across political, economic, social, religious, cultural, industrial and financial spheres, under which the overwhelming number of upper positions in society are either occupied or controlled and dominated by men. Thus, any system that operationalises an order that accords men undue advantage over women is considered patriarchal.

In patriarchal societies, both boys and girls take their identity from the father, but while sons are recognised as permanent members of the family, the girls are viewed more as a transit element of this unit to their husbands' families (Suzanne, et al 2011). As a result, priority is given to the needs and interest of sons than daughters; where girls are denied the right to make decisions which directly affects their lives. In terms of relationships, a son can choose



his preferred partner or even refuse his parents' choice of a bride, but girls on the other hand have to submit physically and mentally to family decisions (Packaim, 2006).

Therefore, despite the foregoing critical development that a child goes through during the adolescence, the question to ask is "how do female adolescents achieve their future aspirations in a society where there is total subordination of women to men and also the preference for a male child over a female?"

Arnota (2011) elaborated that, women's empowerment in decision making is very subtle and has implications on the adolescent female's life and suggested that women should be educated on empowerment. However, he did not take into cognisance how women should be empowered by their parents or the society right from the initial developmental stage which affects their womanhood. The Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development (OECD, 2015) revealed that many women, especially the female adolescents, have been empowered through educational programs to help maximise their future aspirations. However, they were quick to say that among all these efforts, the quest of female adolescents to achieve their aspirations is in vain due to socio-cultural factors especially in patriarchal societies.

This is because the society in which a young girl finds herself has a powerful influence on her perception about womanhood and the kind of woman she will aspire to become in future, and some of these societal factors include: the family, cultural norms, educational experience, verbal, non-verbal communication and the media (Suzanne et al., 2011).

The 2009 world survey on the role of Women in development and the United Nation Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2009) confirms that there are





positive multiplier effects for social and economic development when girls in the same extent as boys are allowed to make an informed choice of how to achieve their own aspirations. Again, a United Nation's (UN) conference in Bangkok, Thailand in 2008 suggested that investing in the development of girls and women has a multiplier effect particularly on productivity, efficiency and sustainable development and economic growth.

Also, Sen (2000) states that when girls or women are allowed to contribute to decision making, the society as a whole benefits. This is because; empowerment of girls generates many positive effects for society and the nation as a whole. Therefore, the task of studying female adolescents in patriarchal societies is relevant because it is emphasised that not investing in girls and women restricts economic growth and does not allow poverty reduction (World Bank, 2010).

According to the World Bank (2016), girls and women in African patriarchal societies have faced various forms of discrimination and inequalities which have not only caused them harm, but their families, communities and countries as a whole. Therefore, it is argued that girls with equal access to opportunities can grow into strong women who can take on leadership roles and also help to develop policies that support women and girls.

As a result, in the field of studies, there have been several studies on girls and women empowerment (Jejeebhoy et al., 2004). The outcomes of these researches show unanimously that there exist economic barriers, as well as parental backgrounds as major determinants of a girl child achieving her aspirations. However, it is regrettable that these studies failed to look at other factors like patriarchy; where undue advantage is accorded to men over women, where there is total subordination of women to men and a preference for a male child over a



female. The researcher argues that, patriarchy influences the aspirations of many female adolescents in Ghana specifically the Wa Traditional Area which is also patriarchal in nature.



## 1.1 Problem Statement

According to Sellar and Gale (2011), aspiration is the capacity to imagine the future and everyone has an aspiration which he or she desires to achieve. It is in this light that female adolescents require equal space or enabling environment just like their male counterparts to enable them develop their potentials towards their future aspirations. Prior to researches on career aspirations of women, for that matter the female adolescent, it is evident that girls are more likely to hold higher aspirations than boys (Clift and Vaughan 1997; Butlin 1999; Anisef et al., 2001; Perry et al., 2009). They noted that the expectations of girls are mostly low whilst their aspirations are high due to stereotypes in the society about gender-related jobs and girls beliefs about the limits of what they possibly can achieve.

But, for the female adolescent to achieve her aspirations, she deserves the right to choose her future aspirations and to be guided on her life choices; which include educational attainment, career, and marriage preference without restrictions.

Yet, this is not the case in patriarchal societies as studies have shown that in order to survive “good girlism” in a patriarchal society, a girl undergoes a major displacement or disconnection inside her own self and caught between the expectations of family, community and her own individual needs and desires (Brovermann, 1994). Atta (2015) opined that being born as a girl into these patriarchal societies seem to be a curse since their aspirations have been restricted by parents and society.

In an advocacy to empower women and achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) five (5) of the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP, 2016), which intends to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, the researcher is of the view that





this goal can be futile if societies continue to practice a system that prejudices women especially female adolescents to make their own informed decision about their future aspirations.

It is believed that in a patriarchal society, female adolescents are rewarded for conforming to the system (patriarchy). These rewards include protection, security, relationships, alliances, and all the other status-related goods and benefits of a good woman. However, literature suggests that these rewards are not enough for young females to achieve their future aspirations (Suzanne, et al 2011).

According to United Nation population fund UNFPA (2013), Ghana has one of the highest child marriage prevalence rates in the world. They added that on an average, one out of four girls is married before their eighteenth birthday. The current statistics indicate the breakdown as follows: Upper East (39.2%), Western Region (36.7%), Upper West (36.3%), Central (31.2%), Ashanti (30.5%), Volta (29.3%), Brong Ahafo (29.1%), Northern (27.4%), Eastern (27.2%) and Greater Accra (12.2%), (UNDP 2013). The reasons cited for such high prevalence rates is poverty, however it was added that child marriage is a common feature in societies where there is preference for sons over daughters and ; thereby undermining the future aspirations of the female adolescents.

As a wake-up call to deal with Child Marriage, many stake holders such as the feminists, governments, global and local agencies, and researchers have conducted researches on women empowerment, held conferences to empower women, and have also promoted women participation in decision making. The Government of Ghana is also working towards ensuring gender equality in education. Despite all these efforts, most females are still unable



to achieve their aspirations especially in patriarchal societies. In order for women to be empowered and women's participation in decision making, it is very important to tackle such issues right from the initial development stage (adolescent stage) of women and also address facilitative cultural factors such as patriarchy which has a major influence on girls' aspirations since there is a preference for a male child over a female.

According to (Alhassan and Odame, 2015) a preference for a boy over a girl child and girl child early marriage are key factors militating against quality and gender equality in basic schools in the Northern part of Ghana. They noted that, males in Northern Ghana are mostly the heads of families and the decision to send children to school or withdraw them from school is usually taken by men; but since there is preference for sons over daughters, men take decision in favour of the male child.

Additionally, a report from Action Aid Ghana, a non-governmental organisation operating in the Upper West region of Ghana, indicates that an average of fifty (50) young girls between the ages of fifteen to seventeen (15-17) years are abducted for marriage every year (Ghana News Agency, 2013). This is because, many young girls in the communities including school children are forcefully taken away by men who make them their wives against their will (Froko, 2016). As a result, it is said that some young girls in some communities in the Upper West Region are cursing God every day for making them females.

This study therefore sought to explore the future aspirations of female adolescents, and the obstacles they encounter in achieving their aspirations in a patriarchal society. The study also explored life experiences of women who have gone through the system, in terms of what they aspired to become during adolescence, and their current status. The study further looked

at men's perception on patriarchy and female aspirations because a study revealed that though patriarchy hits women harder, it also affects men (Philaretou, 2000). It also sought for some views from some stakeholders such as; Department of Community Development, Department of Children, and the Department of Gender on how patriarchy affected their work as government agencies responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of people especially the vulnerable; which females are no exception.

Subsequently, views from the Department of House of Chiefs were also solicited since this department deals with issues related to traditional affairs. The study further suggested how best patriarchy can be practiced to empower girls and women to achieve their aspirations; which could help achieve SDG – 5 (i.e. gender equality) in all societies and communities.



## **1.2 Research Questions**

### **Main Question**

How does preference for sons over daughters influence the outcome of female adolescents' future aspirations?

### **Specific research questions**

- i) What are adolescents' future aspirations and the obstacles encountered in achieving their aspirations?
- ii) To what extent do the experiences of women in the achievement of their aspirations influence the aspirations of female adolescents?
- iii) What are men's perceptions on patriarchy and female aspirations?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

### **Main Objective:**

To explore how the preference for sons over daughters influences the outcome of female adolescents' future aspirations.

### **Specific Objectives:**

- i. To unearth adolescents' future aspirations and the obstacles they encounter in achieving their aspirations.



- ii. To explore the experiences of women in the achievement of their aspirations and how they influence the aspirations of female adolescents?
- iii. To uncover men's perceptions on patriarchy and female aspirations.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study sought to explore and understand how female adolescents in a patriarchal society achieve their future aspirations. To achieve this, the life experiences of mothers in terms of what they aspired to become at the adolescent stage and their current status were sought for. This is because, globally it is evident that women and girls are marginalised; since there is a preference for males over females, especially in patriarchal societies in Africa, which Ghana is no exception. This suggests that female adolescents are disadvantaged when it comes to adolescents achieving their future aspirations (Robertson and Berger, 2004).

In the area of study, it is accorded that northern Ghana remains largely patriarchal where males are mostly the head of the family, taking decisions in favour of sons at the expense of daughters (Alhassan and Odame, 2015). Feminists argue that such a practice widens the gender gap between the males and females, and also restricts female adolescents from attaining higher education, career aspirations and the decision to make preferred marriage choices.

From the foregoing, the study is significant because it contributes to knowledge pertaining to the situation of girls and women in patriarchal societies. The study provides the understanding of female adolescents' aspirations and the need for them to be provided with equal enabling environment just like their male counterparts to help them achieve their



aspirations. Additionally, the study contributes significantly to the body of knowledge to inform policy directions that can help achieve SDG – 5 (i.e. gender equality) in all societies and communities. It also serves as a basis for further studies on patriarchy and females' aspirations.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study had two dimensions; i.e. the geographical and contextual scope. Geographically, the study was conducted in the Upper West Region of Ghana, specifically in some communities (Kperisi, Guli, Nakori and Kulkpong) in the Wa Traditional Area. This is because; the Wa Traditional Area and the Region as a whole is patriarchal in nature. The study area was chosen because it has a high prevalence rate of child marriage, teenage pregnancy and girls' school drop-out (Froko, 2016). It is also said that young girls in the Region are slaves to the culture and some traditional practices downgrade them as mere objects, and they have no right to decide for themselves. They are also subjected to negative cultural and traditional practices instituted against them by men as a result of patriarchy (Ghana News Agency, 2013).

Contextually, the study looked at female adolescents' aspirations, and life experiences of women who have gone through difficulties in achieving their aspirations due to patriarchy. Moving forward, the study also drew on men's perception on patriarchy and female aspirations. From these perspectives, future aspirations of female adolescents were defined in terms of the decision to attain higher education, achieve a preferred career goal and the decision to make marriage choices.





## **1.6 Organisation of the thesis**

The thesis is organised in five chapters. Chapter one provides background of the study which explained female adolescence and women's experiences in patriarchal societies in the Western World, Africa and the Ghanaian society. In Chapter two literatures was reviewed on the phenomenon studied while chapter three consists of the methodology used for the study. In Chapter four data analysis and discussions, were presented while chapter five consists of summary, conclusion and recommendations on the study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter captures theories, concepts and their definitions which formed the theoretical base of the study. Themes of the literature reviewed encompass adolescents; where much emphasis was laid on their aspirations and Patriarchy. The chapter also discusses theories such as the feminist theory as the driving theory to discuss the marginalisation and the oppression of women. Subsequently, the capability approach was used to explain how female adolescents can achieve their aspirations. Conceptual framework which supported the study was also looked at and followed by a conclusion on the chapter.

#### 2.1 The Concept of Adolescence

In the growth of mankind from childhood to adulthood, adolescence is one critical period during which individuals, both males and females, prepare for their adult lives. It is said that, adolescence is a period of transition for teenagers where their families and societies groom and prepare them towards achieving their future aspirations successfully (Ruffin, 2009). This makes the adolescent stage an important phase where an individual needs to understand what is happening to him or her physically, cognitively, and socially. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund UNICEF (2011) defines adolescence as a stage of opportunity and pivotal time where adolescents need help to navigate risk and vulnerabilities to enable them achieve their aspirations. Notwithstanding how one may define adolescence,





another important issue that bothers scholars in discourse is the age classification for adolescence and issues that confront adolescents in their period of transition. These are discussed hereafter and a conclusion on an acceptable definition of adolescence that the study used.

According to UNICEF (2011), the age classification for adolescence is not generally specific and varies across countries. This is because there is a wide variation in national laws regarding participating in activities considered the preserve of adults which include voting, marriage, military participation, and property ownership (UNICEF, 2011). However, the United Nation (U.N) has classified the adolescent as individuals between the ages of 10-19 years (UNICEF, 2011). According to the Constitution of Ghana (1992), one is classified as an adult when he or she is 18 years and above; which guarantees him or her the legal right to vote, participate in decision making, enter into contract terms and the decision to make marriage choices. However, according to the Ghana statistical report, (GSS, 2013), the adolescent stage ranges from 10 to 19 years. Though the minimum marital age is 18 years, girls are allowed to engage in consented sex at the age of 16 years. Hence this study limited the age classification for adolescence to ages between 15 to 19 years (i.e. late adolescence) as the unanimous standard to classify who an adolescent is in the study.

Inferring from the above, some writers have categorised the adolescent stage into two - early adolescence which is within the age bracket of (10-14) years and the late adolescence age bracket also between (15-19) years (UNICEF, 2015). Early adolescence is usually the stage that physical changes generally commence (e.g. breast development, changes in body shape and height, growth of pubic and body hair, menstruation etc.). Late adolescence is when major physical changes have already occurred where peer groups opinion play a vital role but



their hold diminishes as adolescents gain clarity and confidence in their own identity and opinions - often referred to as 'experimental stage'. It is argued that, during the stage of adolescence, one becomes more sensitive to the awareness of his or her sexual drive and requires support and consistent education from adults, both at home and around the community on issues of HIV AIDS, early pregnancy, sexual violence and exploitation (Ruffin, 2009).

According to Steinberg (2007), there are five psychosocial issues that confront teenagers during their adolescence. The first is *establishing an identity* – the question of “who am I?” here, the adolescents begin to integrate the opinions of people they look up to (e.g. parents, other caring adults, friends, etc.) into their own likes and dislikes. The second is *establishing autonomy* – i.e. the ability to make and follow through with their decisions, live by their own set of principles of right and wrong where they become less emotionally dependent on parents. The third is *establishing intimacy* – i.e. intimacy refers to close relationships in which people are open, honest, caring, and trusting. At this stage, they get closer to friends and learn how to begin, maintain, and terminate relationships; practice social skills; and to become intimate - usually this occurs in late adolescence. The fourth in Steinberg's five psychological issues that adolescence are confronted with is *becoming comfortable with one's sexuality* - i.e. teen years mark the first time that young people are both physically mature enough to reproduce and cognitively advanced enough to think about it. Given this, the teen years are the prime time for the development of sexuality. Hence Steinberg explained that; what teens are educated on and exposed to sexuality at this stage largely determines whether or not they develop a healthy sexual identity. As a result, many experts agree that the mixed messages teens receive about sexuality contribute to problems such as



teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (Eccles, 2003). Last to Steinberg's psychological issues confronted by adolescence is *achievement* - i.e. when teenagers advance on their cognitive thinking of what society has inculcated into them through values and attitudes. As a result, they begin to see the relationship between their current abilities and plan for their future aspirations. During this period, adolescents figure out what their achievement preferences are - what they are currently good at and areas in which they need to strive for success.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the transitional development of an individual from childhood to adulthood, which is the adolescent stage, is one critical phase which requires attention and support. Therefore, from the definitions of adolescence, age classifications, and issues that adolescent are confronted with during adolescence; adolescence as a concept is referred to as a critical developmental stage between the ages of 10-19 years in a person's life which requires support and guidance of parents, family and the society at large to help adolescents navigate through this process to become responsible adults to achieve their aspirations.

## **2.2 The Concept of Patriarchy**

The concept of patriarchy was developed in the past two decades to analyse the origins and conditions of women's oppression by men (Kamarae, 1992). This is because patriarchy has been used as the most insidious and powerful force by traditional and modernised societies where men oppress, exploit and control women (Walby, 1996: 21). As a result, scholars argue that patriarchy is an "ideology which is symbolic of male principles, as the literal power of the father, as a method of controlling women's sexuality and fertility and as an

institutional structure of male domination” (Rowbotham, 2006:52). This affirms Therborn (2004:17) stating that “in the beginning of mankind’s story, all significant societies were clearly patriarchal”.

However, Walby (1990) on the other hand made a distinction between public and private patriarchy and identified six forms of patriarchal structures in societies. These include patriarchal mode of production, patriarchy in relation to paid work, and patriarchy in relation to the state, male violence, patriarchy in relation to sexuality and patriarchy in relation to cultural institutions including religion, media, and education.

According to Walby, patriarchy in relation to production in the household is the first structure, and that it is through this structure that women’s labour is seized by their husbands. The second patriarchal structure within the economic level is that of patriarchy in relation to paid work where women are mostly underpaid even if they perform equal task with men. The third structure of patriarchy is the state, which is described as capitalist and gender blind; where the state mediates and regulates gender relations through laws and rights noted to be systematically biased towards patriarchal interests in its policies and actions. This is because, the fourth structure of patriarchy according to Walby - male violence against women - is systematically condoned and legitimated by the state’s refusal to intervene against, except in exceptional instances. Again, according to Walby, cultural structure of patriarchy consists of a set of institutions, which create the representation of women within a patriarchal gaze in a variety of arenas, such as religion, education and the media which makes it difficult for women to live in liberty.





Kandiyoti, an Indian scholar, in 2011 addressing patriarchy stressed that there are several forms of patriarchal oppression which includes; “household system, polygyny, and corporate-male headed entities”. Kandiyoti argues that these patriarchal oppressions present women with serious oppression which cuts across every aspect of their lives and call for different strategies to deal with this oppression (Kandiyoti, 2011). Therefore, from the definitions of patriarchy and the experiences of women in patriarchal societies, patriarchy as a concept is referred to as a system that accords men undue advantage over women, where there is oppression and total subordination of women to men and the preference for sons over daughters.

### **2.3 Feminist Approach to Patriarchy**

Patriarchy is rooted down in many societies across the globe especially in African traditional societies, for that matter Ghana; which the Wa Traditional Area is no exception. As a result, women in patriarchal societies are being discriminated against and deprived of the opportunity to achieve their aspirations such as attaining higher education, career goals and the preferred marriage choice as well as the time to get married.

In 1963, a liberal feminist Betty Friedan published a book "problem with no name" and seven years later radical feminist Kate Millet was one of several who identified that problem and named it patriarchy (Kruger and Fisher, 2014). On the call for gender equality, feminism is a philosophy to champion and uplift the voice of the deprived or vulnerable groups in society especially women and children's rights (Andersen, 2007).



Previous studies have noted that the oppression of women, increasing injustice, and inequality in patriarchal societies gave birth to feminism (Kruger and Fisher, 2014). According to Walby (1990), feminism is a political, cultural and economic movement to liberate women in male dominated societies and demand for equality and ensure freedom of women. Thus, Feminism is an umbrella term which denotes the struggle of women to gain equal rights and equal status in patriarchal societies.

Therefore, from the foregoing perspective, this research built upon feminist theory as a theoretical lens to understand patriarchy and how female adolescents achieve their future aspirations in a patriarchal society. This is because; feminism has been defined as a mode of analysis to understand the phenomena which involve thinking about how to eliminate the oppression of women in patriarchal societies in order for female adolescents and women to achieve their aspirations (Andersen, 2007).

Thus, it is suggested that feminist theory forms the basis to understand the experiences of women in a patriarchal society; where undue advantage is accorded to men over women (Walby, 1990). Therefore, feminists argue that women's interest or aspirations are equally important to those of men, hence equal opportunity should be given to both females and males to enable them achieve their aspirations (Wood, 2013).

In the discourse of feminism, three major perspectives were identified which include: Liberal feminism, Social feminism and Radical feminism (Freeman, 1990). In the advocacy of these feminist perspectives, liberal feminism locates the origins of women's oppression to women's lack of equal civil rights and equal opportunities as well as past traditions associated with the ascribed roles for men and women. Hence, liberal feminists' purports that women's liberation





will be achieved if sexist discrimination is removed so that women can have equal opportunity just like their male counterparts to pursue their potential to achieve their aspirations. To achieve this, it is suggested that re-education of the public concerning gender role socialisation process is the best means to achieve women's liberation (Andersen, 2007).

Also, socialist feminists are of the view that the origin of women's oppression in the interaction of the capitalist system is based on class inequalities with patriarchy, based on gender inequalities where women are exploited in the labour market (Freeman, 1990). This indicates that, due to gender inequality and exploitation of women in patriarchal societies, women are persistently underpaid both in the market and their labour in the home making women poorer. This emphasis was core and formed the crux of the debate to understand how female adolescents are not given attention to achieve their aspirations like their male counterparts in societies that are patriarchal in nature.

To Radical feminists, similarly, their view was that the origin of women's oppression is tied to patriarchy; where there is control of female sexuality and female fertility. This perspective identified male power and privilege in patriarchal relations as the essential determinant of women's subordination. As such, it was perceived that women are oppressed in procreative relations in the home and therefore challenges society's basic structure and also identified the need for revolutionising its existing organisation (Freeman, 1990). Thus, an essential strategy for eliminating women's oppression is the establishment of a woman culture separate from the lives of men, thereby overthrowing or undermining the present dominant patriarchy (Andersen 1983, and Jaggar 1983).



In view of the three forgone feminism theoretical perspectives, and based on the research objectives, the study was guided by the Liberal theoretical perspective to understand how patriarchy influences female adolescents to achieve their future aspirations in the Wa Traditional Area. This helped respondents to reconsider whether patriarchy as a cultural structure is the way to ensure gender equality, reformed, or whether there is the need to revolutionise society's culture as suggested by the radical perspective of feminism. This is because, it is suggested that women around the globe experience difficulties in the pursuit of their aspirations in patriarchal societies (Wood, 2013). This made feminists to suggest that, the oppression and marginalisation against women are dismayed and they urge that gender must be looked at as a way of ensuring equal opportunity for men and women and “not simply the enactment of roles and formation of masculine or feminine attitudes” (Heimer, 2000 : 444; Daly and Chesney-Lind, 1988: 511). As a result, the Liberal feminists' perspective in general, has ascribed patriarchy as the root of gender differences in all behaviour and particularly in criminal behaviour and call for women's emancipation (Wood, 2013). However, despite the advocacy of the Liberal feminists, many women are continually marginalised in patriarchal societies which affect female adolescents' future aspirations. Thus, Flax suggest that feminist theory helps in the understanding of the power differential between men and women and how women's oppression evolved, how it changes over time, how it is related to other forms of oppression and how to overcome this oppression (Flax, 2012).

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand how patriarchy influences the aspirations of female adolescents. This has become necessary because, studies have revealed that female adolescents have higher aspirations than male adolescents and when given equal

opportunities like their male counterparts this would help develop their potentials towards achieving their aspirations. (Clift and Vaughan 1997; Butlin 1999; Anisef et al., 2001; Perry et al., 2009).

## **2.4 Female Adolescents and Patriarchy**

According to UNICEF (2011), there are 1.2 billion people who fall between the age categories of 10 - 19 years in the world. Therefore, it is not arguable to say that investing in adolescents has tremendous benefits to achieving the United Nation's advocacy conventions which includes; children human rights protection, the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls, accelerating the fight against poverty, inequality and gender discrimination, and to confront the challenges adolescents go through especially in the cases of female adolescents.

However, according to the World Bank report, in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, societies are organised around the extended family where most ethnic groups are predominantly characterised by patriarchy (World Bank, 2014). And the key feature associated with patriarchy is the preference for male children over females (Anderson and Ray 2010 and World Bank, 2011). Thus, the desire for male children is motivated by decent transmission and the urge to provide continuation of the family lineage. Studies suggest that in patriarchy only males have the control of family property, hence they are given much attention and support in the family than their female counterparts (Wusu and Abanihe, 2006).

As a result, women who are unable to have male children end up in a polygynous union or sometimes divorced. Therefore, in the transformational process of a child from childhood to





adulthood, previous studies suggest that male children are highly valued even by women because having a male child is the only way through which they can keep their marriage and also inherit part of their husband's property (Fapohunda and Todaro, 1988; Ewelukwa, 2002). The study suggests that patriarchy as a traditional practice has repercussion on the female adolescents in patriarchal societies and also endangers their future aspirations.

Notwithstanding, education has a central role in improving the life-chances of individuals and the society as a whole (Agleby, 2015). However, from gender orientation perspective, the preference for boys over girls all in the name of patriarchy in African societies has made the transformational process of children from childhood to adulthood discriminatory against female adolescents. As a result, males are given much attention and support than females on attaining their future aspirations in order to promote the continuity of the family lineage (Glick & Sahn, 2000). Studies by Allhassan and Odame (2015) confirmed that in patriarchal families in northern Ghana, there is preference for a male child over a female and the decision to send children to school or withdraw them from school is solely taken by men. This therefore suggests that since there is preference for sons over daughters, it is likely men will invest more in males to acquire their aspirations for the prospects of the family. This is because, investing in females means investing in the prospects of another person's family. Hence, a study has confirmed that in patriarchal societies girls are denied the access to attain higher education, and are limited to objects to be exchanged in the form of marriage to procreate and do domestic work (Goldstein, 2000). Additionally, a study by Agleby (2015) has also revealed that due to patriarchal tendencies, girls' choices to attain and pursue educational programmes have gone beyond school factors because there are programmes perceived to be for boys such as mathematics and science related courses, whereas home

economics and general arts reserved for girls. Patriarchy is therefore attributed to be creating division of responsibilities or gender roles, discriminating against females especially in the nurturing of adolescents in the Ghanaian traditional household structure. However Agbley (2015) discovered that girls are equally capable of doing well in mathematics and science related programmes even better than boys if patriarchal tendencies are dealt with. This means that patriarchy is a barrier to girls' aspirations.

In a classical patriarchal society, it is said that women continually face challenges with regards to their occupation which tends to have an influence on their female adolescents' occupational aspirations. This is because in a patriarchal society men take high payment than women, even in cases where they take on the same professions, because they are considered as heads of families (Bujra, 1992). This kills the aspirations of many female adolescents growing up in such societies. Also, studies by Eritrea et al. (2012) have revealed that due to patriarchy, women in such societies are given lower career occupations such as caring for children and elementary school teaching while the men are engaged in prestigious occupations such as bank managers, contractors, engineers, etc. which attract higher remuneration than the occupation of women. All these are attributes of how patriarchy has contributed to socially accepted gender division of labour where occupation is greatly influenced by a person's biological make-up (Sikod, 2007). Female adolescents growing up in such communities stand the chance of not achieving their aspiration.

As a result, it is convincing to say that the authority and power associated with men in a patriarchal society reflect male right and entitlement over their wives and females in general (Adomako & Prah, 2009) and in other part of the world where patriarchy is practiced, e.g. Zimbabwe, Watts (1996) reported that threats of violence are often used by men to control





women's sexual and reproductive behaviour, hence leaving female adolescents with negative perceptions about the society and what the future holds for them. These thoughts and beliefs relegate them not to aspire to develop their potentials because in their growing up, they saw society to be discriminatory towards females.

Also, under classical patriarchy, it is said that girls are married off at a younger age against their will into households headed by husbands (Kandiyoti, 1997). Additionally, girls in patriarchal homes do not have the right to choose their husbands; while boys on the other hand have the right to choose their wives and even reject parents' choice of a bride (Agarwal, 2002).

According to Bangser (2010), despite the fact that girls are generally associated with obstacles that make it difficult for them to achieve their aspirations, patriarchy has made the case worse. This is because female adolescents in patriarchal societies face extra challenges of early marriage, teenage pregnancy, and violence due to lack of attention and improper nurturing during their adolescence (UNICEF, 2011). But the question to ask also is how capable are female adolescents to achieve their future aspiration if gender equality - the advocacy of feminism - is observed in patriarchal societies like the Wa Traditional Area? This is put forward in the next section.

## **2.5 The Capability Approach and Female Adolescents**

Since the emergence of Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (CA), the concept has been one of the leading alternatives to standard economic frameworks for think-tanks, policy formulators and the academia concerning poverty, inequality and human development issues



(Clark, 2005). The capability approach is a holistic framework to evaluate, conceptualise and assess an individual's wellbeing (Sen, 1999), unlike the per capita income of assessing wellbeing which focuses much on commodities than basic needs (Saito, 2003). Thus, capability approach has gained popularity in human development in which the state of a population is assessed from a people-centred perspective making the value of goods, income and wealth limited while the value of people is great (Kneppers, 2015).

Hence in literature, the capabilities approach to human development is articulated as the “expansion of what a person is able to do and be” (Murphy-Graham, 2012:12) and not what one is made of. This therefore means that, in a child's development through adolescence, there is the need to expand his/her opportunity to bring out the potential to achieve his/her future aspirations. Thus, Murphy-Graham (2012: 12) agrees that education plays a critical role in the capabilities approach in development and should not be gender biased because it can expand what people are able to be and to do.

Again, another crux of the capability approach linked to this study is that, it basically talks about what individuals are capable of doing and the need to pay attention to the kinds of lives individuals live and the choices of life values they make (Sen, 1999).

Unlike traditional development methods which focus on Gross National Product (GNP), per capita income or basic needs, the capability approach allows people to sufficiently assess wellbeing irrespective of the actual distribution of goods within society. This is because, measuring people's wellbeing based on income and basic needs tells nothing about the kinds of lives individuals will be able to live in the future if given the needed attention and

resources (Watene, 2013). This suggests that one's capabilities are the opportunities that one values and is able to develop to ensure actual wellbeing (Dejeaghere and Lee, 2011: 29).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the capability approach reiterates the fact that the female adolescent has the capability to live the kind of life she values not only by the culmination of alternatives that she ends up with, but by the processes involved in making choices or the freedom to choose an alternative within her ability and context. Thus, following the experiences of girls and women in patriarchal societies, many writers have identified three capability spaces as the lens through which girls' aspirations can be influenced (Nussbaum, 2000; Robeyns, 2003; Walker, 2006; Agbley, 2015).

These three capabilities are: the enablement of participation in decision-making process, ability to exercise choice, and freedom to initiate or take steps to pursue what is of value without fear or harm. Therefore, in this study, these were the capabilities desirable for girls to possess in order to transcend the system of patriarchy that holds them back from achieving their future aspirations. This was one of the themes the study explored as one of the objectives to identify female adolescents' capabilities and the need to be given attention, motivation and support to achieve their aspirations like their male counterparts during adolescence.

## **2.6 Gender Inequality and Patriarchy**

There has been a lot of tremendous progress in the last few decades with more females attaining higher education and female employment both in the public and private sector; however, the majority of women still live in oppression where their aspirations are being







hindered (Maier, 2010). This is because gender inequality still exists due to the patriarchal nature of some societies even within matrilineal families.

Although the transformation one goes through during adolescence is important to one's personal development and aspirations, the female adolescents cannot achieve their future aspirations if a cultural system is gender biased where there is preference for a male child over a female. According to Walby (1990), "the concept of patriarchy is indispensable for an analysis of gender inequality because it captures the depth and pervasiveness of different aspects of women's subordination within the household, family and society". Similarly, Lim (1997) reiterated to say that patriarchal institutions and social relations are responsible for the inferior or secondary status of women. To curb this, the role of human rights is crucial to the lives of these girls to develop their potentials to achieve their future aspirations (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). This is because, it is said that gender equality does not only open the door of opportunity for females but it replaces an attitude of domination with an attitude of cooperation (Kober 2016: 44). However, many theorists propose that patriarchy does not necessarily mean that every man has power over every woman in every context. But on the contrary, "patriarchal interests overlap with systems that also reinforce class and race privileges, as well as other valences of social stratification (Chesney-Lind, 2006: 37).

Notwithstanding, studies have revealed that women in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa face inequality within the household and society, and argued that the main cause of inequality is patriarchy (Isran, 2012); as women are often denied access to equal opportunity unlike their male counterparts to achieve their aspirations. These among others, suggest how patriarchy as a cultural system has hindered women which the female adolescents are no exception.

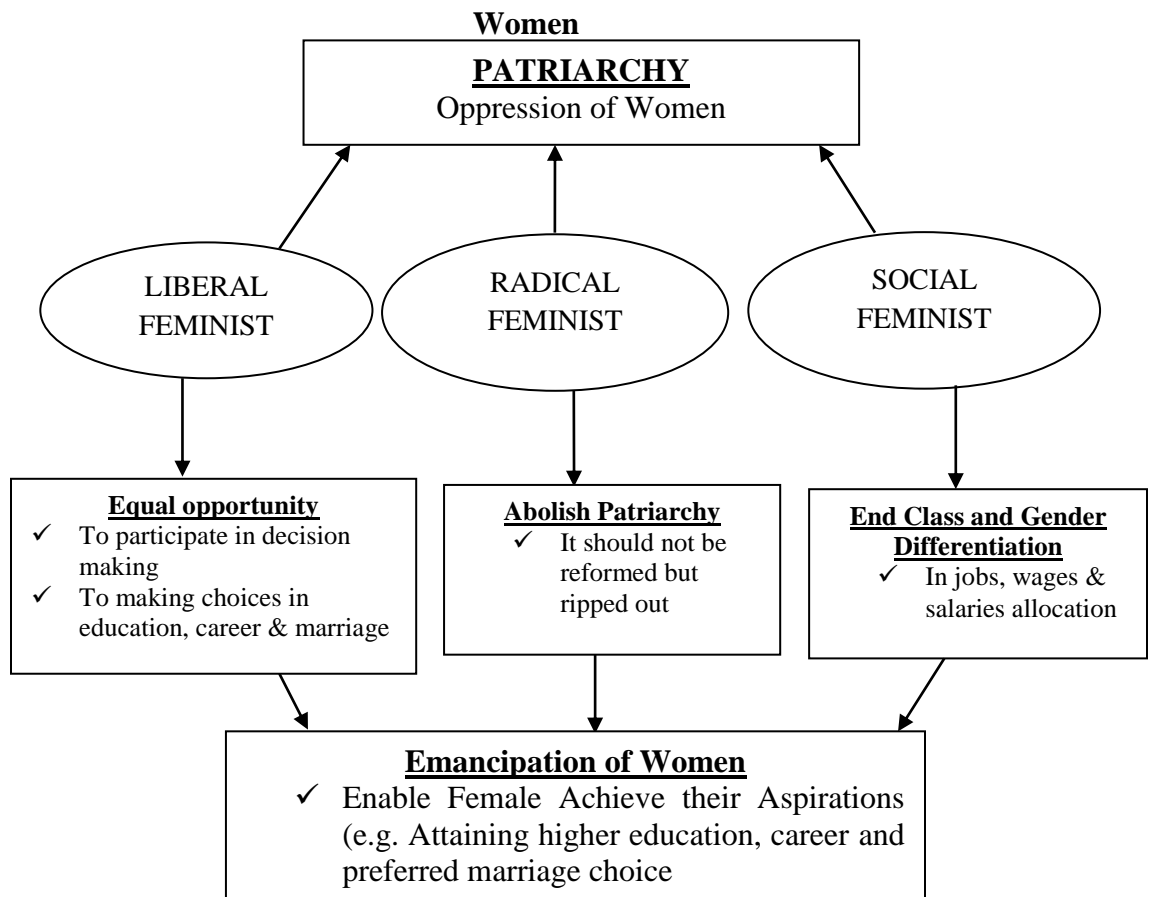
In spite of all these, countries around the globe have made great steps towards achieving gender equality (United Nations, 2000), and this is evident in areas such as education, the decline in inequality, and women's growing social, economic, and political participation. However, inequalities are still present as demonstrated in women's educational background, number of women in decision-making positions etc., as a result of patriarchy (Momsen, 2002). Also, patriarchy is a dominant ideology making it difficult to break the vicious cycle creating gender inequalities.



## 2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework, which is guided by the three feminist theoretical perspectives for the study, is illustrated in figure 1.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of How Patriarchy Affect the Emancipation of**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of How Patriarchy Affect the Emancipation of Women**

*Source: Researcher's Construct (2017)*



The conceptual framework above was drawn from the three perspectives of the feminist theories: the Liberal, Radical, and Socialist perspectives. The feminist theory evolved as a result of patriarchy (a system that oppresses women). The liberal feminists advocate for equal opportunity for women in all spheres of life. They are of the view that patriarchy which keeps men in power is the cause of women's oppression; they believe that all human beings are equally created with the same mental capacity. Thus, the liberal feminists argue that women especially female adolescents should be given equal opportunity to participate in decision-making and have the freedom to choose their careers and marriage partners. In the context of this study, participation in decision making and the freedom to choose refers to the ability of female adolescents to engage with the patriarch or significant people within the family without fear or harm by making inputs concerning their aspirations; since participation in decision and freedom of choice are important to the achievement of one's aspirations.

However, this does not imply that female adolescents should be solely responsible for decisions affecting their lives. Again, since adolescence is the period of exploration, it is only appropriate for adolescents to participate in decision-making and be allowed to make a choice but with the guidance of adults. But from the literature, in a patriarchal society females have no voice or are not allowed to participate in decision making. The liberal feminists advocate that both sexes should be given equal opportunity. The Liberal feminists believe that if this is achieved then women will be liberated to achieve their aspirations in life.

The radical feminists on the other hand suggested that patriarchy is a system characterised by power, dominance, hierarchy and competition. They also hint that the system cannot be



reformed but rather it must be smashed out to allow equality. The Radical feminists believe that the oppression of women cuts across the world, and the domination of women as a result of patriarchy is the oldest and worst kind of oppression. The mission of the radical feminists is to overthrow patriarchy since they believe it cannot be reformed because it is deeply rooted in the society. As a result, their view is that the best way to liberate women is to abolish patriarchy completely for women to have control over their lives especially their sexuality in order to achieve their aspirations in life.

The socialist feminists also believe that the oppression of women is as a result of class and gender in a patriarchal society; in the sense that men are given great rewards because they produce tangible goods and on the other hand, women's work is not valued because they do not produce tangible goods. However, even in instances where men and women perform the same task, women are still underpaid and this then gives men power and control over women. Hence the socialist feminists believe that the way to fight this oppression is to end class and gender differentiation for women to be allowed to perform any work just like men if only they have the capability. They further suggested that men and women should see themselves as equals in all spheres of life and should be rewarded equally.

Whatever the ideological differences between the various feminist groups may be, one thing that cannot be overlooked is the fact that they are united in their rebellion against patriarchy. In order for women and female adolescents to be liberated to achieve their aspirations in a patriarchal society, this study suggests that women and females in general have to be liberated from all forms of oppressions that hinder their potential to achieve their aspirations.

## **2.8 The Aspirations of Female Adolescents and the Obstacles they face in achieving them Aspirations in a Patriarchal Society**

Adolescence is the time when individuals are more concerned about their future aspirations than any of the other developmental phases (Eccles et al., 2003). Nurmi (2004), asserted that Adolescents' aspirations initially develop as vague representations of possible future outcomes based on societal norms and parental expectations. As adolescents gain experience, they develop more self-knowledge (Eccles et al., 2003), which can lead to further refinements in their aspirations and expectations.

As already indicated earlier, patriarchy as a cultural system has posed many challenges to girls in their childhood, adolescence, adulthood and womanhood, and as result, makes it difficult for them to achieve their aspirations. However, studies have shown that female adolescents have higher aspirations than male adolescents which includes getting a higher education, a preferred occupation, and also anticipate when and who to get married to (e.g., Clift and Vaughan 1997; Butlin 1999; Anisef et al., 2001; Perry et al., 2009). Their study suggested that though girls have higher levels of aspirations than boys, but no other segment of society faces much exploitation, discrimination and injustice as girls. For this reason, girls need support, yet overlooked especially in some patriarchal societies where the system prefer males to females and as a result the family's resource and support is being channelled into the aspirations of boys leaving the female adolescents behind (Lloyd & Young, 2009). As a result, adolescent girls in developing countries who come from an impoverished background in patriarchal societies continue to face added challenge of child marriage, early pregnancy, gender-based violence and harassment, parental indifference and traditions that inhibit a girl's ability to make her decisions (Kober, 2016).





On attaining higher education, Lambert et al (2012), in their study found that three main obstacles emerged as hindrances to female adolescents' education, and these are: poverty, harassment, and a cultural mind-set that devalues female education. They noted that cultural mind-set attributed to what made most women unable to attain higher education; making females vulnerable. Signifying that in Africa where the Ghanaian society is no exception especially where patriarchy exists, the perception of females attaining higher level of education is negative. Hence UNICEF (2013) argues that patriarchy contributes to high prevalence rate of early marriage, school drop-out, teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS which has a detrimental effect on female education.

However, despite these obstacles one cannot overlook the remarkable effort by the Ghanaian government to overcome the gender gap in education, although there is still much to be done. There is even a popular saying in Ghana that if you educate a boy, you educate an individual but if you educate a girl you educate the whole country. This means that educating girls continue to be one of the effective ways a developing country like Ghana can take in order to achieve development and the wellbeing of its citizens. Additionally, Lloyd et al, in the context of life stages and opportunity, an adolescent girl will marry later, have fewer and healthier children, earn an income to invest back into her family and also gain real skills to get a preferred occupation if she stays in school, hence investing in girl's education is the right action to take on moral, ethical, and human rights grounds (Lloyd and Young, 2009; Winthrop and McGivney, 2016; Yousafzai and Lamb, 2013).

On occupation, is it believed that gender role in a patriarchal society has had a significant influence on the occupational aspirations for most girls. This is because, the subservient role for women, where they are only subjected to domestic or menial jobs in the society turns to



discourage female adolescents in their pursuit for higher occupational careers (Lamber, et al, 2012). Hence, writers have underscored that the perception in Africa, for that matter the traditional Ghanaian society is that higher positions in occupation are for men whereas the lower positions are reserved for women and as a result, discouraging most female from taking up top occupational positions (e.g., Clift and Vaughan 1997; Butlin 1999; Anisef et al., 2001; Perry et al., 2009). In this sense, female adolescents growing up in such societies could turn to believe such perceptions and this is likely to kill their desires for higher positions. Also, they could begin to accept the role society offers instead of going after their desired aspirations. However, studies have revealed that women are also capable of performing well in such higher positions if only they are not discriminated on the basis of gender roles assigned by patriarchy (Parashar, 2008). This means that patriarchy is just a mere limitation and a barrier to female empowerment and gender equality.

Also, as a matter of patriarchal influence, studies suggest that early marriage continues to hinder girls' aspirations in Ghana. In the sense that some parents in their willingness give out their daughters for marriage when they are in their teen years, either to friends, benefactors, visitors, strangers, or even betrothed them to respected persons, hence ending their education and other aspirations prematurely (Alabi et al., 2013; Lambert et al., 2012; Tanye, 2008; Gergel, 2009). In this context, child marriage as defined by UNICEF (2013) is any union where one or both spouses are below the age of eighteen years, or in other words marriage before the eighteenth birthday. According to UNICEF (2005), child marriage arises because it is often seen as a way to provide for girls' future, but end up making them poorer. Thus, despite the fact that many female adolescents or girls have higher aspirations, around the globe child marriage continues to affect their future aspirations (Unicef, 2011).





The socialization processes also influence academic and career aspiration of adolescents especially in terms of what is expected from both genders (Seymour, 1999). According to Eagly and Wood (1991) and Frank et al. (1997) both genders tend to adjust their aspiration in line with their social roles. As a result of this, males are able to attain higher level of education while women on the other hand aspire and attain low level of education and occupation (Power and Butterfield, 2003). Although, gender stereotyping has been diminishing there are still few female adolescents who hold higher aspiration and are able to achieve them (Powell and Butterfield, 2003).

Also according to (Patmalniece, 2011), in his study, social pressure such as preference of sons to daughters have an influence on females education and career aspirations and this leads to a situation where men by attaining a higher level of education are more preferred in the job market, hence occupy highest positions in the labour force.

Therefore, from the foregoing it is clear that girls have their own aspirations which they desire to achieve and as a result they deserve equal opportunity to participate in decision-making concerning their lives, and the right to choose with the guidance and support from family and society just like their male counterparts. This study sought to explore female adolescents' aspirations and the obstacles they face in achieving their aspirations in the Wa traditional area.



## **2.9 The Experiences of Women and Its Implication on Female Adolescents in Achieving their Aspirations in Patriarchal Societies**

According to Atta (2015), the continual and varied degrees of injustices and inequalities spanning from cultural, social, economic, religious, political matters and its negative effects on females' aspirations is a worry. Haj-Yahia (2005) has argued that, the rise of gender inequality faced by many females in patriarchal societies is tied to patriarchal structures which continue to marginalise women. These structures include: protecting the authority of men, compulsive masculinity, economic constraints and discrimination against women, women bearing the burden of child nurturing, the single-parent family myth and the negative attitude to divorce, traditional beliefs about woman's role as wife and mother, negative self-image and the patriarchal masculine orientation in social welfare.

In a classical patriarchal belt such as Afghanistan, studies suggest that the role of women has been defined by patriarchal control, where men have power and authority over everyone else, while the women remain undermined and subordinate (Kandiyoti, 1994). Additionally, in Colombia it is said that due to patriarchy women are subjected to a set of rules that determines how they act, dress, talk, have sex and even think; making women to accept domesticity and motherhood as the two guiding forces of their lives (Suzanne, et al 2011).

In Africa, the situation is no different as a study in Nigeria has shown that a woman in a patriarchal society is reduced to a mere infidel and a second-class citizen. As a result, there is the commonality of general belief that the place for women is the kitchen (Allanana, 2013). This subjects the average woman, due to patriarchy, as an available object for prostitution, forced marriage, street hawking, instrument of wide-range trafficking and a misfit in the



society (Allanana, 2013). Also, previous studies affirm that patriarchy justifies the marginalisation of women in education, economy, labour market, politics, business, family, domestic matters and inheritance (Salam, 2003). This confirms that the culture of patriarchy is a strong determinant of male dominance over females where men are trained for leadership roles and women on the other hand are confined to domestic activities making them lose self-confidence and the desire to aspire towards higher aspirations in life (Allanana, 2013). As a result, Ojo (2002) opines that because of patriarchy, women are hard-hit than men by poverty due to less emphasis placed on female education, and the prevalence of early marriage which tends to further impoverish the womenfolk and also subject them to statutory discrimination.

Though most women wish to see their daughters achieve their aspirations, Allanana (2013) argues that this is far from reach because the aspirations of female adolescents tend to be circumscribed by patriarchal attitudes about gender roles, which make parents pay greater attention to the aspirations of boys than girls especially in cases where there is inadequate resources to enrol all children in school. Thus in Nigeria, the potential female labour force in the country's industries and civil services is half (50%) of the entire population and out of this, majority are found in the junior sector and this happens because most women are unable to attain higher education to get the requirement for higher or senior positions (Ajir, 2002).

In Ghana, the nature of sex-division of labour depends on customary usages and practices among different ethnic groups. According to Assimeng (1990) the general tendency has been for males to perform economic roles that are very demanding in terms of physical exertion, while females supplement males' efforts with activities that are in conformity with the nature of their strength and physique. However, the practice of patriarchy in some parts of the



traditional Ghanaian society - the Upper West, the Upper East, the Northern and Volta regions - has had an influence on most women's lives.

Specifically, in northern Ghana, studies by Bonye and Kpieta affirm that women do not own lands because of patriarchy and one of the reasons being that women are not considered as permanent members of their fathers' homes (Bonye and Kpieta, 2012). However, it was found that the position of land ownership is changing as a growing number of men in the north now allocate land to women because they have noticed women's ability to bring in income for the family (Bonye and Kpieta, 2012). What this means is that women have great potentials and are capable of contributing to development, and if they are given equal opportunity and resources just like their male counterparts they will use it to develop the family and the entire society at large.

Although patriarchy is often blamed for the subordination and impoverishment of women, anecdotal evidence suggest that a mother's own attitudes and beliefs indirectly affect her daughter's perception about womanhood and determines what the daughter will aspire to become in future. Also, previous researches have underscored that female adolescents' perception of their mothers' careers influence their aspirations (Barling et al, 1991; Kelloway and Watts 1994). For instance, when a mother is educated, occupies a higher position and participates in decision-making, it motivates her daughter to also aspire to attain higher education, and enjoy similar benefits.

Similarly, research has also shown that mothers have a great influence on the aspirations of female adolescents. Otoo (2000) report that girls most often look to their mothers for guidance and the experiences their mothers go through to influence their perception about

themselves as females and the kind of women they will become. On the contrary, Poulter (2006) in a study put forward that fathers rather have a more significant impact on children's aspirations especially female adolescents since they are usually the head of the family and also own resources and decide who to invest it on. This means that, if fathers in their choice prefer the male child over the female then the aspiration of female adolescents is at stake as many females will not get the attention and care needed for them to achieve their aspirations.

Furthermore, Maier (2005) argues that mothers have a closer relationship with their daughters because mothers' daily engagement with their daughters on discussions about issues is often swifter than fathers. Hence, Paa and Whither (2000) suggests that "even though fathers may have more influence on adolescents' aspirations, they can equally get more positive influence from their mothers". Kerpelman (2007) also stressed that it is important for mothers to be aware of their power to influence their female adolescents' life choices and also guide them in achieving their aspirations despite the challenges they go through.



## **2.10 Men's Perceptions on Patriarchy and Females Aspirations**

In order for female adolescents to achieve their aspirations in a patriarchal society, the perceptions of males on patriarchy and female adolescents are significantly important.

According to literature, even though patriarchy hits women harder, it also affects males in that undue pressure is put on them by society (Kaufman, 1991). For instance, women who are violated by men either emotionally, psychologically, or physically have the opportunity to express their emotions and even report such cases; but this cannot be said in the case of men being the victims. This is because, some countries' law do not even recognise abuse on

men by women. Kaufman (1991) put forward that power and masculinity, which is associated with men by patriarchy, makes men hide their emotions, and suppress their needs because patriarchy expects them to be mannish.

It is also said that some societies make mockery of men who report cases of abuse from their wives and those who are unable to hold back their emotions, especially when bereaved (Asiyanbola, 2005). This can be attributed to a popular saying that “men do not cry”. The question to ask in this context is that, what then happens to men who go through domestic abuse but are scared to report because of patriarchy, and those who cannot hold back their emotions and wish to express it but are scared society will make mockery them?

Similarly, a study by White (1960) also revealed that males’ perception about patriarchy is that, though it accords them power and undue advantage over women, it negatively affects them in the sense that they exercise patriarchal power not only because they reap benefit from it but the assertion of power is also a response to fear and to the wounds experienced in the quest of power.



Again, Philaretou (2001) affirms that males’ perception on the family breadwinner role makes men's jobs structured as if they have no families because society sees only women as natural caretakers in a household. As a result, men are discouraged from spending much time with their children and also performing primary responsibilities because patriarchy disapproves of such roles for men. As a result, this has contributed to some men’s position of supporting the feminist movement to end patriarchy because the world is changing and women's rebellion against patriarchy holds the promise of bringing patriarchy to an end.



On the other hand, on male's perception about females' aspirations, it is said that throughout history, women were viewed as immoral and objects of pity; where some critics accused working women of being negligent and this resulted in women employees not taken seriously by their male colleagues, or society (Nieve and Gutek). Thus in history, males' perceptions about women was to perform duties as wives and mothers (Dominenico and Jones, 2006). Hence, women experienced feelings of guilt or selfishness if they put their education and career aspirations first. However, despite this perception from males, women have made efforts to enter into the workforce, but attitudes regarding stereotypical occupational roles for male than females have resulted in women in low-paying jobs such as sales, service and clerical jobs (Tinklin and Frame, 2005). This, the study argues, restricts women's aspirations as compared to their male counterparts.

Notwithstanding, (Tinklin and Frame, 2005) questioned how the educational background of a man determines his support for his wife and female adolescents to achieve their aspirations. Their findings showed that men who are educated were likely to educate their daughters or make sure their wives achieve their career aspiration even if they married their wives at an early stage of their life. On the contrary, an uneducated man is likely not to invest in his children's education especially in the cases of female adolescents and is also not likely to allow his wife achieve her career aspirations because he doesn't see the need for female education and the wife to enter the workforce. In contrast, Mau and Bikos (2000) argued that parents' educational level have been positively related to aspirations of adolescents; but for some time now men, whether educated or not, have developed a positive perception about female adolescents' aspirations and the need for women to enter the workforce despite patriarchy.



However, a report by UK-AID revealed that in Africa specifically in Nigeria, men perceive women as people always being led by their emotions which make them weaker and more vulnerable than men. They added that women are expected to behave and dress modestly, upright or honest, tolerant, patient, respectful, and deferential towards men, and above all they should obey their husbands on all matters (UK-AID, 2015). This suggests that most people believe that men make decisions in and outside the home and have made women believe they are unable to make decisions concerning their lives, especially with regards to their aspirations.

Similarly, in northern Ghana, a predominant patriarchal zone, the males see women as temporal members of their fathers' home. As a result, they get no inheritance from their fathers and also no support to attain higher education, because investing in a girl's education is investing in her husband's family. As a result, most men in patriarchal societies prefer to invest in boys than females. However, (UNESCO, 2003), revealed that investing in girls is equally important since most married educated women invest back into their family to reduce economic hardship back home.

Additionally, on males' perception on female aspiration, it was revealed that women are seen as bad managers so no valuable commodity is entrusted in their care (Bonye and Kpieta, 2012). As a result, men continue to be richer than women since all family resources are entrusted to them.

All these suggest that patriarchy is a system that needs to be relooked at since it does not only influences the aspirations of females because there is a preference for a male child over a female, but literature suggest that is also affect men though it hits women harder. On this



objective the study sought to find out males perception on patriarchy and females aspirations in the Wa Traditional Area.

## **2.11 Conclusion**

From the literature, it is evident that females have great potentials and are capable of contributing to development right at the family unit to the societal level, but patriarchy which is the cause of women's oppression hinders them from achieving their aspirations; because there is a preference for a son over a daughter in a patriarchal society. This study suggested that in order for female adolescents to achieve their aspirations, it is important to address socio-cultural factors such as patriarchy which undermines females and give much attention to males.

In conclusion, the above literature informed the sort of research questions in chapter one, which have been answered in chapters four and five, as well as the methodology that was best suited for the study; which is discussed in chapter three.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the study area and detailed methods applied in the study to achieve the research objectives. The chapter begins with a description of the study area, research approach, research design, target population, sampling, sampling technique, sources of data, data collection procedure, data presentation and analysis, and ethical considerations.

#### 3.1 Profile of the Study Area

The research was carried out in the Wa Traditional Area in the Upper West Region (UWR) of Ghana. The Wa traditional area is located in the north-western corner of Ghana, which shares boundaries to the North with the Kaleo Traditional Area, to the East with Manwe Traditional Area, to the West with Dorimon and Wechiau Traditional Areas in the Upper West Region and to the south with the Bole Traditional Area in the Northern Region.

According to report by the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs (UWRHC, 2017), the people (indigenes) of the Wa traditional area are predominantly the “Mole-Dagbani” group and the most predominant language spoken in the traditional area is Walee and are also predominantly Muslims. There are also some settlers such as Dagaaba, Frafras, Akans, Ga-Adangbes, Ewes, Grusi, Dagombas, Gonjas, and Moshis among others especially within the capital of the traditional area which is located at Wa and its surroundings. The system of inheritance in the traditional area is Patrilineal where only males are allowed to inherit





properties and the main economic activity is agriculture followed by commerce and industry. The people are mostly involved in subsistence farming. They also engage in livestock production which includes cattle, sheep, goats, and poultry among others, and other economic activities such as weaving, tailoring, trading, construction, hotel service, and carpentry among others.

The traditional area has about two hundred and forty-four (244) chiefs which constitutes the paramount chief (Wa Naa), the paramount Queen Mother (Wa Pognaa), divisional chiefs, divisional queen mothers, sub-divisional chiefs and sub-chiefs. The Wa traditional area is made up of many communities with their respective rulers. The traditional area has five paramuncies namely; Wa, Busa, Kperisi, Guli and Sing. The major communities in the traditional area are as follows; Wa, Busa, Kperisi, Guli, Sing, Konjiahi, Kadoli, Dubie, Charia, Duori, Kulkpong, Nakori, Loggu, Kpungu, Bugubele, Nyagli, Boli, Biihee among others (UWR Regional House of Chiefs Report, 2017).

However, four communities were chosen from these communities which include: Kperisi, Guli, Kulkpong and Nakori for the study. The reason for choosing these communities was to enable the researcher to gain an in-depth knowledge of patriarchy from the traditional leaders and also to get natives who could best relate to the phenomenon studied. The majority of the communities were selected from Wa central; specifically two (2) communities closer to the Wa municipality, one (1) community (Kperisi) also a bit far from the Wa municipality, and one community (Kulkpong) from Wa east.

The population of the Wa Municipality, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, is 107,214 representing 15.3% of the region's total population. Males constitute

49.7% and females represent 50.6% (GSS, 2014). Out of the female's proportion, 22.1% are in formal employment sector as employees, 12.4% constitute family workers and 5.0% are self-employed (GSS, 2014).

The heads of households are predominantly male; male headed households constitute about three times more than female headed households in the UWR (GSS, 2010b). The phenomena; polygamy, and patriarchy are persistent in the UWR and through these phenomena, men's power, status, and privileges are maintained. In other words, women and female children are marginalised groups in the households of the UWR's male dominated society (Bowen, 2013).

However, it is noted that higher proportions of females in the Municipality are self-employed (57.9%) compared to 48.0% for males. The low proportion of women in the Municipality who were able to achieve their aspirations even went through some challenges since the system accords men undue advantage over women. Female adolescents have great potentials just like their male counterparts and if they are given all the necessary support to bring those potentials into realisation, they would be able to contribute to the decision-making process, attain higher education, attain their preferred career goals and this would not only affect their lives positively but would also foster development right at the family, community, and national levels. This would also bridge the inequality gap in the society.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

In social science, the approach or the decision to employ a particular type of research approach depends on the phenomenon being study. According to Creswell (2013) the





research approach is a plan and procedure for the research that spans the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

According to Bryman (2012), research approaches are chosen based on the purpose of the research thus explanatory, exploratory and descriptive. On this note, a research is said to be qualitative in nature if the purpose for the study is to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social phenomenon. As a result, qualitative approach to research seeks the subjective meaning of how people make sense of the world they live in, thus having in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2013). On the other hand, quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables and use of numerical terms to explain data.

Mixed method research is an approach to enquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. This normally involves integrating the two types of approaches and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (Neuman, 2007). The advantage of this approach is that it provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either qualitative or quantitative approach alone (Creswell, 2013).

However, considering all these three approaches, the researcher employed the qualitative approach for the study based on the purpose of the study which is exploratory in nature than testing hypothesis to explain variables. Therefore, the qualitative approach was suitable for this study because it helped the researcher achieve the objectives since the study required a focused meaning and an in-depth knowledge of the experiences of women, the female

adolescents and the perceptions of male elders about female adolescents' aspirations and patriarchy.

### 3.3 Research Design

In conducting a social research, research design helps the researcher decide on the type of methods and procedures to be used to study the problem under investigation. Thus, research design provides the specific direction for the study (Creswell, 2013). Similarly, there are designs under all the three research approaches mentioned above. However, in qualitative approach, designs include: narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnographies and case study designs (Creswell, 2013).

Creswell opines that, in research the decision to choose a particular design depends on the research problem or the phenomenon being studied. According to Creswell (2013), phenomenological research design is suitable for a study if the researcher's interest is to describe the life experiences of individuals.



The purpose of the study was to explore the adolescents' future aspirations and challenges they encounter in achieving their aspirations in a patriarchal society; secondly the life experiences of women in a patriarchal society and also sought for in-depth knowledge of men's perception on female aspirations and patriarchy in the Wa Traditional Area. Hence, based on these objectives of the study, the researcher employed phenomenological design for the study.

### **3.4 Target Population**

Target population refers to individuals to which researchers are interested in (Creswell (2013). Scholars suggest that these groups usually share the same distinct set of qualities (Bryman 2012). In this study, the target population comprised of women who have both female and male adolescents who have been able to achieve their aspirations and those who have not been able to achieve their aspirations; men who also have female and male adolescents; female and male adolescents in school and those out of school; and lastly, some stakeholders in the Wa municipal Assembly.

### **3.5 Sampling**

In research, sampling allows the researcher to select a few proportions of individuals or groups from a bigger group or population. According to Bryman (2012), the rationale behind sampling is that in research it is difficult to cover the entire population due to practical reasons such as time factor and inadequate resources.



In this study, non-probability sampling method was used which include purposive and snowball sampling techniques. This is because, non-probability sampling is also appropriate when the researcher seeks an in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon being studied (Ross, 2005).

### **3.6 Sample Size**

The study involved a total of fifty-four (54) respondents. It comprised thirteen (13) men, thirteen (13) women and sixteen (16) adolescents (eight (8) boys and sixteen (16) girls) at the

various communities and four (4) stake holders from the Wa municipal assembly. This is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sampled Distribution of Wa Traditional Area communities, Informants, Sample Size and Techniques.**

Communities	Informants	Sample Size	Technique
1.Nakori	Men	3	Purposive & Snowball
	Women	3	Purposive & Snowball
	Adolescents	6	Purposive & Snowball
2.Kperisi	Men	3	Purposive & Snowball
	Women	3	Purposive & Snowball
	Adolescents	6	Purposive & Snowball
3. Kulkpong	Men	3	Purposive & Snowball
	Women	4	Purposive & Snowball
	Adolescents	6	Purposive & Snowball
4. Guli	Men	4	Purposive & Snowball
	Women	3	Purposive & Snowball
	Adolescents	6	
STAKEHOLDERS	1. Department of Community Development 2. Department of Children 3. Department of Gender 4.Regional House of chiefs	4	Purposive
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>	

Source: Author's Construct, (2017)





### 3.7 Sampling Technique

There are various strategies used in selecting respondents for a study. The decision to use any type of sampling technique depends on the nature, content of phenomenon being studied and how feasible the sampling technique will be to achieve the overall objective of the study within the scheduled time. In the case of this study, purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select the communities, respondents and the stakeholders.

#### 3.7.1 Purposive-Snowball Sampling

In qualitative studies, purposive and snowball sampling are both distinct non-probabilities sampling strategies available for the researcher to employ. However, writers suggest both strategies can be used jointly if one technique could be deficient as a result of time and resource constraints (Palinkas et al., 2013). Therefore, in this study both techniques were adopted jointly to select participants. According to Bryman (2012), purposive sampling is a valuable kind of sampling for special situations such as unique cases where members have in-depth knowledge about the problem under study. Snowball sampling on the other hand is a technique used to refer one respondent to the other and the crucial feature is that each person or unit is connected with another through a direct or indirect linkage Bryman (2012),

To understand the perception about adolescents' aspiration, the experiences of women in a patriarchal society, and men's perception on patriarchy, the researcher first purposively selected traditional communities in the Wa Traditional Area. Subsequently, purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select adolescents, women, and men (traditional leaders and family heads). These informants were selected based on their convenience,



availability, and in-depth knowledge to contribute significantly to the topic which helped the researcher achieved the goal of the study within the stipulated period.

### **3.8 Sources of Data**

The study used primary data in order to accomplish the study objectives. Primary data was collected from the field as first-hand information through the use of structured interview and semi-structured interview guides.

### **3.9 Data Collection Technique**

In order to collect data on female adolescents' future aspirations, life experiences of women and female adolescents in achieving their future aspirations, and also men's perception on patriarchy and females' aspirations, a semi-structured interview guide was used. These are explained in detail below. A Semi-structured interview is quite flexible and the interviewer decides the sequence and wording of questions in the course of the interview but guided by a checklist (Sarantakos, 2013).

This enabled the researcher gained an in-depth knowledge on adolescents' aspirations, perception on patriarchy and life experiences of women. This was feasible since the researcher decided the questions to ask in the course of the interview. The researcher also considered further relevant questions that came up in the course of the interview; which were not pre-conceived by the researcher at the earlier stage of the design.

The interview was conducted in a form of face-to-face conversation with the aim of obtaining information where responses were interpreted by the field assistant who was a





native and could also speak the local dialect Walee while the researcher took down notes of the interview. The structure of the interview guide was based on the themes of the objectives of the study which were the aspirations of female adolescents, experiences of mothers, men's perception on patriarchy and female's aspirations. The aspirations of adolescents were pre-conceived in terms of attaining higher education, career, and marriage preference and subsequently coded by the researcher for respondents to share their thoughts whether agreeing or disagreeing to the assertion with further explanations.

### **3.11 Data Analysis**

The data analysis done in this study searched for patterns in data, recurrent behaviours, and belief systems that informants thought about the female adolescents' future aspirations, life experiences of women and patriarchy. According to scholars, text data are dense and rich, making it suitable for use in a qualitative study (Creswell, 2013). However, it is cautioned that, despite text data being rich for use as qualitative data, not all the information can be used in the analysis and researchers need to "winnow" the data (Guest et al., 2012). This was relevant for the study, since the researcher aggregated data into a small number of themes connected with the concepts of the study.

In qualitative data analysis, there are various forms of analyses but for the purpose of this study content and thematic analyses were used in the analysis of data. According to (Bryman, 2012), qualitative content analysis is one of numerous research methods used to analyse text data based on quantitative numeric terms. Hence, the use of content analysis was to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon to depict the magnitude of informants' perception about the female adolescents' future aspirations. This helped to provide subjective

interpretation of the content of text data through coding process and identified themes or patterns which were condensed into categories or broad descriptions of the phenomenon. This helped described how female adolescents' future aspirations are being perceived in a patriarchal society and how they can be guided to achieve them.

Also, thematic analysis was used for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns into different categories which were kept in quotations and explained thereafter. This helped to organise and describe data set in rich detail (Bryman, 2012). This was done to capture important details about the data in relation to the research questions.

Hence, the researcher jointly used both content analysis and thematic analysis to analyse future aspirations of adolescents, perceptions on patriarchy, experiences of women and opinions from stakeholders on the phenomenon and also drew on management strategies to manage female adolescents in patriarchal societies to help them achieve their future aspirations.

During the interview process, all respondents who could not speak English were interviewed by a field assistant who was a native from the Wa Traditional Area and also had an in-depth knowledge on patriarchy. This made it easier to explain the phenomenon studied to the respondents for their assertion.

### **3.12 Ethical Consideration**

In a kind of study which involves direct human participation like this one, ethical issues are critical to consider in protecting informants' integrity and confidentiality. According to



(Creswell, 2013), ethics guide researchers through a range of concerns, dilemmas, and conflicts that arise over the proper way of conducting a study. However, in a social research there are three main ethical issues that have to be considered in conducting research- maintaining professional standards, voluntary consent and anonymity (Sarantakos, 2013).

In conducting the study, the researcher adopted methods to address participants' confidentiality and rights. Rights of the respondents were put into consideration where there was prior notice before the actual day of interview. Information given was entirely voluntary where respondents were not compelled to provide information. Also, the researcher ensured that the study met the standard of the institution by working with the guidelines of the University for Development Study. This was done by seeking for ethical clearance from the Department of Social, Political and Historical Studies of the University before going to the field to collect data. Finally, the researcher upheld the credibility of the research findings by avoiding bias in the reporting of the research findings.

### **3.13 Researcher's Role**

Qualitative research is interpretative research, with the inquirer typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants, and this introduces a range of strategic ethical and personal issues into the research process (Locke, 2007). With these concerns in mind the researcher was not influenced by personal background, thoughts, experiences, culture or any other factor which could result in bias in the research findings. Issues were objectively analysed and reported as found in the field.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the research. The findings are presented in themes of demographic characteristics and the research objectives: the aspirations of adolescents and obstacles they encounter in achieving their aspirations in a patriarchal society, the experiences of women and implications on female adolescents' future aspirations, and men's perception on patriarchy and female adolescents' future aspirations. These are presented in tables using respondent frequencies and percentage scores while their views are kept in quotations of themes.

#### 4.1 Socio- Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A descriptive analysis among three groups was adopted for the study which included: adolescents in their late adolescence (15-19years), women, and men who had an in-depth knowledge on patriarchy and some stakeholders in the Wa Municipality. Their demographic variables analysed here include gender, age, level of education, and marital status. Table 2, presents data on respondents' demographic variables.



**Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Adolescent Respondents**

Variables	Categories	No of Respondents
Gender	Male adolescent(15-19yrs)	8
	Female adolescent (15-19yrs)	16
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>
Level of education	Male adolescents in school	7
	Male adolescent dropouts	1
	Female adolescents in school	10
	Female adolescent dropouts	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>
Marital Status	Single male adolescents	8
	Married male adolescents	NIL
	Single female adolescents	10
	Married female adolescents	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

Source: Field Work, February – March, 2017.

Table 2 presents the demographic background of adolescents who participated in the study, out of the 24 adolescents sampled for the study, more female adolescents (6) and male (1) dropped out of school. The reason given by the female adolescents for dropping out of school suggest that early marriage resulted in them dropping out of school, the male adolescent on the other hand attributed dropping out of school to financial constraint. However, more female adolescents (10) than male adolescents (7) are in school.

This suggests that, in patriarchal societies like the Wa Traditional Area, female adolescents are married off and depriving them of pursuing their educational aspirations.



**Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Men, Women, and Stakeholders**

Variables	Categories	No. of Respondents
Gender	Men	13
	Women	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>
Age	(20-30)	2
	(31-50)	15
	50+	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>
Level of Education	Educated men	9
	Uneducated men	4
	Educated women	3
	Uneducated women	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>
Marital Status	Married women	13
	Married men	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>
Stakeholders	Department of Community Development	1
	Ministry of Gender, Upper West Regional office	1
	Department of Children	1
	Regional House of Chiefs	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

Source: Field Work, February – March, 2017.

Table 3 presents the demographic background of men and women who participated in the study. Out of the thirteen (13) women and thirteen (13) men interviewed, three (3) women are educated and ten (10) women uneducated whilst nine (9) men are educated and four (4)





men uneducated. This depicts the extent to which women are deprived of education in patriarchal societies in the study area.

Moreover four (4) stakeholders, comprising two (2) men and two (2) women, were interviewed in the Wa Municipal assembly. These were governmental departments which had an in-depth knowledge of patriarchy and were in charge of issues concerning the welfare of vulnerable groups in the society and the development of communities at large: Ministry of Gender and Social Protection, Department of Children and Community Development and the Regional House of Chiefs, all in the Upper West Regional Office. Their views were sought on how patriarchy affects their obligation as government agencies in charge of ensuring the wellbeing of people, and subsequently asked how they managed to achieve the objectives of their departments.

#### **4.2 The Aspirations of Adolescents and Obstacles in Achieving their Aspirations.**

To understand how female adolescents achieve their aspirations and the obstacles they encounter, the sampled female adolescents were asked questions on their aspirations with regards to attaining higher education, career goals, and marriage preference. They were also asked of their capabilities and the challenges affecting their aspirations. In the interviewing process, the sequential questions asked bordered on attaining higher education, career goals, making preferred marriage choices, parents awareness of their aspirations, equal support by parents for female and male adolescents, who is given more support in cases of unequal support, what influenced parents' decision on who to support, their capabilities and challenges. These questions were asked among female and male adolescents to compare scenarios. Table 4 on the next page presents the data.



**Table 4: Aspirations of Adolescents, and Capabilities and Obstacles in Achieving Higher Education**

Content Info	Categories	Female Adolescents		Male Adolescents	
		Freq.	Percent (%)	Freq.	Percent (%)
Attaining higher education	SHS	2	12.5	2	25.0
	Nursing/Teacher	14	87.5	2	25.0
	University	NIL	NIL	4	50.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Parents awareness	Yes	13	81.2	8	100
	No	3	18.8	NIL	NIL
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Equal support from parents	Yes	5	31.3	4	50.0
	No	11	68.7	4	50.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
If 'no' who is given much support	Males	9	81.8	3	75
	Females	2	18.2	1	25
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0</b>
What influenced parents treatment	Patriarchy	9	56.2	4	50.0
	Modernity	5	31.3	4	50.0
	Don't know	2	12.5	NIL	NIL
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Capability to attain higher education despite patriarchy	Highly Capable	7	43.8	2	25.0
	Capable	4	25.0	5	62.5
	Somehow capable	1	6.2	NIL	NIL
	Not Capable	4	25.0	1	12.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Participation in decision affecting your life	Yes	7	43.7	7	87.5
	No	9	56.3	1	12.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Work, February – March, 2017.



With regards to attaining higher education, all sixteen (16) female adolescents had aspirations: few aspire to attain secondary education, whilst the rest aspiring to attain nursing and teacher training. Similarly all eight (8) male adolescents also had aspirations: where few aspiring to attain secondary education, and nursing and Teacher training and the majority also aspires to go to the university.

This indicates that among the male and female adolescents, males aspire more to attain a higher levels of education (i.e. university) than their female counterparts; who aspire nursing and teacher training. The reason given by female adolescents was that nursing and teaching occupation is mostly reserved for females whilst other occupations such as lawyer, banking, doctor, engineering, lecturing and other higher positions which demands a first degree is preserved for males'. This affirms a study by Eritrea et al. (2012) which revealed that due to patriarchy, females in such societies aspires a career occupation such as caring for children and elementary school teaching while males on the other hand aspires prestigious occupations such as Bank managers.



In finding out their parents' awareness and support to assist adolescents attain higher education, all male respondents postulated saying that their parents supports them. A 17 years old boy delineated that:

*“Yes...my parents are aware of my decision and they support me to attain my higher education by paying my exams fees and providing learning materials”* (Boy, 17 years JHS 1, Kperisi ).

Similarly, majority (81.2%) of female adolescents also agreed that their parents provide support. A 16 years old girl also delineated that

*“My parents are aware and they provide support for me to attain higher education by paying my exams fees, buying of books and other things” (Girl, 16 years JHS 3, Guli)*

This is against a few of the female adolescents disagreeing to the assertion. One of them explained saying:

*“My parents are not willing to support me in school because they say there is no need for a girl to attain a higher level of education since she will be married off and have the responsibility to take care of her family” (Girl, 17 years JHS 1, Nakori ).*

This means not all female adolescents are supported to attain a higher level of education and this affirms Alhassan and Odame (2015) assertion that because of preference for sons over daughters, male children are preferred to attain a higher level of education since women marry out of the households, therefore investing more in them to acquire higher education means investing in the prospective husband.

Subsequently, on whether parents give equal support to male and female adolescents to attain higher level of education, half of the male adolescents agreed that equal support is given to attain higher education while the other half disagreed and were of the opinion that female adolescents are supported more than their male counterpart. In a further probe to find out the reason for such an inequality with regards to support from parents, it was noted that males are perceived to be capable of working to support themselves. A male adolescent said,

*“females are supported more than males because parents say boys can work and support themselves in school but girls cannot, so they rather support the females to prevent teenage pregnancy” (Boy, 17 years JHS 3, Kulkpong ).*



A few of the female adolescents also agreed that equal support is given to both female and male adolescents to attain a higher level of education. This is against the majority disagreeing to the assertion, saying that male adolescents are supported more than females. This affirms feminists' argument that in a patriarchal society, male adolescents are supported more than females in achieving their aspirations (Wood, 2013). A 17 years old female adolescent explained saying,

*“Males are supported to attain higher education more than females because they say males will one day become the head of the family hence they need to be supported to be successful to take care of the family but we the girls will be married off to a different family and will be taken care of by our husbands”* (Boy, 17 years JHS 1, Nakori).

Similarly, other female adolescents said,

*“Parents believe in the aspirations of male adolescents and hence support them but for female adolescents they do not believe we can equally attain a higher level of education”*

(Girl, 17 years SHS 1, Kulkpong).

*“Parents are of the view that a boy can go to the university but a girl on the other hand can only aspire to the secondary level since she has to get married and take care on her family”*

(Girl, 18 years JHS 1, Guli).

This indicates that there is a discrimination against girls and as a result, male adolescents are supported more than female adolescents to attain higher education. This is because; males are regarded as future heads of families and therefore have the responsibility to continue the family's lineage. Much support is given to them during adolescence to become successful in





future to enable them take care of their families whereas female adolescents are largely left out and only seen as transit elements to different families. This finding supports Fikree (2004), that the importance and influence of male children over females can be judged from the fact that a son within a patriarchal household is thought to be the custodian and protector of family interests while a daughter on the other hand, is regarded as belonging to another family and is therefore a temporary visitor in the house.

Therefore, on reasons that influenced parents' unequal treatment of supporting male adolescents more than the females, half of the male adolescents and more than half of the female adolescents postulated that patriarchy influenced the said unequal treatment. However, a few of the female adolescents 'did not know' the reason for such unequal treatments by parents.

Thus, from the foregoing, it is apparent that both the male and female adolescents have knowledge about patriarchy and are aware of how the practice hinders the aspiration of females based on their observation of the different treatments offered to them by parents and the reasons for such treatments.

Again, the other half of the male adolescents and a few female adolescents opined that modernity was the result for the said equal treatment for both female and male adolescents.

Regarding adolescents' capability to attain higher education despite patriarchy, few of the male adolescents and majority of the female adolescents said that they were highly capable because according to them, they are intelligent in school. This confirms the discovery of Agbley (2015) that girls are equally capable of doing well in school even better than boys if patriarchal tendencies are being dealt with.

Also, majority of the male adolescents and few of the female adolescents asserted that they were capable of attaining a higher level of education. A female adolescent however said that she was somehow capable of attaining a higher level of education; she said,

*"I am somehow capable of attaining higher level education because I am an average pupil"*

(Girl, 16 years JHS 1, Kulkpong).

On the contrary, one male adolescent, and the rest of the female adolescents said that they were not capable of attaining higher education due to poor academic performance.

As a result, the respondents were further asked if they encountered any challenges pertaining to attaining a higher level of education. From this, it was noted that financial constraint was a major challenge since parents find it difficult to provide support. On the other hand female adolescents added that despite financial constraint, harassment from some teachers and their peers, are other challenge they face. This confirms the assertion of Lambert et al (2012) that three main obstacles emerged as hindrances to female adolescents' education: poverty, harassment, and a cultural mind-set that devalues female education.

Finally, with regards to adolescents participating in decision making concerning one's life choices, majority of the male adolescents and few of female adolescents agreed that they participate in decision making. On the contrary, male adolescent, and majority female adolescents disagreed saying that they were not allowed to participate in decision making. From the former, it can be observed that more of female adolescents were not allowed to participate in decision making affecting their lives, and this affirms Sen (2000) which states that in male dominated societies, girls and women are denied the opportunity to participate in decision making.



In an interview with the male adolescent who was not allowed in decision making, he said,

*“My parents’ say I do not know what is best for myself so they do not involve me, I only accept their decisions whether good or bad”* (Boy, 17 years JHS 2, Kperisi).

Similarly, in an interview with one of the female adolescents who were not allowed in decision making, she said,

*“Decision making is the duty of males so I am not allowed, females are not part of decision making in my family and community”* (Girl, 18 years JHS 2, Kperisi).

and *“I am not allowed because my parents say I am very young to be included in decision making though sometime I wish I can also express my opinion about certain issues affecting me”* (Girl, 18 years JHS 1, Nakori).

Though some male and female adolescents were allowed to be part of decision making concerning their lives, the study found that more males were allowed to part-take in decision making concerning their lives in patriarchal societies than females.





#### **4.3 The Aspirations of Adolescents and Obstacles in Achieving their Aspirations.**

To understand how female adolescents achieve their aspirations and the obstacles they encounter, the sampled female adolescents were asked questions on their aspirations with regards to their career goals. They were also asked of their capabilities and the challenges affecting their career aspirations. In the interviewing process, the sequential questions asked bordered on career goals, , parents awareness of their career aspirations, equal support by parents for female and male adolescents, who is given more support in cases of unequal support, careers perceived as preserve for only males and females, and their capabilities and challenges. These questions were asked among female and male adolescents to compare scenarios. Table 5 on the next page presents the data.



**Table 5: Female and Male Adolescents Responses of their Career Aspirations and Obstacles faced**

Content Info	Categories	Female adolescents		Male Adolescents	
		Freq.	Percent (%)	Freq.	Percent (%)
Aspired career goal	Nurse	8	50.0	NIL	NIL
	Teacher	6	37.5	2	25.0
	Doctor	NIL	NIL	3	37.5
	Mechanic	NIL	NIL	3	37.5
	Handicraft	2	12.5	NIL	NIL
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Parents awareness and support to obtain career goal	Yes	14	87.5	8	100
	No	2	12.5	NIL	NIL
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Equal support given by parents to obtain career	Yes	5	31.2	4	50.0
	No	11	68.8	4	50.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Are the career considered as preserve for males & females	Yes	16	100.0	8	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Capability to achieve career goal despite patriarchy	Highly Capable	4	25.0	2	25.0
	Capable	12	75.0	6	75.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Work, February – March, 2017.

From Table 5, based on the career goal aspirations of adolescents, it was noted that both male and female adolescents had different career goals. Half of the female adolescents aspire to become nurses, and few of both male and female adolescents aspire to become teachers.





None of the female adolescents aspire to become doctors and mechanics whereas majority of the male adolescents do. However, few of the female adolescents aspire to engage in handicraft such as dressmaking and hairdressing whereas none of the male adolescents do. One female adolescent said,

*“I am not academically good and I have realised that I am good at handiwork such as dressmaking and hairdressing hence I aspire handicraft than to work in other careers”* (Girl, 18 years school dropout, Nakori).

From the findings above, it was realised that female adolescents aspire to engage in handicraft, become nurses and teachers but not doctors and mechanics. This is because, those careers were considered as the preserve of females by female adolescents since they perceived them not to be difficult as compared to careers such as being an accountant, mechanic, engineer, lawyer and doctor. Even the male adolescents aspiring to become mechanics and doctors said, these occupations are difficult to do and only men can engage in them. The researcher noted that specific roles ascribed to both men and women by the society have a major influence on adolescents’ aspirations.

Also, the close vicinity of the teacher and nursing training schools informed the choices made by the female adolescents, but proximity was not a reason for male adolescent to aspire to become teachers and nurses. This emphasizes that in patriarchal societies, it has been preconceived that males have to engage in difficult or complicated jobs such as becoming a doctors and engineers while females have to engage in less difficult jobs like teaching, nursing, hairdressing, and dressmaking. This supports a study by Eritrea et al (2012) which revealed that due to patriarchy, women and female adolescents in such societies aspires a

career occupation such as caring for children and elementary school teaching while the men on the other hand aspire prestigious occupations.

Furthermore, according to Assimeng (1990), the general tendency has been for males to perform economic roles that are very demanding in terms of physical exertion, while females supplement males' efforts with activities that are in conformity with the nature of their strength and physique.

On parents' awareness and support to assist adolescents achieve career goal, majority of the female adolescents and all the male adolescents delineated 'yes', asserting that their parents were aware and support their career aspiration. On further probing to ask respondents the type of support given them, both males and females adolescents said, parents support them through education by making sure that they get all what they need to excel in school to enable them achieve their career goal.

On the contrary, the few female adolescents who said that their parents were not aware of and were not supporting them to attain their career goals attributed it to the disappointment they brought to their families because of teenage pregnancy, causing them to drop out of school. This has affected their career goals because, not being able to achieve educational goal also affects career goal.

Subsequently, in probing intensely to know if parents provided equal opportunity and support for both male and female adolescent to achieve their preferred careers, a few of the female adolescents and half of the male adolescents said that equal support is being provided for both male and female adolescents. On the contrary, majority of female adolescents and half of the males disagreed.



On further probing to find out who is given much support than the other, majority of female adolescents explained that male adolescents were supported more than female adolescents because their parents said that the males will one day become heads of families so it is important they invest the little resources on them so that they will become successful to take care of their families, but females will be married off and they will be taken care of by their husbands. In contrast, the other half of the male adolescents said that female adolescents are supported more than male adolescents because parents say males can engage in any type of work to help themselves achieve their aspired careers but females on the other hand cannot do that so they need to be supported more than the males. This also affirms (Baker, 2014) that parents pay more attention to their girls because of the vulnerabilities imposed on them by society's culture.

This indicates that, in terms of parents' support to male and female adolescents, different perspectives exist depending on one's perception. But irrespective of the differing perspectives, it was found that more support is given to male adolescents than female adolescents; which are attributed to patriarchy.

With regards to adolescents' capability to achieve career goals despite patriarchy, it was noted that a quarter of the female and a quarter of the male adolescents were highly capable.

Most of the female and male adolescents said they were capable of achieving their career goal. Upon probing further, a female adolescent said,

*“Though parents prefer to support male adolescents to achieve their career goal, I am determined and intelligent in school and I certainly will achieve my career goal”* (Girl, 18 years SHS 1, Nakori).

Similarly, male adolescents said,

*"I am intelligent, skilful and confident I will achieve my preferred career goal even though parents support female adolescents sometimes"* (Boy, 18 years JHS 3, Kulkpong).

This shows that adolescents, whether male or female, have capabilities and are conscious of their capabilities to achieve their career goal despite the negative effects of patriarchy. This is because this excerpt indicates that, at least some female adolescents are convinced they are intelligent and skilful and therefore are confident they can achieve their aspirations despite challenges. This confirms the assertion that girls with equal access to opportunities can grow into strong women who can take on leadership roles and also help to develop policies that support women and girls (World Bank, 2016).



#### 4.3 The Aspirations of Adolescents and Obstacles in Achieving their Aspirations.

To understand female adolescents marriage aspirations, adolescents preferred marriage was the last of the aspiration the study explored. The sampled female adolescents were asked questions on their marriage preference, if they are allowed to have a self choice of spouse, whether they want to attain a higher education and get a career before marriage, and their perception of marriage drawing from family's experience. The result is represented in table 6.

**Table 6: Female and Male Adolescents Responses on their Marriage Aspirations**

Content Info	Categories	Female Adolescents		Male Adolescents	
		Freq.	Percent (%)	Freq.	Percent (%)
Marriage Preference	Wedding	12	75.0	8	100.0
	Elopement	1	6.3	NIL	NIL
	Engagement	3	18.7	NIL	NIL
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Self-choice of spouse	Yes	16	100.0	8	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Attaining higher education and career goal before marriage	Yes	5	31.3	7	87.5
	No	11	68.7	1	12.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Perception of marriage drawing from family's experience	Inspiring	15	93.7	7	87.5
	Frustrating	1	6.3	1	12.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Work, February – March, 2017.

Majority of the female adolescents and all of the male adolescents opined that they want to have a '**wedding**'. In probing to find out the reason for the choice, it was noted unanimously



between the males and females adolescents that, they want to have a wedding because it makes people to respect you in the community. However, a few of the female adolescents said they would rather prefer an ‘**engagement**’ to a wedding; reason being that an engagement saves cost, whilst weddings are very expensive. Only one female respondent preferred ‘**elopement**’ to the other two types of marriage ceremonies. She asserted that

*“My sister was eloped and happily married, so I would want to follow in her footsteps”* (Girl, 16 years SHS 1, Guli).

This indicates that most adolescents aspired to have a wedding ceremony more than other types of marriage ceremonies because they believe that a wedding is a respectable form of marriage comparable to engagement and elopement. The few who chose engagement did so because it is less expensive than a wedding. They all demonstrated a strong disregard for elopement because the practice is not respected in society.

Both male and female adolescents preferred to choose their own spouses. A female adolescent said,

*“I want to choose the man I love and who also loves me I cannot love the man my parents will choose for me* (Girl, 18 years SHS 1, Nakori). .”

Similarly, a male adolescent also said, *“I want to marry the woman I love and think can give me a peaceful home”* (Boy, 19 years SHS 1, Guli).

When asked if they were allowed to choose their own spouse, all female and male adolescents agreed that they were allowed to choose their own spouses because they have seen their brothers and sisters married to partners of their choice. Hence, this discovery is







contrary to Packaim (2006) that in a patriarchal society, in terms of relationships, a son can choose his preferred partner or even refuse his parents' choice of bride, but girls on the other hand have to submit physically and mentally to family decisions.

On attaining higher education and career goal before marriage, majority of the male adolescents said 'yes'. They explained that they want to get good jobs in order to provide for their families. However, few of the female adolescents also said 'yes', which they explained that they would not want to depend on their husbands for all their needs, and also, they want to support their husbands to take care of the children. On the contrary majority of the female adolescents said 'no'. They explained that it is a husband's duty to take care of his wife and the children. A few of the male adolescents also asserted not to attain a higher level of education and career goal before marriage. They explained that attaining a higher level of education and career goal will involve more time spent schooling and working.

This indicates that the perception of males being the heads of families influenced adolescents' perception about marriage with regards to when to get married and the role of a wife and husband. This perception of females results in economic pressure on men as the 'head of the family'. This also affirms literature that even though patriarchy hits women harder, it also affects males in that undue pressure is put on them by society as the head of the family (Kaufman, 1991).

Adolescents' were further asked their perception about marriage drawing from family's experience, majority of female and male adolescents said it was good and inspiring because there was peace at home amidst some misunderstanding between parents sometimes. However, one (1) female and one (1) male adolescent disagreed explaining that marriage was

frustrating due to financial hardship in the family, because only their fathers provided for the whole family. Their mothers on the other hand were unemployed, thus leading to quarrels between their parents every day. This indicates that the economic pressure on a man as the head of the family does not only affect them personally but also affects their marriages as well.

Data collected from the Department of Community Development suggested that male adolescents were supported more than female adolescents, and women were marginalised in many communities. To tackle such problems, the department embarks on programs such as gender role analysis. This is a tool used to educate communities on the chores that girls perform at home which result in low academic performance and advocate for boys to also help in performing house chores in order to reduce the pressure on girls. In addition, the department educates communities on the potentials of girls and the need for them to be equally supported like their male counterparts. Also, the department educates the community on the benefit of women's participation in decision making.



From the Department of Children, it was explained that patriarchy hinders their work in ensuring the basic principle of the Children's Act (1998); which enforces the rights of children to prevent discrimination against children. It also includes the support to achieve their aspirations and issues concerning inheritance since there is the preference for sons over daughters. They further explained that it was difficult to ensure the rights of children since the tradition is against it, and this usually resulted in misunderstanding between them and some parents.



The Department of Gender also gave their opinion on the subject matter. According to them, despite public education, most people still hold patriarchy at high esteem and are of the view that women should not be given opportunities in the society. As a result, despite their numerous programmes to ensure gender equality, little success has been achieved since it is difficult to change the peoples' perception about their beliefs especially with regards to culture and tradition.

The stakeholders were further asked if they think it is necessary to collaborate with the Regional House of Chiefs to educate the people on the need to reform cultural practices which do not promote human development in order for them to achieve their goals. They all agreed that it was important to collaborate with the House of Chiefs. It was also attested by the Regional House of Chiefs that patriarchy hinders girls' and women's aspirations and they considered themselves to be the right agency to help educate the people on patriarchy and its implications. However, they were quick to say that there is misallocation of resources. The government rather allocates resources to the other departments thinking they can bring change to ensure the wellbeing of people.

The various departments also admitted they were unable to collaborate to carry out such education in most communities, even though they agreed departmental collaboration was the right procedure for such advocacy. This supports Allanana (2013) that patriarchy does not only oppress women but it also affects the work of state institutions that are responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of its citizens.

#### **4.3 The Experiences of Women in a Patriarchal Society and Its Implications on Female Adolescents' Aspiration.**

In order to understand how patriarchy influenced the aspirations of women and its implications on female adolescents' aspirations, only women were interviewed on this objective, and were asked questions pertaining to their current occupation, level of education, career, and the preference for marriage they aspired for during adolescence. Also, there was further probing to find out if they were able to achieve those preferred aspirations, and whether they participated in decision making concerning their adolescents. Subsequently, they were asked who among their children was given the responsibility to nurture into adulthood; which of the children is given more attention and support to achieving their aspirations from their father; if patriarchy had an influence on female adolescents' aspirations; and finally their perception on patriarchy. These were asked to know the life experiences of women who are familiar with the system (Patriarchy) and how they are surviving with it. Table 7 presents the findings.



**Table 7: Women Experiences in a Patriarchal Society and Its Implications on Female Adolescents' Aspiration**

Content Info	Categories	Percent (%)	
		No. of Responses	
Current Occupation	Public servant	3	23.1
	Farm/Trading	7	53.8
	Handicraft	2	15.4
	Unemployed	1	7.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Aspired to attain higher education	Nursing/Teacher	12	92.3
	University	1	7.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Aspired to obtain career goal	Nurse	9	69.2
	Teacher	3	23.1
	Seamstress	1	7.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Marriage Choice	Self-Choice	12	92.3
	Parents' Choice	1	7.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Women participating in decision making concerning adolescents aspirations	Yes	6	46.2
	No	7	53.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Children given responsibility to nurture into adulthood	Females	10	76.9
	Both	3	23.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Children given much attention and support by husband to achieve aspiration	Male	10	76.9
	Female	3	23.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Female adolescents participate in decision making	Yes	6	46.2
	No	7	53.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Patriarchy influence on females aspirations	Yes	13	100.0
	No	NIL	NIL
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Perception about Patriarchy	Reformed	11	84.6
	Maintained	2	15.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Work, February – March, 2017.





The occupations of respondents were categorised into public servant, farming/trading, handicraft, and unemployed. It was noted that few of the respondents were working in the public sector as teachers, whereas the most were self-employed farming and trading, dressmaking and hairdressing. However, one person was not engaged in any form of work and served as a housewife. She expressed her desire to trade but was hindered by lack of start-up capital. This indicates that majority of the women in the Wa traditional area, despite patriarchy; operate their owned private business rather than working in the public sector.

All the respondents aspired for higher education; where most of them aspired to go to nursing/teacher training college to become teachers and nurses. On further probe to find out if they were able to achieve their perceived aspirations, only (3) three said 'yes' whilst the rest (10) said they were not able to achieve their aspirations. One respondent aspired university education to enable her work in the public sector but could not achieve it.

In finding out if their current occupations were what they aspired for during adolescence, most of the respondent respondents answered 'no' saying they aspired for a higher level of education and a higher career goal but were not supported by their parents. One of the reasons given was inadequate finances of their parents; hence the little resources within the family were channelled to support their brothers since they were to become successful in life to be able to take care of the family. The other reason was the excuse that females will be married off to a different family and will be taken care of by their husbands. One of them reported that;

*"my father said he does not have money to support female children to attain higher education, but only males because females will be married off and be taken care of by their husbands so he will rather use the small resources to support our brothers"* (Mother, Guli).

This means that in situations where female and male adolescents are competing for limited family resources for education, male children are more likely to be favoured. The respondents also said that patriarchy affected and 'killed' their aspirations making them unsuccessful in life and further affecting their female adolescents' aspirations. This affirms the argument of Allanana (2013) that though most women wish to see their daughters achieve their aspirations this is far from reach because the aspirations of female adolescents tend to be circumscribed by patriarchal attitudes about gender roles, which make parents pay greater attention to the aspirations of boys than girls especially in cases where there is inadequate resources to enrol all children in school.

On their marriage aspirations, respondents were asked of their choice of husbands, if they aspired to have a self-choice of spouse or they preferred parents' choice. All (13) of the respondents aspired to choose their preferred husband and not parents' choice. In a further probe to find out why, they explained that a self-choice of a marriage partner guarantees peace and love because the marriage is based on love (i.e. both parties love each other), but a parents' choice may not guarantee that since the person is not well known before marriage. Unfortunately, only one person could not achieve that aspiration; the reason being that there was economic hardship in the family, so her parents arranged for her to marry someone they thought could take care of her in order to release the hardship on them. This is affirmed by UNICEF (2005), that child marriage arises because it is often seen as a way to provide for



girls' future, and releasing economic pressure on the family but unfortunately this usually ends up making them poorer.

Women's participation in decision making is vital to the raising up of children, thus respondents were asked if they participate in decision making concerning adolescents' aspirations. Most of the respondents said they were not allowed to participate in decision making. They attributed this to their culture; which disapproves of women's participation, making it the sole preserve of the men who are the heads of their families.

However, a little below the majority of the respondents said they were allowed to make decisions concerning their children's aspirations. One respondent said,

*"though the culture disapproves of women's participation in decision making, with issues concerning the welfare of my children, I am involved because of my husband's orientation..."* (Mother, Kperisi ).

They further added that their participation was limited to the nurturing of their female adolescents, while their husbands concentrate on the males. This is affirmed by Kerpelman (2007) that in a patriarchal society, mothers are given the responsibility to nurture their girls into womanhood whereas men nurture their sons.

Relating to the findings herein, it can be said that women in the Wa Traditional Area are not allowed to participate in decision making, and the few who are allowed to participate do so only with greater responsibility to their female children. As a result, there is a division of care, attention, and support by parents to male and female adolescents in patriarchal societies. This is because the males are the heads of their families and own resources within







the family. Hence, preference is given to male adolescents in a patriarchal society which enables them to excel in achieving their aspirations more than the female adolescents.

In a further probe to ask how women have advised their daughters with regards to preference for sons over daughters and their daughter's aspirations, all the respondents said their daughters were aware of the preference for sons over daughters, and they have encouraged them to be determined and take their studies seriously. They have also pledged their support in achieving their aspirations in the absence of support from their fathers. Again this supports Kerpelman (2007) assertion that for adolescents to achieve their aspirations, especially females, it is important for mothers to be aware of their power to influence their life choices and also to encourage and guide them in achieving their aspirations though they may go through challenges due to patriarchy.

Conclusively, the findings revealed that women not being allowed to participate in decision making equally affected female adolescents. However, it was noted that women who were allowed to participate in decision making made great contributions concerning their aspirations; which results in great achievements.

Finally, the respondents' views were also sought on whether patriarchy should be abolished, reformed or maintained. Majority agreed that patriarchy should be reformed. A woman explained that,

*“Patriarchy should be reformed for the perception of the preference for sons over daughters to be changed so that women who are not able to give birth to males would be respected just like women who give birth to males since both children are human beings”* (Mother,

Kulkpong).

Another respondent also said,

*“Patriarchy should be reformed for women to also participate in decision making concerning all issues within the family to promote family and community development since women are equally capable of making good contributions”* (Mother, Nakori).

It was also said that patriarchy should be reformed to facilitate women inclusion in family resource inheritance decision. One respondent said,

*“Women should be offered some portion of their fathers’ properties even if they are married. This is because; some women marry men who are not financially stable to take care of the family. Therefore, if they are given a portion of their fathers’ properties they will be in a good position to support their husbands to take care of the family especially the children”*

(Mother, Kperisi,).

This is also in line with the assertion that women are not included in family inheritance because of patriarchy and one of the reasons being that women are not permanent members of their fathers’ homes (Bonye & Kpieta, 2012). This is also in line with liberal feminists’ assertion that women's liberation would be possible if sexist discrimination is removed so that women can have equal opportunity just like their male counterparts to participate in decision making and equal opportunity in all spheres of life (Andersen, 2007).

However, a few of the respondents were of the view that patriarchy should be maintained. They said,

*“Patriarchy should be maintained since it has been practiced ever since mankind came into existence and if the system is being challenged our husbands will become furious and even*



*divorce us. This will worsen our situation since we do not have properties in our fathers' house and the community. Our brothers' wives will also make a mockery of us and even sack us from the house since they have resumed our positions as daughters of the family because they are married to our brothers. This is our fate so we have to accept it and live with it in order not to lose our husbands since our mothers also went through it"* (Mother, Nakori).

Regardless, none of the respondents called for the abolition of patriarchy. This is contrary to the assertion by Anderson (2007) that though patriarchy hinders women's ability, all women in patriarchal societies want patriarchy to be abolished. Even though most of the women in the study area were not happy with the practice of patriarchy, they were against its abolition in order to protect their marriages. They were rather in support of reforms to make life better.

#### **4.4 Men's Perception about Patriarchy and Female Adolescents' Aspirations**

To comprehend men's perception about Patriarchy and female adolescents' aspirations, an interview process was ensued involving men as respondents. They were asked whether they offer equal opportunity to both female and male adolescents to with respect to their aspirations, attention given to each, who is the head of the family, what informed the choice of head of the family, effect of Patriarchy to men, and also female adolescents' aspirations, and whether they are willing to support both male and female adolescents equally regarding aspirations. Table 8 presents the results.



**Table 8: Men's Perception about Patriarchy and how it affects Female Adolescents' Aspirations**

Content Information	Categories	Men Group	
		Freq.	Percent (%)
Given equal opportunity to adolescents to achieve future aspiration	Yes	8	61.5
	No	5	38.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Head of family	Only Males	13	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
What informed the head of family	Patriarchy	13	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Does Patriarchy affect you as a man	Yes	5	38.4
	No	8	61.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Does Patriarchy hinders the aspirations of female adolescents	Yes	10	76.9
	No	3	23.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Perception about Patriarchy	Reformed	10	76.9
	Maintained	3	23.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Willingness to give Equal opportunity and support to both adolescents	Yes	7	53.8
	No	6	46.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Among who are you not willing	Male	2	33.3
	Female	4	66.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Work, February – March, 2017.



From Table 8, it was noted that the most of the respondents said they gave equal opportunity to both male and female adolescents. They however explained that equal opportunity is only given from childhood to adolescence, after which much concentration is given to males as they approach adulthood. On the other hand, few (38.5%) said they did not give equal opportunity to female and male adolescents to achieve their aspirations right from their infancy. A family head said:

*“Male adolescents are future family heads and this position comes with a lot of responsibilities so they have to be given much attention and support to become successful. The females will be married off, and their husbands will also take care of them”* (Man, Kperisi).

Another said, *“female adolescents may get pregnant along the way and this will mean that all the resources invested in her will be wasted, but with male adolescents they can still go to school even if they impregnate a female; hence it is advisable to rather support males than females”* (Man, Kperisi).

This suggests that though most men give equal opportunity to their adolescents to achieve their aspirations, it was noted that this equal opportunity was only from childhood to adolescence but as the children grow, the level of attention given to female adolescents reduce because of the fear of teenage pregnancy and the perception that they would be married and should be the responsibility of their husbands. The male adolescents on the other hand will become future heads of their families and continue the lineage. Also, literature affirms that in patriarchal societies both boys and girls take their identity from the father, but while sons are recognised as permanent members of the family, the girls are viewed more as



a transit element of his unit to their husbands' families, hence restricted in terms of equal support from parents (Suzanne, et al 2011).

It was further affirmed that '**head of a family**' was only aligned to males while a female could never become one. To what informed the choice of men being the head of the family, it was stated categorically to be due to '**Patriarchy**'. In explaining, it was attributed to be the cultural norm in the region. This is an indication that it goes beyond the Wa Traditional Area and is practiced in the Upper West Region. This is affirmed by Alhassan and Odame (2015) in a similar study in northern Ghana, which is patriarchal in nature.

Subsequently on whether 'patriarchy' affected them negatively in terms of finances and emotions as heads of family, the majority said '**no**'. A family head said, *"the position does not affect me financially because men own resources in the family, as a man everybody (wives and children) in the family works for me hence the income they receive are brought to me, and I will intend use it to take care of them. This means that all resources within the family belong to me hence I am not financially pressured* (Man Kperisi).

Another man shared saying, *"Patriarchy does not affect me emotionally because I was nurtured to be strong and courageous as a man since childhood hence I control my emotions; the saying that men don't cry should be encouraged. The position as family head grants me the right to solely make decisions in the family without consulting my wives; which saves me from a lot of problems."* (Man, Nakori).

However, few of the men said that the position comes with a lot of financial responsibilities, and also affected their emotions which they explained that;



*"I feel pressured because as the head of the family I am solely responsible for the welfare of everybody in the family. I have to take care of my wife and children by providing food, clothing, shelter, and paying school and hospital bills. The question I often ask is who will take care of my needs? (Man, Kulkpong).*

*Another man shared by saying, "The saying that men do not cry is a big problem to me because sometimes when I am faced with a very depressing situation, all I want to do is to express it by crying, but society will mock me, hence I have to keep it within and accumulate the pain; which makes me bitter in life" (Man, Nakori).*

Yet another shared that his position as the head of the family sometimes made him unable to involve his wife in decision making. This is because; society mocks men as not being 'men' when they always consult their wives before making decisions. As a result, men make all the decisions by themselves, and this does not help the family. This is also established by Kaufman (1991) that even though patriarchy hits women harder, it also affects males in the sense that undue pressure is put on them by the society.



On the issue of patriarchy hindering the aspirations of female adolescents, majority of the men said it did. The reason given was that there is a preference for sons over daughters; therefore the limited resources available are used to support male adolescents at the expense of the females. However, a few of the men disagreed; saying that female adolescents do not have aspirations. This was attributed to their assertion that females are only born into this world to be nurtured into womanhood for marriage, childbearing and taking care of the family. One family head shared by saying,

*“Patriarchy does not hinder female adolescents’ aspirations because education has made a lot of people aware of the need to support female adolescents to also achieve their aspirations like their male counterparts” (Man, Kperisi) .*

This suggests that some men were aware that patriarchy hinders female adolescents’ aspirations but had no choice since it is a cultural practice and male adolescents have to be supported at all cost more than female adolescents.

On a further probe to find out if men were willing to give equal support to both female and male adolescents in the absence of financial challenges, majority said they are not willing to give equal support to both male and female adolescents to achieve their aspiration. Some respondents expressed this view by saying,

*“I am not willing to support my daughter because of the fear of teenage pregnancy; if it happens all my resources will be wasted” (Interview, March 2017). And, “I am not willing to support my daughter because my daughter will be married of to a different family and investing in her means investing in someone else's family at the expense of mine.” (Man, Kulkpong).*

Also, one of them said, *“I am not willing to support my daughters because they cannot serve the gods after my demise, my sons will take up that position so I prefer to rather support my sons than my daughters” (Man, Nakori).*

Another person also said, *“I am not willing to support my daughters because I do not believe females have aspirations, there are only created by God to marry, give birth and take care of the family, so investing in them is a waste of resources” (Man, Kperisi).*





However, a few said 'yes' they are willing to provide equal support in the absence of financial constraint. One family head expressed this view saying,

*"I am willing to support my female adolescents because nowadays if you focus all your resources in helping only your sons to become successful they usually do not come back to take care of the family, they only take care of their nuclear family but the girls who were not supported, even with the little they have, still take care of the family"* (Man, Kperisi).

This indicates that aside patriarchy, where there is a preference for sons over daughters, inadequate resources within a family and other cultural practices are other reason why females are not supported to achieve their aspirations. However, it was also noted that some men have come to understand the importance of equally supporting female adolescents.

Lastly, on men's perception about the practice of patriarchy, majority of the respondents said 'patriarchy' should be reformed. Some of them shared by saying, *"Patriarchy should be reformed to enable women to also take part in decision making in the family and the community at large; since they are capable of making good contributions sometimes. This should be done only on condition that they are submissive, respectful and portray good attitudes in all things"* (Man, Guli).

*"Patriarchy should be reformed for women to also have some access to their fathers' inheritance so that they can use it to support themselves and their family"*

(Man, Kperisi) and,

*"Patriarchy should be reformed for people to be educated to change their perception about the preference for sons over daughters"* (Man, Nakori).



However, a few of the men were of the view that patriarchy should be maintained

*“Patriarchy should be maintained because it has been practiced since the creation of mankind and there has not been any problem so women should accept their fate as subordinates to men in order to avoid problems” (Man, Guli).*

From this, it can be said that in as much as patriarchy accords men undue advantage over women, some men still believe that the system should be reformed to also help women. This affirms literature by Kaufman (1991) that not all men are in support of patriarchy since it also affects them; hence some support the feminists’ view on patriarchy reforms. Similarly this affirms UKAID (2015) contribution to the discourse that some men’s position of supporting the feminist movement to end patriarchy because the world is changing and the women's rebellion against patriarchy holds the promise of bringing patriarchy to an end. However, there are still a few who want it to be maintained.

Conclusively, findings showed that patriarchy does not only affect females but also affects males and institutions that ensure the wellbeing of people, because their goals usually run into conflict with the culture and tradition of the people.

#### **4.5 Linking the Theory and Conceptual Framework to the Findings**

From the theory and conceptual framework that guided the study, it was confirmed that patriarchy is the source of women’s oppression as expressed by the liberal feminists advocating for equal opportunity to be given to both women and men. Thus, it was confirmed from the respondents that women need fair treatment to improve their situation since it has effects on generations. But on the radical feminist view on patriarchy being



abolished, respondents disagreed with this assertion and were of the view that patriarchy should not be abolished but rather reformed.

Lastly, on the socialist feminist view on patriarchy reforms to end unfair treatment of women, the respondents agreed to the assertion. It is therefore concluded that patriarchy needs to be reformed for equity to prevail between males and females. This draws on the conceptual framework and is the only sure way to emancipate women and female adolescents to enable them achieve their aspirations such as attaining higher education, obtaining a preferred career goal and a preferred marriage choice.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This section presents summaries of the research findings, the conclusion and the recommendations made based on the findings analysed in chapter four regarding adolescents' future aspirations, the experiences of women and implications of female adolescents' future aspirations, and males' perception on patriarchy and female adolescents' aspirations.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

##### 5.1.1 The Aspirations of Adolescents and Obstacles Face in Achieving their Aspirations in a Patriarchal Society.

The first specific objective of this study was to find out the adolescents' future aspirations and challenges faced in achieving their aspirations in a patriarchal society. This required categorising aspirations in terms of attaining a higher level of education, obtaining a preferred career goal and making marriage preference. In achieving this objective with regards to patriarchy, much emphasis was placed on female adolescents. However, a few of the male adolescents were also included for comparative scenarios. From the findings of this objective, it was confirmed that female adolescents have aspirations like their male counterparts such as attaining a higher education, a preferred career goal and a preferred marriage choice.





On attaining higher education, while most male adolescents aspires a higher level such as the university (first degree), most female adolescents preferred diploma programmes like nursing training and the teacher training; which they considered as less difficult jobs. Consequently, these had an influence on their career goals as well. Most male adolescents preferred occupations such as becoming a mechanic and doctor, which they claimed are challenging careers.

Lastly on marriage aspirations, both female and male adolescents had an idea of the kind of marriage ceremony they want in the future. Most preferred a wedding ceremony to engagement and elopement. Also, it was realised that female adolescents choose their spouses without any restrictions because it is allowed in their families. Additionally, it was also noted that both female and male adolescents have capabilities of achieving their aspirations.

However, it was realised that despite these aspirations of adolescents, female adolescents were not likely to achieve these aspirations due to patriarchal tendencies where there is a preference for sons over daughters. As a result, this makes female adolescents' future aspirations, especially education and career goals, far from being reached. This is because, sons are considered as permanent members of the family and have a responsibility of continuing the family's lineage, whereas daughters are considered to belong to their husbands' families; thus investing in them means investing in their husbands' families. It was subsequently discovered that patriarchal tendencies may not be the only hindrances to females' education and career aspirations; other factors such as financial constraints and harassment also affects their aspirations.

### **5.1.2 The Experiences of Women in a Patriarchal Society and Its Implication on Female Adolescents' Future Aspirations**

This objective targeted only women respondents to discover how females achieve their aspirations in a patriarchal society. This is because, in a study of this nature, it was important to explore the life experiences of females who have passed adolescence to find out what their aspirations were, whether they have been achieved or not and how this is influencing their daughters' aspirations. It was revealed that most women aspired to attain higher education to become nurses and teachers during adolescence. However, it was again noted that patriarchal tendencies of son preference over daughters hindered their aspirations due to financial constraints and the notion that sons are considered future heads of the family and expected to continue the family's lineage. These limited their family to support their brothers to achieve their aspirations at their expense; hence they were married off for financial gains.

However, the study found that the few women who were able to achieve their aspirations admitted going through challenges since there was a preference of sons to daughters. As a result, all the women were positively influencing their daughters by advising them on patriarchal tendencies, how it can affect their future aspirations and the need to strive harder because 'mothers' were ready to use their past experience to support daughters to achieve their aspirations in case their fathers refuse to do so.

Lastly on the issue of women owning properties, it was discovered that only males were allowed to inherit family's inheritance especially land. Though most women want some reforms regarding patriarchy, some want the practice to be maintained in order not to jeopardise their marriages.



### 5.1.3 Men's Perception on Females' Aspirations and Patriarchy

To find out men's perception on females aspirations and Patriarchy, only men were interviewed. Most of the men interviewed had positive thoughts for their female adolescents and claimed they provided equal support to both female and male adolescents. However from the findings, it was realised that this equal support was only given from infancy to the adolescence, and as they grew, fathers shifted much attention to the aspirations of sons than daughters. According to them the expectation of sons to continue the family's lineage is the major reason for such unequal treatment, and the fear of teenage pregnancy which could make all resources invested in females wasted. This is because, when a male impregnates a girl, he can still continue his education, but a female is likely to drop out. It was also noted that financial constraint is another reason for the unequal treatment. However from the findings, it was realised that even in the absence of financial constraints majority of the family heads are just not willing to provide equal support to both female and male adolescents to enable them achieve their aspiration.



Lastly, on men's perception about patriarchy, most of them agreed that it should be reformed to improve the situation of women and also to reduce the pressure on men as the 'head of the family' in patriarchal societies. However, a few disagreed and were of the view that though the situation of women is bad, patriarchy should be maintained because it has been the norm and was practiced by their forefathers.

### 5.2 Conclusion

Everybody is born with potential, and as a result, have aspirations which he or she desires to achieve. However, these aspirations would be far from being realised especially in the cases

of female adolescents who live in patriarchal societies. This is because in a patriarchal society, there is total subordination of women to men, preference for sons over daughters, and men are accorded undue advantage over women. From the foregoing, this study was conducted in some communities in the Wa traditional area to explore the experiences of women, female adolescents in a patriarchal society and the perception of men in the study communities female adolescents' aspirations.

The study found that despite people's perception that patriarchy is an old practice, it still exists and the preference for sons over daughters is still being held in high esteem which affects women and female adolescents' future aspirations. This is because, sons are regarded as permanent members of the family who have the responsibility to continue the family's lineage whereas daughters are only viewed as temporal members of the family and would soon get married and join their husband's family. Hence, most families especially fathers did not support their daughters to achieve their aspirations because that would mean investing in somebody's family.

On the experiences of women, it was found that most women did not achieve their perceived aspirations during adolescence due to the practice of patriarchy. This is because, they were denied of support and the right to participate in decision making regarding their lives; which continues to be a hindrance to their female adolescents' aspirations because of patriarchy and the preference for sons over daughter. The issue concerning inheritance also affects women simply because women are not regarded in patriarchal societies to be part of the family lineage; hence most women want the practice be reformed.





On men's perception, it was also found out that though patriarchy hits women harder, it also affects men by placing much burden on them. As a result, some men also want some reforms to be done on the practice. Data collected from the various stakeholders (Ministry of Gender and Development and the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs) also suggested that patriarchy affects their obligations. Hence, they are unable to achieve the goals of their departments.

### 5.3 Recommendation

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are made to help address the situation of females especially female adolescents in a patriarchal society to enable them achieve their future aspirations.

- 1. There should be more effort to support girls because of preference of sons over daughters.**

The Ministry of Education (M.O.E) should put in more effort to implement policies that are already in existence to support girls especially in patriarchal societies where there is preference of sons over daughters. This is because of the perception that a son in a patriarchal family is considered as a permanent member of the family hence he has to be supported to be successful in future to continue the family's lineage whilst a girl is considered as a visitor, hence investing in a girl means investing in her husband's family since she will be married off. The issue of sexual harassment by some teachers and peers must also be dealt with by the Ministry of Education (M.O.E). Parents should therefore be educated by the Ministry of Education on the benefits of girl child education and the need to allow adolescents to



participate in the decision making process regarding issues about their aspirations, and also provide equal support to both female and male adolescents to achieve their aspirations.

## **2. Community sensitisation**

There should be community sensitisation of Chiefs, elders and opinion leaders of communities by the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection and Ministry of Chieftaincy, for them to see the need for reforms on patriarchal practices which hinder the aspirations of female adolescents. If leaders in these communities embrace the idea of reforms they will be able to organise forums to discuss and come out with ideas for the reformation of patriarchal practises which negatively affect female adolescents.



### **3. Collaboration Among Stakeholders**

There is the need for Collaboration between stakeholders in charge of ensuring the welfare of women and children, and the Regional House of Chiefs to carry out programmes which the people can easily embrace for patriarchal reforms to take place. There is the need for these institutions to collaborate with the Regional House of Chiefs to carry out such programmes since they deal with issues regarding traditional affairs. As a result, the people will be more receptive towards them.

### **4. Creation of Jobs to Reduce Level of Poverty in Patriarchal Societies**

Another recommendation is for the government to address the issue of poverty in the Upper West region and the Northern part of Ghana. This is because although patriarchal practises hinder female aspirations, poverty with patriarchal families worsen the plight of female adolescents. This can be done by creating jobs to enable parent to work and get income to support their children, both female and male adolescents. Financial constraint is also one of the reasons why the male adolescents are supported rather than the females. The general assertion is that all children cannot be support to achieve their aspirations because of limited resources, but since sons are preferred over daughters, they are rather supported.

### **5. Economic Empowerment of Women**

It was realised that all the women interviewed showed a positive willingness to support their female adolescents achieve their aspirations if they have the resources to do so even in the absence of support from their husbands. However, this is far from being reached since the traditional governance structures in the study area did not allow women to participate in



decision making and also own resources especially lands. There is the need for traditional authorities in the study area to come out with strategies to help expand women's economic roles especially regarding access to land and other alternative livelihood. This will help empower women economically to support their adolescents, especially female adolescents in the absence of support from their husbands to their daughters because of the preference of sons over daughters.



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## APPENDIX 1

### UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

#### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I am an MPhil student undertaking an academic research on the topic, “The Outcome of Female Adolescents’ future Aspirations in a Patriarchal society in the Wa Traditional Area of the Upper West Region of Ghana.”. I want your permission to ask your children a number of questions on the phenomenon being studied and will appreciate if you will permit me. The information they will provide will be used solely for academic purposes and her confidentiality is guaranteed. Hope your consent is solicited?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Thank You

---

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



#### Interview Guide for Adolescents

##### Demographic Questions

i) Name of respondent \_\_\_\_\_

ii) Gender: (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ]

iii) Age \_\_\_\_\_

iv) Level of education: (1) Not in school [ ] (2) Primary [ ] (3) JHS [ ] (4) SHS [ ]  
(5) Tertiary [ ]

v) Marital status: (1) Single [ ] (2) Married [ ] (3) Divorced [ ] (4) Widow [ ]

### **The Aspirations of Female Adolescents and Obstacles They Encounter in Achieving Their Aspirations in a Patriarchal Society**

**NOTE:** In the context of this study, a future aspiration is categorised into **three perspectives:** attaining higher education, career and preferred marriage choices.

#### **CATEGORIES**

##### **Attaining higher education**

1. Do you aspire to attain higher education? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

1a. If yes what level of higher education do you want to attain? (1)SHS [ ] (2) Nursing college [ ] (3) Teacher training college [ ] (4) University [ ]

1b. If **No** in **Q1**, what constraint you from achieving higher education?

.....  
.....

2. In order to achieve your higher education you need the support of your family, are your family aware of your aspiration to attain higher education? (1) Yes [ ] (2)No [ ]

2a. If yes what are the support given by your parents (**both father and mother**) to attain your higher education?





.....

2b. If no why is/are your parent's (**either father or mother**) not in support of your desire to attain higher education

.....

.....

3. In your family, are males and females given equal opportunity and support to attain higher education? (1) Yes[ ] (2) [ ]

3a. If yes how is the support given?

.....

.....

3b. If no who is given much support than whom? (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ] and why?.....

4. In your opinion what are your parent's perception towards male and female adolescents' future aspirations?

.....

.....

5. What influenced such behaviour (1) Patriarchy [ ] (2) Modern society [ ] (3) Don't know [ ]

6. As an adolescent, what obstacles do you encounter in achieving higher education?

.....



.....

7. Assessing your strength and weaknesses as an adolescent, how capable are you to attain higher education despite the challenges? (1) Highly Capable [ ] (2) Capable [ ] (3) Somehow Capable [ ] (4) Not Capable [ ]

7a. If your **ANS** in **Q7** is **1** or **2** or **3**; what are your capabilities?

.....

8. With your capabilities, what effort are you making in achieving your higher education?

.....

9. Do you participate in decision concerning your own life? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

9a. If yes what are parents reaction to your decisions?

.....

### CAREER GOAL

1. Do you have a career goal? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

1a. If yes what do you want to become in future?.....





1b.If no what constraint you from having  
one?.....  
.....

2. In order to achieve your career goal you need the support of your family, are your family aware of your aspiration for your career goal? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

2a. If yes what is the support given to you by your parents (**both father and mother**) to obtain your career goal?

.....  
.....

2b. If no why are your parents (**either father or mother**) not in support of your pursuit to obtain a career goal?

.....  
.....

3. In your family are male and female given equal support to obtain career goal? (1) Yes[ ] (2) No [ ]

3a. If yes what are some of the supports given?

.....  
.....

3b. If no who is given much support (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ] and why?



.....

.....

4. Are there any careers you consider being the preserve for males? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

4a. If yes name such careers known as preserve for males?

.....

.....

4b. What are the careers for females?

.....

5. As an adolescent what obstacles do you encounter in obtaining your career goals?

.....

.....

5b. Assessing your strength and weaknesses as an adolescent, how capable are you to

achieve your career goal despite the challenges? (1) Highly Capable [ ] (2) Capable [ ]

(3) Somehow Capable [ ] (4) Not Capable [ ]

5a. If your **ANS** for **Q5b** is **1** or **2** or **3**; What are your capabilities?

.....

.....

5b. What effort are you making in achieving your career goal?

.....

**Marriage**

1. Are you married? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

1a. If no at what age do you intend to get married and why?.....

.....

2. What kind of marriage would you want? (1) Wedding [ ] (2) Elopement [ ]

2b. If your answer for question 2 is 1 or 2

why?.....

.....

3. Do you wish to choose your own husband or wife? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

2a. If yes why?.....

2b. If no would you prefer your family to choose your spouse (**yes/no**) and why?

.....

4. Do you want to attain higher education and achieve your career goal before marriage?

(1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

3a. If yes why?.....

.....

3b. If no why?.....





.....

5. In your family, are males/females given the chance to choose their spouse (1) Yes [ ]

(2) No [ ]

4a. If yes why?.....

6. What is your perception about marriage drawing from the experiences of your family?.....

.....

7. What else would you like to tell me

about?.....

.....

.....

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Investigator: Vida Abena Nyarkoa**

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I am an MPHIL student undertaking an academic research on the topic, “The Outcome of Female Adolescents’ future Aspirations in a Patriarchal society in the Wa traditional area in the Upper West Region of Ghana.”. I would like to ask you a number of questions on the phenomenon being studied and will appreciate if you will permit me your time. The information you will provide will be used solely for academic purposes and your confidentiality is guaranteed. Hope your consent is solicited?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

Thank You

---

### **Interview Guide for Women**

#### **Demographic Questions**

- i) Name of respondent \_\_\_\_\_
- ii) Gender: (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ]
- iii) Age \_\_\_\_\_
- iv) Level of education: (1) Not educated [ ] (2) Primary education [ ] (3) JHS education [ ] (4) SHS education [ ] (5) Tertiary education [ ]
- v) Marital status: (1) Single [ ] (2) Married [ ] (3) Divorced [ ] (4) Widow [ ]
- vi) At what age did you get married? (1) 12 – 15 [ ] (2) 16 – 19 [ ] (3) 20 + [ ]

#### **The Experiences of Women and Its Implication on Female Adolescent's Future Aspirations in a Patriarchal Society**

1. Are you working? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

1a. If yes what kind of work do you do?

.....

1b. If no why are you not working?

.....



.....

2. What did you aspired to become during adolescence?

(1) Attaining higher education

.....

(2) Career goal

.....

(3) Preferred marriage choice

.....

2a. Were you able to achieve your perceived aspirations in **Q2**? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

2b. If yes what made it possible?

.....

.....

2c. If no what constrained you from achieving your aspiration?

.....

.....

3. Now as a mother are you allowed to participate in decision making concerning your children especially your adolescents? (1) Yes [ ] (2) [ ]

3a. If yes how do you participate?

.....

.....



3b. If no what limits you from participating?

.....

4. Among your children who are you given much responsibility to nurture into adulthood? (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ]

4a. If male why?

.....

.....

4b. If female why?

.....

5. Which of your children does your husband give much attention and support to achieve their future aspiration? (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ]

5a. If Male why?

.....

.....

5b. If Female why?

.....

.....

6. In your family do you allow female adolescents to participate in decision making concerning attaining higher education, career goal and marriage choice? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]



6a. If yes how do you involve them?

.....

.....

6b . If no why do you restrict them?

.....

.....

7. Looking back during your adolescence and motherhood experience how are you influencing your female adolescents to achieve their aspiration?

.....

.....

8. Will you say patriarchy has an influence on female adolescent's aspiration? (1) Yes [ ]  
(2) No [ ]

8a. If yes how?

.....

.....

9. How have you advised your daughter to prepare for challenges in a patriarchal society towards achieving her aspiration?

.....

.....





10. What is your perception on patriarchy? (1)Abolished [ ] (2) Reformed [ ] (3) Don't know [ ]

10a. If your answer is 1 why?

.....

.....

10b. If your answer is 2 why? .....

.....

11. What are some of your daughter's skills and capabilities?.....

.....

12. What are some of her internal struggles/obstacles?.....

.....

13. What else would you like to tell me

about?.....

.....

.....

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Investigator: Vida Abena Nyarkoa**

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I am an MPHIL student undertaking an academic research on the topic, “The Outcome of Female Adolescents’ future Aspirations in a Patriarchal society in the Wa traditional area in the Upper West Region of Ghana.”. I would like to ask you a number of questions on the phenomenon being studied and will appreciate if you will permit me your time. The information you will provide will be used solely for academic purposes and your confidentiality is guaranteed. Hope your consent is solicited?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

Thank You

---

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**Interview Guide for Men**

**Males’ Perception on Patriarchy and Females Aspirations**

**Demographic Questions**

- i) Name of respondent \_\_\_\_\_
- ii) Gender: (1) Male [ ]    (2) Female [ ]
- iii) Age \_\_\_\_\_

iv) Level of education: (1) Not educated [ ] (2) Primary education [ ] (3) JHS education [ ] (4) SHS education [ ] (5) Tertiary education [ ]

v) Marital status: (1) Single [ ] (2) Married [ ] (3) Divorced [ ] (4) Widower [ ]

1. Do you have children? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

2. How many male and female?

(1) Male .....

(2) Female .....

3. What levels of attention and support do you give to them?

Male (1) Very High [ ] (2) High [ ] (3) Low [ ]

Female (1) Very High [ ] (2) High [ ] (3) Low [ ]

3a. If low for male why that level of attention?

.....  
.....



3b. If low for female why that level of attention?

.....  
.....

4. As a father what occupation do you consider the preserve for male and female?

Male.....

Female.....

4a. Why those occupation for female?

.....

.....

4b. Why those occupations for female?

.....

.....

5. Who is the head of the family? (1) Male [ ] (2) Female [ ]

5a. What informed the choice of the head of the family? (1) Patriarchy [ ] (2) Modern society [ ]

6. Does Patriarchy affect you as a man? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

6a. If Yes in what ways does it affect you?

.....

.....



6b. If yes how do you manage it?

.....

.....

7. Do you think Patriarchy hinder the aspirations of females? (1) Yes [ ] (2) No [ ]

7a. If yes how does it happen?

.....



8. What is your perception on patriarchy? (1) Abolished [ ] (2) Reformed [ ] (3)

Don't know [ ]

8b. If your answer is 1 why?

.....

.....

8b. If your answer is 2 why?

.....

.....

8b. If your answer is 3 why?

.....

.....

9. How willing are you to give equal opportunity and support to your male and female adolescents to achieve their aspirations with the availability of resources? (1) Very Willing [ ] (2) Willing (3) Not Willing [ ].

10. If 'Not Willing' among who are you not willing (**male/females**) and

why.....

.....

.....

11. What else would you like to tell me

about?.....

.....

## Appendix 2:

### Letter of introduction

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES  
FACULTY OF INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL & HISTORICAL STUDIES

Tel: +233-3920-93075

Wa Campus, P.O. Box 520

Our Ref:



21<sup>st</sup> February, 2017.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

#### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to your organisation, MS VIDA ABENA NYARKOA with student Registration Number UDS/MSA/0211 who is pursuing M.Phil in Social Administration in the Department of Social, Political and Historical Studies, Faculty of Integrated Development Studies, University for Development Studies.

As part of the requirements for the award of a Master's Degree she is writing her thesis titled "The Outcome of Female Adolescents' Future Aspirations in a Patriarchal Society: A study of the Wa Traditional Area".

The Department would therefore be grateful if you could grant her the necessary assistance and cooperation to make the research possible.

Yours faithfully  
Yenku Patience  
FOR: HoD- DSPHS  
DEPT. OF SOCIAL POLITICAL  
& HISTORICAL STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY FOR DEV'T STUDIES  
P.O. BOX 520  
WA CAMPUS