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THE ATTITUDE OF THE CONTEMPORARY YOUTH OF AKROPONG IN THE AKUAPEM NORTH DISTRICT OF GHANA TOWARDS MARRIAGE.

BY

CHARLES FOSU -AYARKWAH

B. Ed. (Ghanaian Language Education).
Dip. (Diploma in Theology)

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DECLARATION

I, Charles Fosu-Ayarkwah declare that this thesis with exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:…….Date:…….

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CERTIFICATION

This project has been read and approved as meeting the requirements of the school of Research and Graduate Studies, University of Education,Winneba.

Principal Supervisor:…….Signature……

Date:……

Ms. Hannah Odoom

Senior Lecturer

Department of Psychology and Education

University of Education, Winneba.

External Examiner:……..……Signature:……

Date:……

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Charles Fosu Ayarkwah.

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DEDICATION

This work has been dedicated to Evangelist and Mrs. Abboah-Offei of Grace Deliverance Team (Grace Presbyterian Church – Akropong -Akuapem).

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is an important social institution which is cherished and respected in most African societies. However, the trend has changed as most of the contemporary youth in Akropong Akuapem in the Eastern Region of Ghana do not seem to cherish or respect marriage anymore. The purpose of this study was to find out the reasons for the change in attitude towards marriage among the youth.

A semi-structured interview guide was used to elicit the views of the youth, traditional leaders, religious leaders and social workers on the topic. Forty (40) respondents comprising; thirty youth, four religious leaders, three traditional leaders and three social workers were purposively sampled for the study. The data obtained was transcribed and analysed under themes and sub-themes that emerged from the research questions.

Data from the study revealed that:

- Factors such as high cost of marriage, the job the youth engage in and the educational attainment of the youth influenced their attitude negatively towards marriage.
- It was also revealed that female youth desired to get married earlier than their male counterparts.
- The study further revealed that religious affiliation of the youth had had positive influence on their attitude towards marriage.

The study recommended that:

- Religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers as well as parents should educate the youth on the true meaning of marriage. Local newspapers like the "Akuapem Amannee" of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana should be giving weekly highlights on the importance of marriage. These will go a long way to change the perception and the understanding of the youth about marriage.
- Religious leaders should be liberal when it comes to selection of future partners among the youth. They should not be restricted to select from their Churches or one particular sect only. This will enable the youth to have a wider field from which to choose their suitors based on their values, love, belief and other important factors.

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- Programmes that will give the youth insight-into issues on marriage such as peer counselling, pre-marital counselling workshops on preparation towards marriage, seminars on dating and other related topics on marriage should be organized by religious bodies and social clubs. This will help the youth to develop better attitude towards marriage.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Marriage is regarded as an important social institution in all cultures. It plays a key role in population growth and continuity of bloodlines. Marriage also constitutes the context within which families, a major building block for societies are formed. It was therefore necessary and desirable for most parents in the ancient times to train their wards and to give them up in marriage when they were old enough and capable of shouldering responsibilities in life. Marriage used to mark an important turning point in individual's life. It was indeed rare among Africans that a rational being, except for religious or health reasons should decide to remain a bachelor or spinster for life.

Marriage therefore according to Hunter, Mills, Malony and Patton (1990) is a central feature of all human societies. It is composed of a culturally accepted union of a man and a woman in husband-wife relationship recognised and legalised. The authors noted that, it is the normal and acceptable way of expressing adult love and procreation. It can also be defined as a social contract between two adult male and female who unite their lives legally, economically and emotionally. Marriage among the Akans of Ghana (Akuapems inclusive) becomes recognised after all the necessary rites are performed by the man to the bride's family.

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It is worthy to note that scholars such as sociologists have not been able to agree on the true date and origin of marriage. However, Christian scholars trace the history of marriage from the creation and unionization of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:20-25 NIV). The meanings of marriage and marriage formation from the time of Adam have gone through major transition over the years especially between 1600 and 2006 (*http://www.marriageabout.com.\od\historyofmarriage).* Marriage has been a union between two (male and female) biologically unrelated people who seek through such a relationship to derive benefits and in turn make concessions to their partners. Marriage in the past in most African cultures has been arranged either by parents, other relations or hired "match makers". The would-be couple did not have much say about the choice made.

In the olden days, the index for marriage in most cases was wealth. The main factors considered in the matching process in Africa and for that matter Ghana were often the families' religion, social class, health status of the individuals, and the fertility level of the family members. Other factors considered in arranged marriage were the spiritual state of the family members and how industrious the people in the family were. (Sprechers & Chandak, 1994). Some marriages were by proxy. This involved giving of a dowry (which could be money or presents from the bride's family to the groom family). Some marriage formation also required a bride price (the groom and his family giving money to the bride's family). Few couples in the olden days had any sort of courtship or dating as is happening in recent times. Most marriages were also based on traditional demands and the desires of the parents. (Abrah, 2001)

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Apart from traditional demands, people have many reasons for entering into marriage whether in Ghana or elsewhere. The universal and common aims for marrying are that, it is through this revered institution that sexual desires are legitimately gratified and for procreation. Various studies including Gyasi–Appiah (2006) and observations have also revealed that, people married for social recognition, security for continued cordial relationship among families and clans, and sometimes for economic support. Others also married for love, companionship and the satisfaction of certain physical and emotional needs.

Some expectations also went with the marriage contract. People entering into marriage had the hopes that their reasons for marrying would be realized through the help of their spouses. This was because marriage is considered among Africans and for that matter Ghanaians (Akuapems inclusive) as a union for support for individuals who entered into it. In Ghana and in most African countries, marriage used to be an honoured and revered institution. The Ghanaian value system regarding child-birth and marriage indicates that barrenness is a taboo and singleness among men and women who are of age is a curse to the family. People were therefore prepared psychologically, materially, financially, socially and spiritually before they went into it. The customary rites such as “bragro” among the Akans, and “dipo” among the Krobos formed part of the preparations that herald the actual marriage rite. The Christians also prepared their youth towards marriage. The youth were taught the catechism before they were confirmed .This was and still is, the ceremony that ushered them into adulthood and for that matter marriage.

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The trend has however changed. Factors like peer influence, education, mass media, modernization, religion and infiltration of various cultures into Ghanaian culture and value systems have affected marriage as an institution both positively and negatively. Various studies and observations have also revealed that, deviations, change or delay in the realization of the goals for marriage cause separation or divorce among marriage couples. (Abrah, 2001).

Marriage has become a choice but no more obligations to most people in society. Like the French essayist Montaigne, some people see marriage as a cage: one sees birds outside very desperate to get in and those inside equally desperate to get out. This situation is not different in Akropong Akuapem. To the Akuapems who form part of Akans of Ghana, "marriage is not like sweet palm wine which can be tasted before buying it but a life long adventure". Marriage should therefore follow the normal procedure. That is:

1) Choosing a partner either by parents, guardians or one's self.
2) Courting to know each other.
3) Knocking, that is introduction of the would-be partners to their immediate families.
4) Payment of bride price and associated ceremony.
5) Procreation of children.
6) Socialization

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When marriage procedures are followed accordingly, it is supposed to bring joy and satisfaction to the couple and their related families.

It is rather unfortunate therefore to notice that, most young women who have strong desire to go into marriage find themselves disappointed due to poor patronage by the males. The few fortunate ones who have entered this institution are also alarmed at the rate at which most marriages are breaking up these days. The young men who are capable of marrying are indecisive. Those who have made the 'bold choice' are still cohabiting with the would-be spouses. What therefore prevent the youth from getting married? What factors are responsible for the rush into marriage among the youth? What is the meaning of marriage these days to the youth?

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Marriage seems to have lost its respect among the youth in the Akuapem North District. It is no more revered or honoured these days by the youth .Parents have little or no hand in selection of spouses for their wards. No proper investigation is made about the background of would- be spouses before marriages are contracted.

Most youth of Akuapem North District especially Akropong consider marriage as a second option when it comes to happiness in relationship. The increase in psychiatric cases among spouses on the street is a bother to well –meaning Ghanaians. The high rate of divorce in the district is a worry to all Ghanaians who consider marriage as a lasting relationship among couples. Co-habitation has become a fashion and is even sometimes

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classified as a type of marriage among the youth in the district. The gainfully employed youth in Akropong Akuapem do not see marriage as a traditional obligation in society anymore. The males tend to have affair with the females, resulting in childbirth but refuse to marry mothers of the children. This has led to increase in "seemingly fatherless" children and street boys and girls in Akuapem Akropong.

As far as this researcher knows, there have not been much scientific investigations into factors that influence the attitude and the perception of the youth towards marriage these days in the study area. It is therefore necessary to find out why the once revered and cherished institution has lost respect among the youth in the town.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out how the following variables affect the attitude of the contemporary youth in the Akuapem North District of Ghana towards marriage. The variables are cost on marriage formation, educational attainment, religion, job, and gender difference. The work is also to find out how the effect can be managed. In particular; the study is designed to explore how:

i. the youth perceive and understand marriage these days
ii. religion influences the attitude of the youth toward marriage?
iii. the Cost of marriage formation can influence the attitude of the youth towards marriage.
iv. the educational attainment of the individuals affects the attitude of youth towards marriage.

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v. gender differences affect marriage.

vi. the relationship between job and attitude towards marriage

1.3 Research Questions

Based upon the problem and purpose of study, the following research questions were used to direct the study.

1) What is the perception of the youth about marriage?

2) How does religion influence the attitude of the youth towards marriage?

3) To what extent does the cost of marriage formation impede the marriage plans of the contemporary employed youth?

4) How does the educational status of the youth influence their attitude towards marriage?

5) How does the type of job the youth engage in influence their attitude towards marriage?

6) How does gender affects the attitude of the youth towards marriage?

1.4 The Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the employed and literate youth whose ages range between 20-35 years in Akropong in the Akuapem North District of Ghana. This means that the findings and recommendations of the study were based on the area mentioned, where the data was collected and analysed. With this, findings may not be necessarily applicable to other areas hence generalization for all areas in Ghana may not be possible.

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1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would determine whether variables such as cost of marriage formation, gender differences, religion, educational attainments and job do influence the attitude of the contemporary youth in Akropong-Akuapem towards marriage. This study will also enable us to know which of the stated variables affect the attitude of the youth most towards marriage.

Professional counsellors, pastors, men and women of the clergy, traditional counsellors and social workers can use the results of the research to counsel the youth who are ready to marry and parents whose wards are preparing to marry.

Sociologists, who study marriage and family issues would equally benefit from the findings of this work.

The general public would also benefit from this work as the researcher will use the findings to run workshops, seminars and group counselling sessions for youth clubs, churches, and schools.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted among the contemporary employed and literate youth in Akropong- Akuapem in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Social workers, pastors, traditional leaders, Imams and chiefs were contacted to obtain their views about the subject under study. The area of study was also chosen due to its familiarity to the researcher which facilitated easy access to the respondents. The literate employed were used because of easier communication in the English language.

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1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

1. Marriage formation – it is the process involved in contracting marriage which begins with knocking through wedding in Akan societies.
2. Disengagement – it is moving away or stopping old practices, beliefs, values and personal philosophies to pursue interest and agenda of parties in relationship or marriage.
3. Union – coming together of an adult male and female who have agreed to marry and have gone through all the necessary formalities to have become husband and wife.
4. Religious leaders – they are the pastors, imams, Christian marriage counselors and church elders in the area of study.
5. Traditional leaders- are chiefs, sub chiefs and elders in the Akropong traditional council.
6. Social workers – are those who work at the social service department in the district
7. Positive influence – Conditions that favour the youth to enter marriage.
8. Negative influence – Conditions that prevent the youth from getting married.
9. No influences – It means the conditions do not influence the youth in anyway.
10. Bride price or Dowry – Money or things paid to the bride's family or parents by the bridegroom before marriage or relationship is recognized by society in Akan societies.
11. Contemporary youth- The youth of today whose ages ranges from 25 years to 35 years.

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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses literature related to the topic. It deals with both theoretical and empirical review. Related literature on the topic is reviewed under the following headings:

1) Theoretical Perspective
   - The marital adjustment theory
   - The exchange theory on marriage
2) Concept of attitude and formation of attitude
3) Concept of youth
4) Concept of marriage
5) Types of marriage
   - Religious marriage
   - Traditional marriage
   - Civil /ordinance marriage
   - Co-habitation
6) The process of marriage formation

2.1 The Marital Adjustment Theory

The central theme of the marital adjustment theory is that the glue of marriage is manufactured by submerging individual interests for the greater good of group solidarity. (Scanzoni and Scanzoni, 1988). According to the proponent of the theory, “adjustment”

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may involve submerging “true selves.” Thus, the “true selves” such as personal desires and aspirations of individuals should always be put aside in order to work on the group interest and aspiration for successful marriage.

The biggest challenge most newly married couple face in marriage is the problem of disengagement. This means couples do not find it easy leaving all the old things such as friends, life style and attitude that satisfy their individual needs behind and adapt to conditions that will sustain their marriage. However, critics of the adjustment theory like Brickman has opined that, it is difficult to do away with habits and interest formed in an attempt to pursue a common interest in relationship (Scanzoni and Scanzoni 1988). As part of the criticism, a sociologist and female advocate Bernard (as quoted by Scanzoni et al 1988) has criticised the marital adjustment theory on the grounds that it has largely ignored the fact that wives were doing more of the submerging of individuals’ interests than were their husbands.

Ferguson (2001) in her support of the marital adjustment theory has opined that every successful marriage should be laid on foundation stones of adaptability and adjustment. She further noted that, couples have to adjust to the new marital conditions in order to adapt to the conditions prevailing in the marriage setting.

It is however unfortunate to see married couples in the area of study going to court to dissolve the marriage as a result of their inability to adjust to prevailing situation in marriage. The inability of the contemporary youth to sacrifice their personal interest and

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be committed to marital interest is pushing most of them away from marriage. (Darty 1998)

A survey by Naraba (2000), Christian marriage counsellor as quoted in Abrah (2001), indicates that about 70% of the 300 sample population of the Ghanaian youth in 2000 rushed into marriage without considering the commitment and adjustments involved in it. He emphasised that adjustment and commitment are key factors in successful marriages. This is to say that the current rampant break –ups in marriages among the youth may be partly due to lack of commitment and marital adjustment among spouses (especially among the youth)

2.3 The Exchange Theory on Marriage

The main theme of this theory is that "the most solid and cohesive social system is the one in which the parties concerned experience maximum joint profit' (Kelly and Schrenitzki as quoted by Scanzoni and Scanzoni, 1988). The theory further suggests that, if a relationship becomes no more rewarding to one partner, efforts should be made to change the costly and punishing situation. The theory emphasises on the reward and benefits individuals derive from the union. Exchange, the adage says, is not robbery when it is fairly treated. An Akan adage equally says "the left hand and the right one wash each other in turns." The exchange theory seems to be in contrast with the marital adjustment theory. The exchange theory places emphasis on sacrifice in a form of costs and rewards. It also focuses on the reward the spouses offer each other. With these, marriage therefore

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becomes a continual process of negotiation and profit seeking but not a process of adjustment (Scanzoni and Scanzoni 1988:312).

To support this theory, Bernald (as quoted) by Anokye (2001) has opined that a marital relationship is successful if rewards to both partners are greater than the cost, and it is preferable to any other alternative. She is also of the view that, marriage becomes successful if the partners involved experience maximum joint profit from the relationship.

According to Gyasi Appiah (2006) marital satisfaction for the husband and wife is realised if there is interdependency in the relationship and as such the relationship is no more rewarding to one partner's efforts. The marriage relationship is successful or solid if satisfaction is greater than the cost. The proponents of the exchange theory are of the view that, if the needs of partners are provided on mutual bases, marital satisfaction is always achieved.

The main reasons for the adoption of these theoretical stances are to find out how individual aspirations, desires and behaviour affect peoples' attitude towards marriage. They enabled the researcher to find out the impact of peoples marriage on the youth and their attitude towards marriage.

2.4 Marriage as a Concept

Marriage, an important social institution has been defined in so many ways to reflect its dual nature as both public institution and private personal relationship. Marriage is

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therefore defined as a union between two biologically unrelated female and male who live together and seek to derive benefits from such union such as sexual gratification, love, companionship etc, and also use such a union as a legitimate means to procreate (Pepra 2007).

In an attempt to acknowledge that marriage is a basic institution in every society. Gyasi-Appiah (2006) opined that marriage "is a kind of relationship which legally binds together a man and a woman as husband and wife for the procreation of children." To him, the validity of marriage is not destroyed in any way but remains intact even if the marriage does not produce any children. He further said that, marriage of any type begins with the proposal of love, usually by a man to woman who is marriageable.

Akinade (1997) on his part disclosed that marriage is "a union and cohabitation of two people of the opposite sex with a permanent commitment to each other and their children when they are born and are dependent on them."

Marriage is perceived as the start of socially approved exposures to sexual relations and means of legitimising parenthood (United Nations, 1998 quoted Fergurson 2001). According to the report, people may have different reasons for marrying but the desire for children still remains a strong motivation for marriage. Marriage from a religious point is defined by Dartey (1998) as "the coming together of a man and woman in a relationship that is approved and sanctioned by both society and the scriptures with the purposes of establishing a well rounded and closely-knit relationship that can enhance the

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personalities involved and society at large in accordance with the vision of creation as envisaged by God."

To Knock (1996) cited in Frimpong (2000), marriage involves a voluntary contract by matured heterosexual adults i.e. male and female, with the expectation that the males will be the principal earners, that partners will be sexually faithful and that both partners will become parents. In his attempt to share a similar view, Miller (1987) quoted in Mensah (2000) also opined that marriage is a socially accepted union of individuals in husband-wife roles with the key function of legitimising parenthood. The two definitions directly link marriage fertility. Infact, child bearing used to be the concern of many sexual unions of a male and a female in the olden days. Marriage has therefore become an institution that regulates reproduction (Agyin-Asare and Agyin-Asare 2005).

Nukunya (1992) has also disclosed that despite the universality of it, there is no definite definition for marriage. He however gave a definition from the handbook of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain as a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognised as a legitimate off-spring of the parents.

The Collins concise dictionary of 21st century (2001) states that marriage is the legal union of a man and woman as husband and wife. Hugottuber (1963) as in Dartey(1998) has said that marriage is a bond between two Kinship groups rather than two individual persons. This assertion explained further that the marriage joins the two families together.

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The woman considers the husband's extended family as hers and the man too sees the woman's family as part of his.

To the Akuapems (the people of Akropong inclusive),marriage is a legal union between an adult male and female(s) who have gone through the necessary rites and have been given approval by families involved to become husband and wives. Traditionally, the Akuapems allow their men to marry more than one woman provided they can cater for and satisfy their wives and children.

The diversity in definitions and the difficulty in arriving at a common or universal definition for marriage may stem from the fact that modernity has brought in other forms of marriage hence the attempt to have a single definition has been a tedious task. However, the attempt by Akinade (1997), Hugottuber (1963), Knock (1996), Nukunya (1992) and others as stated above to define marriage have been very relevant and thus useful to this study and discussions.

2.5 Types of Marriage

Marriage takes many forms in conformity with marriage institution in Ghana. For the purpose of this work an attempt is made at highlighting only some of the popular ones. The types of marriages to be discussed here include:

i) The religious marriage (i.e. the Christian and Islamic marriages)

ii) The customary or traditional marriage

iii) The civil marriage

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iv) Co-habitation

Asante-Boahen (2001) has noted these types of marriage among the Akans of Ghana.

2.6 The Christian Marriage and the Attitude of the Youth

Christians perceive marriage as God ordained as such marriage formation, couples roles and dissolution of marriage should follow the biblical principles. According to Brown and Brown (1999) marriage in the Christian sense is to be seen as a commitment and not as contentment. This means, couples should not seek what individuals can benefit from marriage but rather they should be concerned with what they can provide for their partners for a happy and successful union.

Kissembe, Megesa, & Shorter (1997) in an attempt to emphasize what Gen. 2:24 says "And they shall become one flesh" opined that Christian marriage is a covenant between two people based on the above stated biblical command. By this, the couple should disclose themselves as persons who share a common belief, faith, attitude, perception and goal despite their differences in a conceivable level.

According to Collins (1988) cited in Abrah (2001), the Bible describes the purposes for marriage, the roles of husband and wife, the importance of sex and the responsibilities of parents and relatives in Christian marriage. For example, Paul in 1st Corinthians 7:1-5 stated the purpose of Christian marriage as a means to fulfil marital roles, sexual intimacy and for companionship. In the book of Ephesians chapter 5:22-31, Paul again prescribes the type of relationship that should exist between a husband and a wife. Thus, wives

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should submit to their husbands as the church submits to the Lord and husbands are also to love their wives as their own bodies. “To love” here implies that the husband is to feel for, and to care for the wife just as he does for his own body. Love from the Christian point of view has many qualities or attributes, as described in 1st Corinthians chapter 13. Paul in that scripture opined that “For love is kind, patient, tolerant, respectful, but not proud, rude, self-seeking and keeps no record of others’ wrong. He further said love does not delight in evil but a seeker of truth, perseveres, trusts, hopes and protects the interest of others. Love as a major ingredient of Christian marriage when applied well ensures successful formidable and Christ centred home or family.

On the contrary Collins (1988) as in Abrah (2001) again cited instances in the Bible where people like Job, Samson, David, Lot and others experienced tension or conflict which resulted in unsatisfactory marriages. Tension or unsatisfactory marriage among Christians may come as a result of selfishness, anxiety, sexual abuse, drunkenness, inferiority complex, cheating, unforgiveness, anger, bitterness and a host of others on the part of a partner or both parties in a marital home. Indeed, the writer of the book of Proverbs (21:9) has opined that marrying a contentious or quarrelsome partner may not fulfil the purpose of Christian marriage. However in Proverbs 18:22, the Bible postulates that he who finds a wife/mate finds a good thing.

Intimacy and companionship are the two key factors that serve as bedrock for Christian marriage apart from Christ being the unseen guest of the home (Mensah 2000). The Bible again cautions against a believer marrying an unbeliever as they are seen as being

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unequally yoked (2nd Corinthians 6:14-15). Despite the fact that the bible does not strictly place a ban on a Christian marrying an unbeliever, when a husband and a wife have different view points, belief or values, marriage which is to bind people can be destructive when it breeds chaos and tension among couples and families. Value conflicts according to Pepra (2007), are the generating point of marital problems such as tension, power struggles and mutual criticism.

Religion has also been found to be related to the incident of marriage dissolution. The Roman Catholic Church believes that a true marriage is indissoluble by legal means. Thus Catholics usually have lower divorce rates than Protestants. The dissolution process is further influenced by the extent to which one holds on to religious values on the commitment to marital vows (Skolnick1996).

Skolnick has also observed that spouses who are not attached to any religion are more likely to experience marriage dissolution because such people face less social and religious sanctions and conventions. Oliver and Wright (1996) have observed that highly religious couple who attend church regularly for more than two times in a week are more able to work to protect their marriage from dissolving

From the above discussions on how God intended marriage to be, it can be deduced that intimacy, companionship, communication, decision making, commitment, love, belief systems and marital roles are the key ingredients of Christian marriage.

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2.7 The Islamic Marriage and the Youth

Islamic marriage is purely based on the teachings, doctrines and principles of Islam with Qu'ran and Hadid as reference guides. It is polygamous in nature yet Qu'ran gives room for monogamy as well (Akinade 1997). Thus, those who can afford to accommodate and care equally for more than one wife up to a maximum of four wives can do so (Qu'ran 4:4). Marriage from Islamic perspective is a covenant and as such a religious commitment which is internalised as divine blessings (Qu'ran 4:22).

Abdallati 1975 cited in Abrah (2001) has opined that marriage in Islam is regarded as a righteous act which should be full of responsible devotion. Marriage in Islam is intertwined with the principles of Islamic faith. The Qu'ran places emphasis on the following factors for a successful marriage: kindness, equity, compassion, love, sympathy, consideration, patience and goodwill.

Islamic marriage again gives new roles for partners. Thus, the husband's solemn duty to God is to treat his wife with kindness, honour, patience and to cause her no harm or grief. (Qu'ran 2:229-232; 4:19). The wives on their part have certain solemn rights and duties. The right of the woman in marriage is to be protected and guided by men while the woman is to submit to the husband, honour him and care for his household needs. A wife should seriously contribute to the success and blissfulness of the marriage as much as possible. The wife should again be faithful, honest, trustworthy, attentive and hardworking and should use all these qualities to ensure the comfort and well being of her mate.

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Abdallati further stated that, a woman should make herself attractive, desirable, responsive and cooperative and above all should be intimate with the husband.

Abrah (2001) on her part summed up issues on marriage from Islamic perspective as follows:

1) Marriage in Islam is seen as a perfection of one's faith and this means that if one married in the Islamic faith then his belief system is enhanced (Qu'ran 2:22).
2) Qu'ran 2:224-232 alleges that Islamic marriage creates new roles for partners
3) Allah enjoins husbands to treat wives with kindness, honour and patience and this involves accommodating the wife's behaviour which in turn demands a lot of commitment and adjustment.
4) Islamic religion acknowledges the importance of decision making in marriage thus in both mate selection and in divorce, partners are expected to reach a mutual consent as in Qu'ran 2:228 & 233.
5) Love as an essential element in Islamic marriage is highlighted in Qu'ran 30:22. The passage states among others that "He has created for you…and He has put love and tenderness between you.
6) The Holy Qu'ran enjoins the wife to be intimate with her husband.

However, Susan and Chandak in their contribution to Marriage and Family journal (1992/92) have opined that "The worst thing which is not allowed in Islam and the dislike of God is divorce."

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Religious marriage has certain code of ethics that governs and regulates partners in marriage. The two religions almost share the same view on commitment, love, companionship, intimacy, adjustment, mutual consent, belief and values as the major ingredients for a successful marriage.

2.8 Traditional/Customary Marriage

It is the belief of the traditional worshippers that God "Odomankoma" is married to Mother Earth "Asaase Yaa." With this marriage is considered the oldest and sacred institution on earth (Eshieman 1969 quoted in Abrah 2001). Customary marriage is considered a culmination of series of relationships including courtship, pre-marital sex play in certain societies in Africa (Schandorf (Ed.) 1992). Marriage in African context is expected to last a lifetime and this, obviously calls for developing a long-range style of love and understanding (Safo, 2002).

Marriage formation in most African societies are arranged by parents, other relatives or hired "match makers" and often the young men and women have little say in the matter. In traditional Africa, the concept of marriage is influenced by families of the partners and much importance is attached to the families and friends of the couple than the husband-wife relationship (Marriage and Family Journal 1992/93 – Susan and Chandak).

Traditional marriage involves the payment of bride price so as to gain family recognition, support and blessing from both sides (Peil, 1977 in Abrah 2001). The husband is always

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considered the head of African marriage and has to work hard to ensure the survival of the wife and the children he will be blessed with. The husband therefore dictates the pace and progress of the marriage. Wives are considered as part of the husband's property. Traditional marriages can be dissolved in traditional courts (Akinade 1997).

According to Amoateng and Heaton (1989), traditional marriage is polygamous in nature but like Islamic marriage, rooms are created for monogamy as well. Thus men who can afford to give equal attention and care to two or more wives and the kids can marry as many as they can. Men marry more in order to produce more children because a man's worth and dignity in traditional African society is measured by the number of healthy children and wives he has. Most men also marry more in order to produce more children to assist him in his farming activities. Despite these advantages, traditional marriage is gradually phasing out in society due to acculturation.

There are several reasons for people to enter into marriage globally. Marriage has been the cornerstone of every family structure hence it is cherished, honoured and revered across continents. The globally identified reasons for marrying are that, it is through this revered institution that sexual gratification is legitimately accepted and procreation which is for population growth and family continuity is mandated. Aside these reasons, individuals who go into marriage also have genuine reasons, hopes and aspirations that they would like to realise. According to Mensah (2000), people marry for social recognition, security for continued cordial relationship among families and clans, pleasure and sometimes for wealth. Others also marry for love, companionship, sexual

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satisfaction, a means to raise children, to have certain physical and emotional needs satisfied and sometimes for economic support.

Most people enter marriage with the hope that the objectives and visions shall be realised through the help of their spouses. Change, deviation or delay in the realization of the vision therefore can cause separation or divorce among married couples. Observation and scientific research such as the one conducted by Noonoo (1997) have revealed that the high incidences of unstable or unhappy marriage which eventually end in divorce are as a result of un-realization of individual's visions and aspirations they had before getting married. A research by Richards (1995) on the influence of parental divorce on the youth in the United States of America revealed that certain circumstances of parental divorce are associated with more negative views of marriage (particularly if divorce is associated with parental conflict and deteriorating parent-child relationship). However, it is likely that parental divorce has the opposite indirect effect of increasing the likelihood of early marriage for some children of divorce via lowered educational prospects. (http://marraige,rutgeedu/publications/pubteena.html).

The Awake Magazine of July 8, 1993, Japanese edition cited Narabayashi (1999), that "Divorce is becoming an accepted way to seek a happier life." The paper further commented that marriage formation and dissolution have become a fashion these days in all parts of the world. People rush into marriage and rush out of it within seconds. In Singapore divorce among both Moslems and Non-Moslems increased almost by about 70% between 1980 and 1988. People nowadays don't take critical and analytical view

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about marriage, the would-be spouse and the benefits as well as the anticipated challenges before they contract marriage. Such marriages last for few days and collapse or are dissolved.

In Ghana and most African countries, marriage used to be an honoured institution. People were prepared psychologically, materially, financially, socially and spiritually before they went into it. The trend has however changed due to religious factors, education, modernization and infiltration of various cultures into the Ghanaian culture. Ghanaian value system regarding child birth and marriage is clear to everybody that barrenness is a taboo and celibacy among men and women who are of age is a curse to the family. It is believed that marriage ensures continuity of the society. With this, it is an ultimate traditional obligation to all young adults who are capable and employed to marry in order to guarantee the continuity of the society and the family race.

The contemporary youth of Akropong Akuapem have different views on marriage all together. Marriage is no more revered; it has become a choice in life but no more an obligation. What therefore prevents the employed and the unemployed young adults to enter marriage? What do people so much desire in their marriage? And what factors push or lure the youth into marriage?

Marriage according to an Akan adage is “not palm wine to be sampled and rejected but a long-life adventure”. Marriage practices in the Akuapem society follow a systematic and accepted procedure. That is:

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a) Choosing a partner either by oneself or by parents (Guardian).

b) Courting for sometime to know each other well

c) Knocking

d) Payment of bride price and associated ceremony

e) Procreation of children

f) Socialization

It is indeed through first marriage that young adult or the youth achieve their first goals in life (Rice, 1999). It is rather unfortunate to note that most young girls have strong desire to enter marriage but find themselves disappointed due to lukewarm attitude of males. The few fortunate ones who have entered marriage are also alarmed by the rate at which most marriages are breaking up (Frimpong 2000).

2.9 Civil/Ordinance Marriage

This is a type of marriage which takes place at a law court or registrar's office. It is mostly supervised by a judge or a senior registrar. It has the same obligations as a church or religious marriage. It is monogamous in nature. Individuals in the civil marriage have stronger inheritance of rights and ownership to each others property than what pertains in customary or traditional marriage (Abrah, 2001).

Its inherent legal rights make it the strongest form of marriage because it is difficult to dissolve due to the legalities involved. Divorce is granted only by a high court. Advance notices are mostly pasted at vantage points for twenty one days to announce the

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intensions of the "would-bes" to get married. The advance notice is to grant the general public the chance to raise objections (if any) against the marriage.

Certificates of marriage are usually given to couples after signing the marriage register at the law court or the registrar's office. This type of marriage too must be witnessed by at least four relatives or friends who append their signatures as witnesses to the marriage (Akinade, 1997).

2.10 Cohabitation

Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling (1990) defines cohabitation as a situation whereby a man and woman share the same household without marriage for at least six months. The dictionary further states that marriage involves three parties: the man, the woman, and the state or families. However, in cohabitation, the couple chooses to have the benefits of living together without the intrusion or the protection of the state or the family.

Psychologically, the couple probably is motivated by a desire for companionship, sexual privilege and sharing of quarters without the legal constraints of marriage. Partners can leave the relationship upon notice with responsibility only to themselves. Couples in cohabitation again enter such relationship in order to enjoy freedom and also to avoid restrictions in traditional and religious marriages. (http://marriage.about.com/od/history of marriage).

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The increase in cohabitation reflects a complex of social factors: increased sexual freedom, postponement of marriage, a trend toward smaller families, a relaxation of parental pressure towards early marriage and decrease in the authority of the church. According to the 1985 census as quoted in Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counselling 1990, there were 1,988,000 such household cohabitations in the U.S.

Rosman and Rubel (2004) also define cohabitation as "the state or condition of living together as husband and wife without being married." In an article which appeared in a Ghanaian Newspaper; The Mirror (Saturday, September 28, 2002), Margaret Sarfo opined that, couples in cohabitation in Ghana usually become comfortable in that state hence show no desire to go through the formalities to be properly married.

A survey research indicates a remarkable increase in the acceptability of cohabitation among teens. In 1975, 35% of high school seniors agreed or mostly agreed that "it is usually a good idea for a couple to live together before getting married in order to find out whether they really get along." By 1995, the figure had skyrocketed to 59% (Monitoring the Future). This confirms the findings of the National Survey of Children (1987) that "more than half of youth endorse living together before marriage as making 'a lot of sense'" (http://marriage.rutger's.edu/publications/pubteena.htm.) . This trend might not be different from the youth in Akropong Akuapem in the eastern region of Ghana as most of them are perceived not to be serious to formalize their relationship.

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2.11 The Concept "Attitude"

According to the Zanna (1993) attitude is "Predispositions to classify objects and events and to react to them with evaluative consistency". This means people react to situations and objects based on various reasons.

Myers (1996) also defines attitude as a favourable or unfavourable evaluative reaction towards someone or something exhibited in one's feelings or intended behaviour. To Myers, people's reaction or intended actions are as a result of favour, ability or otherwise of what affects them and with them culminates into what will be evaluated as good or bad habits. Attitudes which manifest in behaviour involves the cognitive (thoughts about an issue), affective – the emotions associated with the issue and behaviour.

Kotey (1998), on his part, opined that attitude is a mental state of mind that is not innate but learned and can be changed that will permit response to things in a specific way. He further stated that attitudes are complex phenomena with many manifestations. An individual's attitude towards an object or idea could be inferred by noting all his reactions and thoughts about the topic over a period of time. Morris and Maisto (1999) also defined attitude as "a relatively stable organization of beliefs, feelings and tendencies towards something or someone.

From the available definitions cited above, the meaning of attitude has become evidently clear that it is the evaluations of other people, object and issues that involve not only cognitive but also feelings and behaviour. The youth in Akropong have developed different attitudes towards marriage perhaps based on their understanding about the

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concept of marriage. Some also have had different attitudes partly because of their feelings, belief and their observations about what goes on in people's marriage.

1.12 Formation of Attitudes

According to Coldstein (1994) cited in Morris and Maisto (1999), research at the behavioural level of analysis has focused on the processes of conditioning. Thus, classical conditioning, operant conditioning, modelling as well as the role of direct experience or exposure are the main factors for the formation or shaping of attitudes.

Arthur and Carolyn (1985) as quoted in Kotey (1998) are of the view that classical conditioning of attitudes by training subjects to remember words that were arbitrarily paired with different nationalities, objects or events. That is direct pairing with an object, event or a situation makes it easily remembered. For example, French is always paired with blue, red is also associated with pain or sorrow in Africa and Dutch matches with gift. The pairing of positive words with people or object yield positive attitude whiles negative words yield negative attitude.

The second factor for formation or shaping of attitude is operant conditioning. This is a mechanism by which getting reinforced for a particular behaviour increases the probability that the behaviour will occur again. This can also play a role in shaping attitudes. For example, every time a child is reinforced for expressing an opinion. Thus when Minka's father answers "that is right" for any positive remarks Minka makes about his favourite football team, the father either consciously or unconsciously is increasing

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the probability that Minka will display positive responses towards a good conduct and fair play in football.

Another factor through which behaviour can be shaped or formed is through modelling. That is observing and repeating the behaviours of other people. Modelling exerts a powerful influence on attitudes through watching parents and media images that children are exposed to on television (Arthur & Carolyn (1985) as quoted in Kotey (1998).

Direct exposure or experience is another factor to help to form or shape attitudes among people. It is one of the most effective mechanisms of attitude formation.

According to Morris and Maisto (1999), many of peoples' attitudes evolve from evaluating their experiences. The attitudes formed through direct experience are more confidently held and more resistant to change than our attitude formed indirectly. This is in line with Abrah 2001 that 30% of the 500 sampled populations in two districts in the Greater Accra region of Ghana are "somewhat" satisfied with their marriage when compared with the previous relationships (marriage) The indicators of such marital satisfaction were based on compatibility, love, adjustment, money and religion .The rest who were not satisfied attributed their dissatisfactions to lack of companionship, money, commitment and job. She further noted that the unsatisfactory nature of those marriages had had adverse effect on the attitude of the children from such marriages. Most children from unsatisfactory marriages developed negative attitudes towards marriage when they grew up. This might be partly attributed to the experiences and observations they had from their parents' marriages

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2.13 Concept "Youth"

Sinclair, Wilkes and Krebs (2001) define youth as early time of life and metaphorically the optimism and innocence thought to accompany it. They further explain that, the nature of youthful experience is greatly affected by cultural and economic norms. The passage from youth to adulthood is frequently acknowledged by ritual formalities, idealised youth is embodied in enduring themes of art and literature. The adolescence emotional patterns become more stabilised.

Dictionary of pastoral care and counselling (1990) also limits the meaning of youth to adolescents. Adolescents are therefore persons in the developmental stage first marked by the onset of puberty and concluding with the ill-defined time of entering adulthood. The dictionary further stated that during adolescence, a number of highly significant physical, intellectual, and social changes occur that are perplexing and bewildering to adolescents and adults alike.

Youth is the condition or quality of being young. It is also an early period of development between childhood and adulthood (Santrock 2005). The youth according to Santrock (2005) have two basic psychosocial needs while they are engaged in their odyssey towards identity. First, they need something to believe in, they search for people and ideas in whose service it would seem worthwhile to prove themselves trustworthy. Secondly, they need a sense of belonging – of being in community. This provides a temporary sense of identity and is a buttress of external support while they build an internal foundation for their identity.

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The youth in Akropong Akuapem are considered the backbone of the community. The age of youth falls between twenty five and thirty five years (for this research only). Most of the employed youth in the town are the breadwinners of their families while the jobless and the students mostly survive through remittances from parents and relatives.

2.14 .0 Process of Marriage Formation

Noonoo (1997 unpublished) opined that before Ghana's independence parents owed it a duty to train their wards to marry or to be married. Young adults however owed it an obligation to marry in order to meet societal standards. Parents were expected to choose a partner for the male children who were of age. Such a partner was considered by the parents to be most suitable. This procedure of contracting marriage according to Noonoo is considered archaic by about 75% of the contemporary youth who were preparing for marriage in the Central Region of Ghana. It is considered archaic by the youth because, it is not too long before the men detected the unsuitability of the women in many respects. However, about 19% of the respondents in the study were of the view that women who were chosen by parents for their male children for marriage were well-behaved or at least amenable; they were so respectful that they acted in obedience to the authority of the husbands.

However, the system has changed completely and nobody would like to play a game of chance by accepting a proposal from parents for their son whom they might not have met before. People, especially the youth who are about to marry for the first time, would like

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to accomplish the task of making a choice by themselves and be responsible for their choices or actions (Anokye 2001).

A study by Addo (1979) as quoted in Anokye (2001) indicates that 60% of the university students expressed strong disapproval of parental involvement in mate selection. Increased education could therefore weaken the traditional system of mate selection.

Marriage of any type begins with the proposal of love, usually by a man to a woman who is marriageable. This is followed by certain procedures before the marriage is recognised and accepted by society. The procedure may vary from one community to another, one tribe to another and most importantly according to the dictates and tastes of the woman's parents.

Authors and researchers like Gyasi-Appiah (2006), Dartey (1990), Abrah (2001) and Landis (1966) have identified the following as steps or procedures to be followed before marriage is recognised.

a) Dating

b) Knocking

c) Engagement

d) Wedding

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2.14.1 Dating/Courtship

From a Christian point of view, Mensah (2000) defines courtship as "the art and science of getting involved in social and spiritual activities that lead to engagement, betrothal and ultimately, marriage in the sight of God'. To him, it is the stage in relationship where friends or lovers take time to pay attention to the one they hope to marry. Courtship sets the tone for learning to please each other in marriage. In the olden days, the "would-be" couples were not given much time to study each other. The few, who had the chance to do it, did it under strict supervision by parents and society. Time to learn about the feelings, likes and dislikes of those getting prepared to marry was lacking in the traditionally arranged marriage. The modern marriages however create room for dating and courtship. Courtship according to Abrah (2001) begins after a young man has made his intention known to a female counterpart who has willingly accepted the proposal of love or showing consent to a male's marriage intention.

On his part, Mensah (2000) cautions that courtship is not meant to be a trial and error affair or a lottery device in which one can easily withdraw and try another suitor. He also cited the following as the benefits one derives from courtship:

1) It gives a good opportunity for the two to become better acquainted with each other.
2) It creates room for godly study for corrective purposes. That is, defects in character that parents advices, ministers' sermons and friends influence failed to correct can be permanently corrected if a loved one takes on the godly assignment of working on his/her partner in those areas.

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3) The period of courtship enables a couple to plan together towards the development, exploitation and use of their various talents and gifts.

Loudis (1996) has also opined that courtship experience can be a stabilizer to withstand pressure from parents or guardians who would want to plant false lover or would be spouse on a brother or sister. It helps to check the wrongful intention of "pretended lovers."

Apart from the above advantages stated, the maturity level of those in courtship plays a significant role in preparation towards marriage. Parties in courtship should be biologically, psychological and emotionally mature in order to learn from each other to assist themselves. A successful courtship leads to "knocking" in Akan society and in most African societies as well.

2.14.2 Knocking

After the initial proposition, if there is an agreement between the man and the woman then the man informs his relatives or parents who follow up to the woman's house to see the parents. He normally sends two to four people to the woman's parents to ask for the woman's hand in marriage. The woman's parents normally ask for her consent and give approval accordingly to the man through the delegation. It is here that the knocking fee is paid.

The knocking fee according to Gyasi-Appiah (2006) "is a small amount ranging from about twenty thousand cedis to fifty or a hundred thousand cedis plus, a bottle or two

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bottles of Schnapps or its equivalent in cash as dictated by the custom of the place. The purpose of this knocking fee is to announce the interest of the man in the woman and to find out if the woman is not already given to any man. It also enables the parents of the man and woman to find out more about the families and the individuals who would like to marry.

However, a study by Anokye (2001) among the married couples at lower Denkyira District revealed that 75% of the respondents did not do any proper investigation about their "would bees" background and their families before they got married. A search on the net has also revealed that most Ghanaian Moslems in Agona District of Central Region of Ghana like their counterparts in India do not pay a knocking fee before the actual marriage ceremony is performed. The parents, or relatives or "match makers" often approve or disapprove of any marriage proposal without a fee. (http://marriage.about.com/od/ history of marriage)

2.14.3 Engagement

A successful investigation after the payment of the knocking fee ushers the "would-bees" into another stage called "Engagement." Engagement according to Landis (1996) "is the period of serious courtship, a time during which the couple can take a last look before they leap into the uncertainties of marriage, but not a binding legal agreement'. It can also be defined as a pledge of marriage or betrothal.

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However, Gyasi-Appiah (2006) from the African perspective defines engagement as formal way of contracting marriage traditionally. It is a customary rite whereby the man pays the dowry to the family of the woman before he takes her as a wife. The engagement is popularly referred to us the customary marriage. The process and content of the package varies from tribe to tribe.

A survey by Family Life/Gender Issues Unit of the Christian Council of Ghana (2004) has revealed that, 50% of the 800 people interviewed in the Accra Metropolis were of the view that engagement or customary marriage was the final stage in the process of marriage formation. The report further added that such people are of the view that the presence of the pastor or the elders of the church at the customary marriages symbolises the presence of the Supreme God, the Creator. There is therefore no need for additional wedding or blessing at the church. However 40.6% of the same sample population was also of the opinion that church wedding is necessary and important in addition to the customary marriage. To them, marriage should be brought to the church to be witnessed by the "Saints." It also makes it possible for the "Saints" to pray for the couple and also support them in cash and in kind. The rest i.e. the 9.4% could not take a firm stand on the issue.

2.14.4 Wedding

The dictionary of pastoral care and counselling (1990) defines wedding as a rite of passage and an act of worship which celebrates the love of God as witnessed by the covenant being made between a man and a woman. It is mostly conducted in the context

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of the community of faith which reinforces the couple's commitment to God and to each other. The marital blessing and flamboyant wedding in our churches today after the normal traditional marriage has become a monster to many youth who are to go into marriage. The social prestige and the fantasy associated with church wedding too has been the attractive factor which lures most young men and women into the Christian marriage (Safo 2002).

2.15 Religion and Marriage

Marriage according to Christian belief is a God-ordained institution. That is the creation and harmonization of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Adam was to be the head of the family and he was to be assisted by the wife Eve. This was to help deliver the man from loneliness (Exodus 18:4). Marriage from the Christian perspective should be based on true love as stated in John 13:3v (RAV). "As I have loved you …" this implies that Jesus, the head of the church expects marriage couples to love each other just as he had loved the church. His type of love is unconditional hence couples should behave as such in love. The Bible again enjoins men to love their wives as they love their own bodies that is extending their love for themselves to enfold their wives (Ephesians 5:23-28). In the same way Christian marital union should be life long hence the marriage vow …" till death do us apart ..." (MHB 1993 offices). The Bible endorses divorce on the grounds of adultery but even then if the parties involved are willing to forgive each other, the marriage should not be dissolved. It is worthy to note that despite this principle, Christians are noted to dissolve their marriages more than those in other religions (Abrah, 2001).

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Christian wedding has become a fashion and social monster at the same time. The fashion nature of it is luring or enticing most people into it without taking analytical look at the commitment and sacrifices involved. The cost involved is also scaring most young men and women who are ready but have not got the means to do so. It is the belief of most people that Christian marriage was derived from Western cultural practices hence people who opt for such marriages break away from the extended family system. This has also resulted in some people's negative attitude towards Christian marriage. The restrictive and monogamous nature of Christian marriage to some extent has made some traditionalists view it as alien to the Ghanaian and for that matter the Akuapem culture.

In her article which appeared in a journal titled Marriage and Family, Sprecher (1994) opined that Ghanaian Moslems like their brothers and sisters in India believe marriage based on "love" is considered a deviant behaviour and almost an immoral act. Mate selection in Moslem communities is a duty of parents and family members and the individual's consent is only required to endorse the choice made for him/her. The Qu'ranic principle on selection in marriage is that; God endorses the choice of a righteous parent for his ward. The Qu'ran only prescribes roles and duties as well as obligations for spouses. Men have been mandated to love their wives while wives should submit to their husbands (Qu'ran 24:32). Freedom in selection of a mate is limited in Islamic cultures.

The influence of the Western culture has however given some amount of freedom to the contemporary youth to choose a spouse within the religion but has to be endorsed by the parents. Those who have gone outside the Moslem domain are considered wayward and are not regarded by the true faithful of the religion. This to some extent has been a

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stumbling block for most of the contemporary Moslem youth in Akuapem who have identified their "would bees" in other faith. The polygamous nature of traditional and Islamic religions scares most young educated women to go into it. The belief of some educated women is that they must have their own men to marry but not to share a husband with two or more wives. (http://marriage, rutgeedu/publications/pubteena.html).

2.16 Education and Marriage

Education, it is said is the bed rock of an individual's development but to some extent, it delays ones marriage especially highly educated women. Studies by Oppong (1987) as quoted by Schandorf (1990) concluded that the highly educated woman is thought of to be proud, saucy, boisterous, and difficult to please and was also domineering. These impressions whether true or false became expressive when educated men were advised to choose wives from illiterate or semi literate women at the village. The traditional view has been that such illiterate or semi illiterate women would be submissive to the men while the highly educated women would not. However, educated couples have a better understanding of marriage which brings satisfaction to both parties. The new assumption is that people especially the youth in Akropong who are of age consider education as a means of enhancing one's outlook, reviewing ones principles and refining ones philosophies on marriage. Education also can positively influence the marital lives of people who pursue it.

On the issue of equality in gender, Ghanaian traditions and Akuapem cultural practices are explicit on it. The wife holds a subordinate position in the marriage. This places the

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woman at the receiving end and is considered as part of the man's assets. Traditionally a woman (wife) is partially permitted to take part in deciding on matters that affect her home, kids and sometimes her future. Assertiveness among married women is considered an act of insolence and insubordination. In most traditions and cultures in Ghana (Akuapem culture inclusive), the best duty of a woman in marriage is to serve the husband, manage the home and to raise children based on the husband's choice.

A woman is considered independent when she is not married. Some young women are therefore afraid to exchange their independence and happiness for marriage which is seen as full of bitterness, hatred, slavery, servitude and misery. Those who are ready to accept it like that with the hope that their spouses will be kind-hearted, understanding and noble in character have had their hope dashed. The young men are also scared to sell their freedom of living with any woman of choice (co-habitation) to settle with one woman as a wife. Marriage is not accorded the respect society used to give it some years ago (Asante-Boahene 2001).

With the above discussion on marriage, the task ahead therefore is to find out what has been the stumbling block to the youth in getting married or what has been the influencing factor to the youth who desire to get married or what is the status of marriage these days in society.

2.17 Cost on Marriage Formation (Bride Price)

Marriage in most Ghanaian societies become legalised and socially accepted when the bride price is paid in full to the bride's family. The cost and the items involved in the

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bride price vary from one tribe to another and from one family to another. Among the Akans the common items involved are drinks, money, trunk which contains assorted items of the bride, compensation money for the brother-in-laws (Akonta Sekan) and others. The Gurune speaking people of the Bolga district also use cows, cola nuts, groundnut, foodstuff and drinks to pay the bride price (Sampaga 1997).

A survey by Sampaga (1997) indicated that 62.5% of the youth in the Gurune speaking communities in the Bolgatanga district were not married due to the high cost of bride price in the area.

The survey further indicated that 15% of the 200 respondent were able to pay the full bride price to get married when they were above 40 years due to the high demands of bride price. Seventy–five percent of the respondents got married through the traditional or customary marriage process/rites because they had no money to add the Christian wedding due to the amount already spend through the payment of the bride price.

A research by Ofei (2003) has also revealed that 60% of the youth in Yilo- Krobo land were either co-habiting or were refusing to settle down on one person to marry due to the fact that they do not have the means to pay the bride price. Thirty –two percent of the respondents (120 youth) also indicated that they were paying the bride price of the women they intended to marry by instalment.

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In attempt to find out the causes of singleness among the youth in the church, a Family Life and Gender Issues Unit of Christian Council of Ghana 2004 report indicated that 61% of the youth who are of marriageable age in the church were single due to their inability to foot the cost on marriage formation.

Sprecher (1994) in their research published in the Family Journal (1994) stated that 60% of the youth in India got married through arranged marriage by parents and relatives who virtually sponsored the marriage formation. This, to the researchers was partly due to the high cost on marriage formation and other socio-cultural factors.

2.18 Gender and Marriage

A research conducted by Monitoring the Future, a non-governmental organization in the United States of America has revealed that about 64% of senior high school girls in 1995 were optimistic to get a lifelong or a lasting marriage in future. However in a different survey 70% of the boys in the same institution in 2004 said, "Having a close intimate relationship with only one partner is too restrictive for the average person." They were therefore of the view that marriage should not be lifelong adventure.

(http://marriage.ruther's.edu/publications/pubteena.html).

A 1993 Gallup poll in California – USA found that only 23% of respondents believed that divorced women tried hard to save their subsequent marriages whiles 71% young adults believed the contrary. In another related survey, an overwhelming majority of young adults in Nigeria said they were happy for having a good marriage, they did not

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however respond quite so positively to the questions about lifelong marriage. Fifty –five percent of the young women were afraid to be serious about marriage because of the long effects of divorce culture pertaining on their land. Twenty –four percent of the young men were however ready to get married because they believed each man had his own luck for marriage. Thus, if marriages of others could not work, it did not mean theirs would be the same. (http://marriage.ruther's.edu/publications/pubteena.html

From a Ghanaian perspective, Anokye (2001) in a study involving the people in the Lower Denkyira District revealed that women between 20 – 30 years in the District have a strong desire for marriage than their male counterparts of the same age. The study further stated that 63% of the women interviewed were of the view that women do "expire" after 35 years due to biological and other physiological factors hence the need to get married before mid-thirties. Twenty -five percent of the same respondents were of the view that age does not matter in marriage. One only has to upgrade herself academically, socially, financially and to maintain her posture and believe that the "Mr. Right" would surely come one day.

Frimpong (2000) in support of the assertion that women marry earlier than men found from his study that, 50% of the women in Koforidua, the Eastern Regional capital married between 15 -25 years while 25% of the men married within that same age group. The reasons he assigned to this were: high cost of bride price, lack of job, and influence of other cultures. This trend might not be different from the situation in Akropong Akuapem.

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2.19 Job and Marriage

A search on the net has revealed that, the idea of married women working outside the home has become accepted by virtually all young adults in America. Of the 18-25 year olds surveyed by Gullup in 1993, 94% said that, having a career is very important. This will make the woman independent in marriage. In another survey of 1,001 randomly chosen ninth graders (14 – 16) in St. Paul, Minnesota, 99% of the girls said, they plan to work after getting married and 85% of the boys expected their wives to continue working after getting married.

(http://marriage.ruther's.edu/publications/pubteena.html).

In Ghana, a study by Addo (1979) as quoted by Anokye (2001) indicated that 66% of the University students believe that a job does not detract a man or woman from the spouse. Eighty-six percent of the 800 sample population "mostly disagreed" to marry a jobless spouse (wife or husband). This to Addo may be partly due to high cost of living and the negative effects of housewives and jobless husbands have on people's marriages.

Sampaga (1997) also indicated that 50% of the youth in Gurune land (Bolga Central) are not married due to lack of jobs. Twelve and half of the respondents got married late due to the low income from their jobs. The study also indicated that overwhelming majority of the employed youth in the Bolga Central got married early because they were capable of bearing the cost in marriage formation.

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In his attempt to identify the various causes of marital conflict, Dartey (1998) suggested that, the recent opportunities open to married women have made some wives showing disrespect towards their husbands. This attitude may come as a result of women earning equal or more income than their husbands. On the contrary, Gyasi-Appiah (2006) has said, mutual agreement by couples to work out an agreeable way of handling their income irrespective of how much each earns will ensure a successful marriage.

On the issue of both spouses working full-time, a survey by Monitoring the Future, a Non-Governmental Organization in 1999 has revealed that 40% of the senior high school students (youth) in Los Angeles thought it was unacceptable for both spouses to work full-time when there was a pre-school child at home. The research further indicated that mothers harm their children by working especially during the first year of the child (Crimmins and Bezilla 1991). The trend might not be different from that of Akropong Akuapem, as personal observation had shown that both young males and females always desire to secure a job first after school before marriage is considered.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methodology adopted for the study. It describes the following into detail.

- The Research Design and population
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Instrumentation
- Validation
- Method of Data Collection and Analysis

3.1 Research Design

The Research Design used in this study is a case study. A case study according to Robson (2003) is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple source of evidence. The reason for using case study stem from the fact that, the researcher aimed at finding the attitude of the youth (only in Akropong Akuapem) towards marriage. The study used qualitative approach to gather data and analyse.

Qualitative research is a naturalistic inquiry, the use of non- interfering data collection strategies to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them. Qualitative research helps to describe and analyse people, individual and collective actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions. It also enables researchers to gather

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data by interacting with selected persons in their settings and to obtain relevant documents on topics under study (McMillan and Schumacher 1997). Furthermore qualitative research enables researchers to use smaller but focused sample in order to elicit in-depth information or views from the respondents. Data are mostly categorised into patterns as the primary basis for organising and reporting results. Qualitative researchers are often more concerned about uncovering knowledge about how people feel about circumstances in which they find themselves than they are in making judgements about those thoughts and feelings.

The data from the study was critically examined to determine the extent to which the variables such as cost on marriage formation, religion, gender or sex differences, educational attainment and job relate to the attitudes and perception of the youth towards marriage.

3.2 Justification for Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is one of the two major approaches to research methodology in social sciences. It involves an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern human behaviour. Qualitative research began to gain recognition in the 1970s when many researchers used this approach in many disciplines such as women studies, disability studies, human service studies and others (Fischer 2005). It also helps to investigate why and how of decision making as compared to what, where and when of quantitative research.

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Qualitative research again refers to the type of study that describes people, systems, events and phenomena in their specific contexts. That is, it enables the researcher to record and understand people in their own terms or events in its natural state (Baumgartner, Strong and Hensley 2002).

In qualitative research, research questions are not framed by delineating variables or testing hypotheses, but most often they came from real world observations and dilemmas. Depth and detail are revealed through direct quotations and careful descriptions of behaviour. Qualitative research takes smaller but focused samples and categorises data into patterns as the primary basis for organising and reporting results. Qualitative researchers mostly derive their data base from interview transcripts from open ended, focused but explorating interviews. Other sources that constitute a qualitative database are recorded observations (both video and participatory), focus groups, texts and documents, policy manuals, photographs, lay autobiographical accounts and others.

According to Holloway (1997) qualitative researchers are often more concerned about uncovering knowledge about how people think and feel about the circumstances in which they find themselves than they are in making judgements about whether those thoughts and feelings are valid. It is exploratory in nature but cannot be represented in mathematical terms. The nature of the topic under study made the researcher to use a qualitative design as he sought the views of the youth and opinion leaders on the attitude of the youth towards marriage into detail. This also enabled the researcher to elicit the detailed feelings of the respondent on the topic under study.

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3.4 Validation

According to Anastasia (1988) as quoted in Onivehu and Amoah (2002) validity is the degree to which a test or an instrument measures what it purpose's to measure. Face validity is a means of checking or inspecting the contents to see whether it does indeed measure what is supposed to measure. Three prepared interview guides on separate sheets were sent to three specialised lecturers from the Department of Psychology and Education (UEW) for restructuring and modification as well as their comments on the items in the interview guide. The final guide was made up of two sets to elicit personal data about the respondents (youth and opinion leaders) as well as the perception and attitudes of the youth toward marriage.

A pilot test on four participants was used to check on timing, relevance, and the comprehension level of later actual participants of the study.

3.4 Population

Population according to Avoke (2005) is the group of interest to a researcher for a study. Population mostly comprises the entire aggregation of elements in which the researcher is interested. The two main types of population are target and accessible population. Target population is the group of elements the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions from. Accessible population on the other hand is the aggregate of cases that conform to the designated criteria that are accessible to the researcher as a pool of subjects for a study.

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The target population for this study was the entire youth in Akropong Akuapem in the Akuapem North District of Ghana. The accessible population for this study covered all men and women aged between 20 and 35 years living in the area of study.

3.5 Sample Size

Sample is usually the subset of the entire population of interest to the researcher. In research, it is usually not feasible to involve all the entire population and therefore the need to select some of them. The sample should have identical characteristics with the rest of the population (Avoke 2005).

The sample population was made up of 30 youth and 10 opinion leaders including pastors, imams, chiefs, elders' Christian counsellors and social workers in the area of study. It was assumed for the purpose of this study that at ages between 20 and 35, one was biologically and socially matured to take personal decisions on marriage. They were also capable of shouldering responsibilities in societies. Specifically, the employed youth for this study were purposively selected for the study.

3.6 Sampling Technique

The researcher adopted two sampling techniques: Thus, purposive sampling and snow ball sampling techniques were employed for identification of the youth for study. The opinion leaders such as pastors, imams, traditional leaders and social workers were purposively selected for the study.

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Purposive sampling, according to Cohen and Manion (1995) is a process whereby the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of the researcher's judgement of their specificity and typicality. With this, the researcher builds up a sample that suits the specific needs of the research such as the educated youth, the employed youth and willingness to participate. Snowball technique on the other hand enabled the researcher to identify a small number of employed youth who had the features and the qualities required for the study. The identified (few) youth were used as informants to help obtain sample required for the study.

3.7 Instrumentation

Data for the study was obtained from secondary and primary sources. The secondary data was collected from related literature from books, journals, the internet, demographic survey and other relevant publications on the topic.

The primary data was obtained through the use of in-depth interviews with employed youth, opinion leaders such as the clergy, imams, traditional leaders and social workers in the area of study. The semi-interview guide was both open and close ended items. The open ended questions were used to help respondents to freely express their opinions and views devoid of prejudice to obtain adequate information for the study. The close ended items apart from avoiding time consumption made it easier to gather the personal data of the respondents. The interview guide was designed in such a way that it was straight forward and easy to translate into the local Akuapem Twi language. The researcher went to places and institutions where the employed youth were to conduct the interview.

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3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Data on attitude towards marriage among the youth was officially collected from the selected respondents in the various fields in the area of study.

To ensure maximum response rate, the researcher with the research assistants went to the identified sample population after prior notice to conduct the interview. The interview was conducted for literates' respondents as well as the opinion leaders in the area of study for the information related to the issues on the topic.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interview was transcribed from audio into text data. Transcription is the process of correcting audio and tapes or field notes into text data. For effective building of chain of events, the text data was coded and categorised into themes and sub-themes. Coding is the process of segmenting and labelling text to form description and broad themes in data (Cresswell 2005 cited in Avoke 2005). This strategy helped to reduce redundancies found within the data. Themes and sub themes that emerged in relation to the research questions were used for the discussion. Direct quotations and related literature were used to support and enrich the discussions. Observations and experiences of the researcher were used to make inferences. Simple percentages were used to represent the themes and sub-themes.

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CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the analyses of the data obtained from the study. The first part of this chapter gives the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The composition of the respondents is made up of the youth, religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers in the Akropong Akuapem Township.

The second part presents the results of the study based on the interview responses and the research questions. The last part of this chapter covers the discussions of the findings which are done under the research questions. The findings are discussed under the themes that emerged during the analysis. For the purposes of analyses, percentages have been derived and used for assessment and discussions of the main issues (themes) of the study.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondent

The demographic characteristics of the respondents cover the youth and opinion leaders. The demographic characteristics of the youth respondents comprise their gender, educational attainment, employment status, and religious affiliation. The composition of opinion leaders comprises religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers. These are represented in the tables below.

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Youth

Table 4.1

Gender of Youth Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	15	50.0
Male	15	50.0
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Table 4.1, indicates that equal number of males and females were selected for the research. That is 15 males and 15 females representing 50% for each. This is to assist the researcher to obtain a fair result from the respondents.

Table 4.2

Educational Attainment (Youth)

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Basic School	4	13.3
Second cycle	10	33.3
Tertiary Institution	16	53.3
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Table 4.2 shows the educational attainment of the youth.

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Evidence from the table indicates that a higher percentage (53.3) of the youth had up to tertiary level education. A relatively high number of the youth (10 out of 30) representing 33.3 percent had also up to the Secondary level education whiles a few of them (4 out of 30) had attained basic education. Respondents from different educational background were considered in order to examine the impact of educational attainment on their attitude towards marriage.

Table 4.3

Employment Status of the Youth

Employment Status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Self Employed	10	33.3
Public Servants	10	33.3
Others organizations	10	33.3
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Table 4.3 shows the employment status of the youth.

The table shows that, 10 of the respondents were self employed, 10 were Public Servants and 10 were employed in other organizations. The employment status of the respondents was considered in order to discuss the influence the type of job people engage in had on their attitude towards marriage.

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Table 4.4

Religious Affiliation of Respondents

Religion of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Christians	15	50.0
Muslims	8	26.4
Non Specific Religion	7	24.6
Total	**30**	**100.0**

Table 4.4 shows the religious affiliations of the respondents.

In all, there were 15 Christians, 8 Moslems and 7 others who did not belong to any specific religion. This was considered in order to find out the influence of religion on marriage among the youth.

Table 4.5

Composition of Opinion Leaders (Respondents)

Opinion Leaders	Frequency	Percentage
Religious Leaders	4	40.0
Traditional Leaders	3	30.0
Social workers	3	30.0
Total	**10**	**100.0**

Table 4.5 shows the composition of the opinion leaders.

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Data from table 4.5 shows that out of the total of 10 opinion leaders, 4 were religious leaders, 3 were traditional leaders and 3 were social workers. Different set of opinion leaders were considered in order to sample for additional views on the youths' attitude towards marriage.

4.2.0 PRESENTATION , DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This section presents the findings which are based on the themes emerging from the interview guides and the research questions. The presentations take due cognizance of the direct quotations of the respondents which are in line with the issues that came out from the analysis. The following themes emerged during the analysis.

- The perceptions about marriage. (marriage as a legal union, marriage as a union, and marriage as co-habitation)
- Religion and attitude towards marriage.
- Influence of cost on marriage.
- The effect of educational attainment on marriage.
- The influence of job on marriage.
- Gender and attitude towards marriage.

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4.3. Research Question One

What is the perception of the youth about marriage?

Marriage used to be one of the important social institutions but, the youth of today have divergent views on the meaning and importance of marriage. The research question one therefore sought to find out how the youth (with supporting views from religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers) understood the concept marriage. The responses served as the basis or the foundation of the research. To answer this research question, items 1, 2 and 3 of the interview guide for the youth were used to elicit the views of the youth. Again items 1, 2 and 3 of the interview guide for the opinion leaders were also used to elicit the supporting views from the religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers. The responses revealed three conceptions about marriage. These were marriage as a legal union, marriage as union and cohabitation as marriage. These results are represented in two tables 4.6a and 4.6b

Table 4.6a : Perception about Marriage

Responses	**Youth**		**Religious Leaders**		**Traditional Leaders**		**Social Workers**		**Total Responses**	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	
Marriage as a legal union between two adult female and male	20	66.7	4	100	3	100	3	100	30	75%
Marriage as a union	6	20.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	15%
Cohabitation as marriage	4	13.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	10%

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Table 4.6 shows respondents perceptions about marriage.

Perception about Marriage

Table 4.6a, revealed that 75 percent (30 out of 40) representing 20 youth, 4 religious leaders, and all the 3 social workers thought of marriage as a legal union between two adult female and male. However 15 percent (6 out of 40) who were mainly young people were of the view that marriage is just a union between two people. A small number of the total respondents who formed 10 percent (4 out of 40) were of a different view that cohabitation is also marriage.

The following are some of the assertions of the respondents on the three stances on marriage;

- *"Marriage is a legal union between two adults (female and male) who support each other in their physical and spiritual growth"(a religious leader's response).*
- *"Marriage is a union between two people"(a youth's response)*
- *"Cohabitation is marriage because two people come together to reproduce and to have fun which marriage stands for"(a youth's response).*

DISCUSSIONS

The first research question sought to find out the understanding of the respondents about marriage. The findings were discussed under the following sub themes.

- Marriage as a legal union
- Marriage as a union
- Cohabitation as marriage

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Marriage as a Legal Union

Data from this research revealed that there were diverse views regarding the meaning of marriage. The interview responses revealed that the majority of the youth (20 out of 30) representing 66. 7 percent were of the view that marriage is a legal union between an adult male and female who have gone through all the necessary rites to become husband and wife. The legality of marriage stems from the fact that the man has performed all the necessary rites and all the families or the parties involved are satisfied and have given their approval or concern to the marriage.

Two respondents (youth) had this to say:

> *Marriage is a legal institution ordained by God to bring two people (male and female) together after the important rites have been performed to the parties or families involved.*
>
> *It is a legal union between two families who give their wards (son and daughter) into marriage and that they become husband and wife.*

These assertions are in agreement with Dartey (1998) that "marriage is the coming together of a man and woman in a relationship that is approved or sanctioned by both society and families with the purpose of establishing a well rounded and closely-knit relationship that can enhance the personalities involved and society at large."

The assertion of Hunter (1999) further confirms that "Marriage is an institution composed of a culturally accepted union of a man and a woman in husband – wife relationship. It did appear from Hunter's study that the performance of the rites which gives families or societal concern or approval of the marriage makes it legalized or formalized. The study

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revealed that the youth who were knowledgeable or well informed on cultural issues had the better understanding of marriage as shown above. This is because it is social approval or concern on any marriage that authenticate it.

The study further revealed that, all the religious leaders (4), traditional leaders (3) and the social workers (3) had the same understanding with the majority of the youth that marriage is a legal union between two adults (female and male) who have had a social approval after going through all the necessary procedures to become husband and wife. A traditional leader interviewed said that:

> *Marriage is supposed to be a life long venture between two (male and female) adults who understand themselves and have agreed to live as husband and wife after going through all the necessary and legal rites(a traditional leader's response).*

One of the social workers also had this to say:

> *It is a life long commitment between two adults (male and female) who have had a societal approval after performing all the formal rites).*

It must be noted that the opinion leaders also recognised the importance of societal approval before a marriage is recognized as a true marriage. It involves the compliance of certain laid down procedures. This procedure generally starts with identification of a would-be spouse, courtship, knocking and payment of bride price and wedding. The same is true about traditional, civil and religious marriages among the Akuapems of the eastern region of Ghana.

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Marriage as a Union

On the other hand, minority of the youth (6 out of 30) were of the understanding that marriage is the coming together of two people. This assertion however did not have the support from some of the opinion leaders. However on the issue at stake, a youth commented:

> *Marriage is union between a man and a woman who have agreed to share their lives.*

Another respondent (a traditional leader) also said:

> *Marriage is coming together of two people who understand themselves and would like to be together to have fun.*

This assertion is consistent with Mair (1965) quoted in Abrah (2001) that marriage is a mutual union between one or more males and one or more females for the establishment of a family. Asante-Boahene (2001) also agrees with the assertion that, marriage is a union between a male and female(s) who have agreed to live together to reproduce young ones.

The researcher is of the view that the youth who understood marriage to be a union without any formalities might have been influenced by the western culture where two people can contract marriage without the backing or knowledge of any relative. This could have come because of the media influence, especially the films the youth watch on relationship and love. Lack of parental control on choice or selection of spouses might also contribute to the perception of the youth on marriage as a union. The responses from the youth on marriage as a union has revealed that minority the (6 out 0f 40) of the youth

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were not ready to formalize their relationship. The reason being that they are afraid to sell their freedom to one person as they consider legalized marriage as full of restrictions and commitments. The youth especially the males oppose legalized marriage so that they could marry more than one wife. It was observed that polygamy was a common practice among the elderly in that community where the research was carried out.

Cohabitation as Marriage

The study further revealed that a fraction of the respondents (mainly youth) who formed 13.3 percent (4 out of 30) had the understanding that co-habitation could be classified as marriage in recent times. The group was of the view that cohabitation has been in the society since the days of Adam and has now been recognised as a type of marriage. There was however, no consensus among the opinion leaders involved in this study regarding cohabitation as a form of recognised marriage. On the issue of cohabitation as a form of marriage, some respondents had this to say:

> *Marriage is about love so if two people (a male and female) love themselves and stay together, or cohabit they can do whatever the married couple can do (a youth's response).*
>
> *It is good to cohabit with your lover if possible give birth and have fun without the interference of any family member. It is about love and understanding (another youth's response).*

The view expressed by the fraction of the youth was in agreement with Asante-Boahene's (2001) assertion that cohabitation is living together without being legally married or recognized by the society. It is a type of marriage in Ghana and some parts of the world. Cohabitation is the order of the day in California, USA as most of the youth

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preferred concubinage to legal marriage (Ferguson (2001). The author further said, society no longer frowns on concubinage because it has become part of life in California. This revelation from the study is in line with the situation in Ghana especially among the youth of Akropong Akuapem.

A probing question on why some of the youth preferred cohabitation to formal marriage revealed the following responses:

- *Lack of funds for performing marital formation*
- *Desire to further education to certain level*
- *Societal pressure on the youth to get married*
- *Religious restrictions on selection of spouses from other religions*
- *Tribal barriers and sentiments of parents and relatives (mainly views of the youth)*
- *Inability to adjust in relationship and to be committed to principles in marriage (view of a religious leader).*

The ideas above clearly show why some sections of the youth are running away from their social responsibility of getting married and are rather indulging in cohabitation. Further probe into the perception of marriage yielded the following responses on the benefits of marriage. These responses were summarized in table 4.6b below.

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Table 4.6b Benefits of Marriage

Responses	Youth		Religious Leaders		Traditional Leaders		Social Workers		Total Responses	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Support (financial)	18	60.0	2	50.0	1	33.3	2	66.7.0	23	57.5%
Unity	3	10.0	1	25.0	2	66.7	-	0.0	6	15.0%
Procreation and sexual satisfaction	7	23.3	1	25.0	-	0.0	1	33.3	9	22.5%
No importance	2	6.7	-	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	2	5.0%

Table 4.6b shows respondents' views on the benefits of marriage.

From the data presented in table 4.6b, it could be seen that, the majority of the respondents (23 out of 40) representing 57.5 percent were of the view that people marry because of the support they derive from the marriage. Thus 18 youth, 2 religious leaders, I traditional leader and 2 social workers asserted that people marry because of the various support services they may derive from the union. A minority (6 out of 40) who formed 15 percent of the respondents were of the view that marriage is about being united together. Thus, three (3) of the youth, one (1) religious leader and two (2) traditional leaders shared this view.

Aside these views expressed above, 22.5% of the respondents (9 out of 40) were of a different view that marriage is about sexual satisfaction and procreation while a small

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number of the respondents forming 5% (2 out of 40) held the view that marriage was of no importance to them. Below are the views of some of the respondents:

> *Marriage is important in the sense that, couples support each other in both domestic and financial needs. In times of trouble, your partner is the one who will help you (a religious leader's response).*

On marriage as a form of unity, a respondent had this to say:

> *Through marriage, families, individuals, towns and communities come together (a traditional leader's view).*

Procreation and sexual satisfaction was also seen as benefit in marriage. A respondent's comment regarding this issue was:

> *It is important because you can enjoy the comfort of your bed with your woman and have children as well (a social worker's response).*

On the issue of no importance of marriage, a respondent commented:

> *Marriage is about selling of ones liberty, right and freedom. I prefer to remain single and enjoy myself (a youth's response).*

A further probe on whether marriage is relevant to the contemporary youth revealed divergent views. The data gathered in this research showed that some of the youth (18 out of 30) shared the view that the most important aspect of marriage to them was the support couples derived from each other. This assertion was supported by two of the religious leaders, one traditional leader and two social workers. The support couples derive from marriage include financial support, emotional support, physical support, social support among others. This idea is in line with what the Holy Bible says (in Ecclesiastes 4:9) that two are better than one, for one will support the other when one falls and they will warm

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each other in bed. The Bible again says in Genesis 2:18-25 that "It is not good that man should live alone; I will make him a help–mate fit for him." The help-mate (woman) is to assist or support the man and the man too is to help the woman and to love her as well. The following are sampled statements of the youth:

- *At first women were just housewives, but nowadays, they also want to be educated and be in higher positions so that they can also support heir husbands in managing homes.*
- *Marriage is important because couples support each other financially, emotionally socially and physically." I am ready to support whoever marries me so that we can achieve whatever we aim at doing in life (views of the youth).*

A religious leader also commented, thus:

> *The purpose of God for marriage is that husband and wife may support each other in all endeavours of life. By this they will be successful and stand against all forms of pressures (within and outside the marriage) (a religious leader's comment).*

From the responses, it can be concluded that a section of the youth nowadays marry with the hope of receiving support from their spouses. The economic situation in Ghana can be the possible reason why the youth would like to receive support from their prospective spouses when they marry. These findings agree with the findings of Sandrock (2005) that the youth in California High School expressed the desire to marry people who are gainfully employed because of the financial support they may derive from the relationship. Sandrock further added that marrying a working spouse mostly reduced the financial stress on the marriage. The support people gain from relationship has now become a bait or a yardstick for entering into relationship or marriage in

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Akuapem North District especially Akropong. This is seen in the number of marriages that were dissolved because spouses' hopes and aspirations for support and care were not met in their marriages.

Unity

Another benefit of marriage the responses revealed was unity. A small number of respondents (6 out of 40) comprising 3 youth, a religious leader and 2 traditional leaders were in agreement that the benefit of marriage nowadays is about uniting individuals, families and communities. The respondents were of the view that marriage unites people from different socio cultural backgrounds. Some of the respondents interviewed about the benefits of marriage gave these comments:

- *Marriage fosters unity among families and communities globally.*
- *It helps to bring the poor and the rich, educated and uneducated together due to the love they have for themselves (views of the youth).*

These views are consistent with Gyasi-Appiah's (2005) assertion that marriage brings people of varied background and from different parts of the world together. This is further shared by His Holiness Osofo Komfo Atsu Kove, Head of Africania Mission in Ghana that marriage is an agreement between families, nations and individuals who come together as one (Spectator, Saturday July 28, 2007). It is evidently clear that some youth would want to marry from different tribes and from different environments. This attests to the fact that, the Akuapems inter-marry with the Guans, Okere's, Krobos, Akyems and Gas. This has ensured peaceful co-existence among the tribes who live

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together on the Akuapem ridge and its surroundings. Inter tribal marriage has also helped to resolve differences that erupted among the people (tribes) on the ridge.

Sexual Gratification and Procreation

The study also revealed that 7 out of 30 (23.3 %) youth shared different view that sexual gratification and procreation are the main reasons why people go into marriage. One religious leader and a social worker were also in agreement that marriage is the only legitimate means through which sexual gratification and procreation can be achieved. This response is in line with Dartey's (1998) assertion that God instituted marriage for husband and wife to satisfy their sexual desires and thereby procreate to ensure continuity of human existence." This assertion is further emphasized by Abrah (2001) that people become satisfied in marriage when their sexual needs are met by their partners. Abrah further said most marriages are sustained when children are produced.

This is implied in the statements of some of the respondents that are given below.

- *Our parents gave birth to us so we must also marry in order to give birth to young ones to replace us when we go (die).*

- *Marriage is something that brings happiness between two people especially when it comes to sexual gratification (views of the youth).*

This means that the youth may marry in order to satisfy their sexual needs and also give birth. The implication here is that to achieve this benefit of marriage, even those who cannot marry legally or formally may also engage in cohabitation in order to satisfy their sexual desires. This could increase the number of youth who engage in cohabitation to

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satisfy their sexual desires. Others also give birth through cohabitation to avoid societal pressure on them to give birth because of their ages.

There were however, a few of the youth (2 out of 30) who held a different view that marriage had no benefit to them. There was, however, no consensus among the religious leaders, traditional leaders and the social workers regarding the issue of marriage not having any benefit. The study revealed that some of the youth perceived marriage to be full of restrictions and that it boarders on selling of one's freedom to one particular person. This stance is in line with Sandrock (2005) who opined that marriage has become a more optional, less permanent institution (among the adolescents.) in contemporary America.

It is evident from the above assertion that marriage has lost its value among the youth of Akropong -Akuapem. It has become optional and no more obligatory as some youth do not even see the need in getting married. This anti-marriage attitude might have developed from some unfortunate experiences some youth might have had from their previous relationships. The increased divorce rate in Akropong might have also scared the youth. The study also revealed that the benefit the youth derived in cohabitation was far better than what they perceived married people enjoy.

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Research Question Two

How does religion influence the attitude of the youth towards marriage?

To answer this research question, item 6 on the interview guide for the youth and items 3 and 4 on the interview guide for opinion leaders were used. The summary of this analysis is represented on table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7 Effect of religion on attitude towards Marriage

Responses	Youth		Religious Leaders		Traditional Leaders		Social Workers		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Positive Effects	19	63.3	3	75	1	33.3	2	66.7	25	62.5
Negative Effects	10	33.3	1	25	2	66.7	1	33.3	14	35.0
None	1	3.3	-	-	-		-	-	1	2.5

Table 4.7 shows the effect of religion on the attitude towards marriage.

Data from table 4.7 suggests that the majority of the respondents (25 out of 40) who formed 62.5 percent had been influenced positively by religious practices, doctrines and beliefs in their attitude towards marriage. Among the majority who had positive attitude towards marriage were 19 out of 30 youth. Three religious leaders, one traditional leader and two social workers also shared this that most of the youth had been influenced by their religious believes and values. Below is a testimony from a youth respondent.

> *My church organizes youth forum and seminars for the church on issues in marriage. This motivates me to settle down and have a husband. The church provides*

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> *refreshment for the wedding and motivates a lot of young guys to settle down to marry.*

On the contrary, the minority of the respondents (14 out of 40) forming 35 percent were of the view that religion have had a negative influence on their attitude towards marriage. The minority comprised 13 youth, a religious leader, 2 traditional leaders and 2 social workers. One of them had this to say:

> *Religion in terms of choice is a barrier. Jehovah Witness, Deeper life or Seventh Day Adventist would not allow their members to marry from any religious sect (a youth's response).*

A further analysis of table 4.7 revealed that a small fraction of the respondents (1 out of 40) representing 2.5 percent was neutral, meaning religion had not had any influence on their attitude towards marriage. A respondent commented that;

> *My religion is open and does not limit me as to whom I should marry or where my wife should come from but the money is the problem (view of a youth).*

DISCUSSIONS

It is evident from the results of the research that the respondents had divergent views on the influence of religion on the attitude of the youth towards marriage. The three positions sampled for discussion were positive influence, negative influence and no influence of religion on attitude towards marriage.

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Positive Influence of Religion on Attitude towards Marriage

Information gathered from the interviews revealed that some religious doctrines, rules and regulations have had positive influence on the majority of the youth towards marriage. Various programmes and activities had been run for the youth which had inspired them to develop a positive attitude towards marriage. This fact was confirmed by three religious leaders, one traditional leader and two social workers. These were some of the comments of the youth.

- *My religion does not influence or prevent me as far as marriage is concerned. It rather encourages me to get married as pastors organize programmes for the youth on the importance of marriage (A youth's comment).*

- *Islam mandates all able people in the faith to get married to people of their choice provided they are in the same religion (a Moslem youth's comment).*

A religious leader also said:

- *In my church we organize programmes on marriage for the singles which has motivated them to get married. We also allow them to marry from any other church (a religious leader's response).*

A social worker also commented thus:

- *The talks on relationship and the importance of marriage teachings have been motivating the youth who are preparing to enter this holy matrimony. My outfit collaborates with other religious bodies to organize pre-marital counselling for the youth (a social worker's comment).*

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The above views were consistent with Agyin-Asare's (2005) assertion that marriage is a sacred union in all the major religions in Africa. Agyin Asare further noted that various forms of prayers are said when marriages are contracted to invoke the blessings of God and other spirits upon the marriage. This assertion is further expanded by Abrah (2001) that peer counselling and pre-marital counselling among Moslems and Christians in Greater Accra Region of Ghana have helped to improve people's perception and attitude towards marriage. Abrah further contended that despite the differences that Moslems and Christians have, they both agree on the sacred nature of marriage.

Additionally, people entering marriage should prepare financially, spiritually and psychologically before they come together as husbands and wives. It is worthy to note that most of the religions all over the globe mandate their members to marry from the same religion or from sects which share some common beliefs with them. It is therefore evident from the above views that the youth might be showing positive attitude towards marriage due to the fact that their religions mandate them to marry. Positive attitude towards marriage by the greater number of the youth might also be attributed to the fact that society frowns on people who remain single at the marriageable age especially when they are gainfully employed. Workshops, seminars, teachings and group counselling sessions organized by some religious bodies for members might have contributed greatly to the positive attitude shown towards marriage by the majority of the youth.

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Negative Influence of Religion on Attitude towards Marriage

The responses also revealed a contrary view. The minority of the youth (10 out of 30) were of the view that certain doctrines, rules and regulations in some religions have created some barriers for them in their attempt to get married. These have resulted in negative attitudes being formed towards marriage. This view was shared by only one religious leader, two traditional leaders and a social worker. Certain doctrines in Christianity which is the predominant religion in the area of study forbid members to relate with unbelievers when it comes to marriage. The situation is not different in Islam as Moslem women are not encouraged to marry from other religions. The men in Islam are however to some extent permitted to marry from other religions. African traditional worshippers are at liberty to marry from any religion provided the couple understand and love themselves. These were implied in the sample statements of the youth respondents.

- *In terms of choice religion is a barrier. Example: Deeper Life, Adventist and Jehovah Witness would not allow their members to marry someone outside their church (A Christian youth's comment).*

- *My religion as a Moslem forbids me to marry or befriend any person outside my religion" I will be sanctioned if I have to befriend a Christian or Buddhist not even to talk about marriage (A male Moslem's comment).*

- *In my church,(Presbyterian Church of Ghana) no one is permitted to become a second wife or third wife but all the men who propose to me about marriage want me as a second wife or a third one. This has been the main reason why l am still single at35 though I am a lady" (a Christian's comment).*

A Moslem Imam also had this to support the youth's comments;

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> *The Holy Qu'ran strictly forbids members to befriend or marry from any religion apart from Islam. We therefore advise our youth to make selection from our religion. Any one who wants to marry a Moslem must renounce his faith and become a true Moslem before the fellow is accepted as a husband or wife to any of our members (a Moslem's response).*

Traditional leaders also said:

> *Our ancestors married as many as four or more wives at a time but the Whiteman's culture has influenced our women not to become second wives. That is why a lot of the women are not married but attached to men who are already married (a traditional leader's response).*

The above views are in line with the Holy Bible (that, Christians should not have anything in common with unbelievers. The Bible further says in Gen 2: 24 that the two shall be united to become one fresh. The believer (Christian) cannot therefore marry anyone who doesn't share the same belief or same faith since it can lead to misunderstanding, suspicion and conflict of values, beliefs and interest. The Qu'ran's assertion on this issue also suggests that Moslems should not marry people outside their religion. The researcher is therefore of the view that some of the youth who delayed in getting married might attribute it to the religious restrictions and principles that forbade them to marry from other religions. The negative attitude developed by some of the youth towards marriage might also be due to the influence of western culture on the youth not to marry more than one and also not to become second or third wives. The high rate of divorce in the district might also be scaring some of the youth to go into the Holy Institution. The Christian doctrine forbids adultery. This makes it impossible for women

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to become second or third wives or men to marry more than one as in other religions despite the desire and the ability to do so.

Religion has no Influence on Attitude towards Marriage

The data further revealed that a small fraction of the youth (1out of 30) were undecided on the influence of religion on their attitude towards marriage. This stance had no supporting opinion from any of the religious leaders' traditional leaders or the social workers. A respondent's opinion is cited below:

> *My religion is open and does not limit me as to whom I should marry or where my wife should come from but the money is the problem (view of a youth).*

Despite the above, the researcher is of the view that those who marry from different religions may later on encounter certain problems in their marriage.

Landis-Landis (1966) as quoted in Anokye (2001) also has the view that lovers who marry without considering the religious affiliation, values and beliefs of their partners do not have a happy marriage at the end. The author further noted that values and religious beliefs play significant roles in relationships.

It is evident from the above that some people get married without considering the values, beliefs and the religion of their partners. This might be influenced by the love they have for each other. Love may also influence someone to renounce his faith and join the faith of the lover. This is in line with the marital adjustment theory which suggested that individuals should adjust in marriage by aligning with partners on belief, views, stances etc. for a peaceful co-existence.

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Research Question Three

To what extent does cost impede the marriage plans of the contemporary employed youth?

The research question 3 was to find out how cost on marriage formation influenced the attitude of the youth towards entering marriage. To answer this research question, items 4 and 5 of the interview guide for the youth and items 5 and 6 of the interview guide for religious leaders, social workers and traditional leaders were used to elicit the views of the respondents. The summary of the responses were represented on table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Effect of cost on Attitude towards Marriage

Responses	**Youth**		**Religious Leaders**		**Traditional Leaders**		**Social Workers**		**Total**	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Positive Effect	6	20.0	-	-	-	-	1	33.3	7	17.5
Negative Effects	22	73.3	4	100	3	100	2	66.7	31	77.5
None	2	6.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	5

Table 4.8 shows the effect of cost on attitude towards marriage.

Evidence from table 4.8 indicated that, the majority of the respondents representing 77.5% (31 out of 40) was of the view that, cost on marriage formation deter the youth from entering marriage. This majority group was made up of (22 out of the 30) youth, all the four (4) religious leaders, three (3) traditional leaders and two social workers. One of the youth had this to say:

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> *To me cost is a barrier in a sense that some families demand so much from the groom as bride price, especially those coming from affluent homes.*

A religious leader also commented on the negative influence that cost of marriage formation has on the attitude towards entering marriage thus:

> *Yes, most of the youth and even adult that I have interacted with express the fear of getting married. Their reason being that they have not got enough money to perform the customary rites and even be fully responsible for another person's life (a religious leader's comment).*

On the contrary, a minority of the respondents representing 17.5% (7 out of 40) agreed that cost on marriage formation does not prevent the youth from getting married. It rather urges them to enter into the "holy institution." The minority comprised of 6 youth and 1 social worker. On the issue of cost not barring the youth from getting married, one respondent commented that;

> *I have not come across anything that scares me. Like bride price or other things. Most of the ladies I moved with have good Christian parents who did not put any high price on their daughters (views of a youth).*

Apart from the two views presented, a small number of the respondents representing 5% (2 out of 40) was of the view that cost on marriage formation has no effect on their attitude toward marriage. They just found it difficult to make a choice. For instance, one remarked that;

> *I have everything and can go in whenever I am ready. My only problem is the one to marry (a youth's comment).*

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DISCUSSIONS

Cost as a Barrier towards Marriage

Respondents were also interviewed to find out how cost influenced their attitude towards entering marriage. Respondents gave divergent views. However, the majority of the youth representing 77.5 percent (22 out of 30) indicated that cost on marriage formation had had adverse effect on them. The high cost on marriage formation which begins from 'knocking' through wedding reception had become a hindrance to most of the youth in the area of study. The youth were of the view that the high bride price parents demanded from would- be in-laws, the cost on wedding (civil or church) and the economic situation in Ghana have been the main issues that kept them away from entering the "holy institution." These are indicated in their sample statements;

- *Cost on marriage is expensive and it is causing delay among the youth especially me. My woman wants wedding yet the father is charging me huge sum of money as bride price. This has brought about misunderstanding between us. I am afraid we may end it here.*

- *Financial burden has prevented all the men who come my way to leave when it comes to formalizing our relationship.*

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- *Cost on engagement and wedding are expensive and people like me are running away from it till we meet somebody who will be moderate enough for me. I want all to perform the engagement in a simple way because money is hard to come by nowadays (some views of the youth).*

It is probable that the youth who are cohabiting in the Akropong -Akuapem and elsewhere may be doing so due to the financial constraints they encounter in the process of formalizing their relationship. The high bride price parents and certain families place

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on their daughters is also a contributory factor to why most of the youth are not entering marriage these days. Flamboyant wedding at church and at the law courts which involves a lot of expenses became evident why the youth especially the males are running away from formalizing or legalizing their relationship.

The study further indicated that all the four religious leaders, 3 traditional leaders and 2 social workers were in agreement with the majority of the youth that cost on marriage formation has caused the youth to develop a negative attitude towards entering marriage. This became evident in the sample statements of the opinion leaders. For example:

- *The young men and women I interact with always complain of the expensiveness of marriage formation these days (views of a religious leader).*

- *The women I meet in my counselling sessions mostly complain of the disappointment guys have been giving them owing to the fact that the guys complain of their low pockets to meet the cost on marriage formation (views of a social worker).*

The researcher is of the view that the young men and women who complain of money as the main barrier to them in getting married may be having low income from their work. They may also lack the simple understanding about marriage that it is a union between two people (male and female) who intend to support each other. They do not seem to recognize the fact that the legality of marriage is not determined by the cost. They therefore fail to plan and pull their resources together in order to prepare adequately to fund the marriage.

A further probe revealed that the cost of wedding also acted as a barrier to marriage among the youth. Some of the respondents said:

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- *Wedding is an addition of cost because the ceremony is about the exchange of vows and rings which could have taken place at the traditional marriage.*

- *It is not really important because if there will be pastors and many witnesses as at the engagement then I think it should be the final process wedding to me is not necessary (views of some youth).*

A traditional leader also said:

> *Wedding has become the most expensive aspect of marriage processes. It is preventing a lot of our youth from getting married (a traditional leader's view).*

These views are consistent with Musa's (1999) assertion that the youth in Bolgatanga Central rejected the idea of wedding because they wanted to avoid the restrictions and limitations that ordinance marriage places on couples to ensure monogamy. The author has also noted that ordinance marriage gives equal rights and responsibility to both husband and wife which contrast with the traditional practices. By African tradition, a wife forms part of a man's property, a subordinate but not a partner in marriage. The study also revealed that most of the youth in this group fell under those who had low income jobs. This therefore does not enable them to raise adequate funds for church or court wedding.

The researcher is of the view that, the negative attitude of some of the youth towards marriage could be attributed to their inability to adapt to the Western principles in marriage despite its positive influence on many people. The restrictions the church or court poses to polygamy might have had negative attitudes towards marriage.

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Despite the above, majority of the youth were in favour of wedding partly because of the legal backing it gives to the couple. Wedding also help people to secure their position in marriage. These views were supported by three of the religious leaders, one traditional leader and a social worker. They however spoke against the excesses on wedding (Church or Civil). These views were shared by the following respondents.

- *Church Wedding is necessary because it is through that God blesses the marriage. Also, the marriage becomes legally protected (A female youth's response)*

- *Wedding at Church or court is important because of the legal aspect attached to it (A male youth's response).*

- *I would go in for wedding myself so that my husband's relatives may not cheat on me in case something happens (A female youth's response).*

A traditional leader also had this to say:

> *The church or court wedding is important because it makes the two legalize their marriage hence each becomes protected by the laws of the land (a traditional leader's comment)*

A social worker also said:

> *The wedding makes it possible for more witnesses to observe and witness the occasion. The legal aspect of it makes the couple secured as the laws of the land protect them (a social worker's comment)*

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These assertions are in line with Abrah's (2001) assertion that most women in Ghana prefer wedding to traditional marriage due to the legal aspect attached to wedding that makes them protected when they are divorced. She further postulated that, the women who prefer wedding to engagement or traditional marriage mostly did so for fear that they might be thrown out of their matrimonial home by the husband without a fair share of what they might have jointly acquired.

The researcher is however of the view that the youth especially the ladies who wanted to be wedded by their prospective would-be partners were only fascinated by the flamboyancy of the modern marriage at church or court. The highly educated among the youth also might have been influenced by western culture that gives equal right and responsibility to parties involved in ordinance marriage.

Positive Influence of Cost on attitude towards Marriage

On the contrary, the minority of the youth (6 out of 30) shared the opinion that cost on marriage formation has no negative influence on them. This view was supported by a social worker that the expensiveness or the flamboyant nature of contemporary marriage motivates some of the youth to enter marriage. A youth had this to say:

> *Marriage ceremony is done once in a life time so one has to spend a lot to make the day. I am gathering funds to formalize my relationship with my woman to prove to her that I am in to get her the best (a youth's comment)*

This means that some of the youth are not scared by the cost on marriage formation. However, the researcher is of the view that, these youth are not willing to face facts. They

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could be influenced by the kind of job they do as they receive fat salaries. They could also be influenced by religious affiliations that mandate them to have church wedding as most of the "modern" churches do. The desire to get married without considering the cost involved may also be the fact that they have taken time to save a lot of money towards their marriage. This aspect of the research is in line with Ofei's (2003) assertion that the youth in Yilo Krobo traditional area spent years to gather resources to pay for the bride price in the marriage process. The author further noted that the long process involved in payment of dowry in marriage formation delays the youth in Yilo Krobo to get married.

Cost does not Influence Attitude towards Marriage

The information gathered further revealed that few respondents were not influenced in anyway by the cost on marriage formation. The attitudes towards marriage by these few respondents have nothing to do with cost on marriage formation. There was however, no consensus among the opinion leaders (religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers). The assertion of these few respondents is in agreement with Whitehead and Popenoe (1998) that most of the youth (adolescent) in Ohio, USA prefer to remain single than getting married due to the fact that they are afraid to accept additional responsibilities in life. This is further emphasized by Anokye (2001) that the youth in Denkyira traditional area are virtually running away from social responsibility by refusing to settle down to marry. This assertion is evidenced in the sample statement of two respondents:

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- *I have everything it takes to get married i.e. money, job education and others but I am just not ready (a youth's response).*
- *Marriage is meant for the elderly and those who can be responsible for their spouses. The guys are not serious so we also treat them like that. I am not ready for any man to lord it over me (a youth's response).*

It is evidenced from the above that the respondents have not been influenced by the cost on marriage formation. They are rather not just ready to settle down to marry. They only want to make fun in life with their lovers. Some too have not met their rightful partners hence do not see the usefulness in settling down to marry. This might be attributed to the fact that they may have unaccomplished vision and marriage may prevent them from accomplishing it.

Research Question Four

How does the educational status of the youth influence their attitude towards marriage?

Education over the years has been the bedrock of nation's development and individual's success. Education helps to change behaviour of people. It equally influences people's decision and attitude towards something. Research question 4 therefore sought to find out how educational attainment of the youth influences their attitude towards marriage. To answer this question, the researcher used item 8 of the interview guide for the youth to elicit their opinions on the topic. In order to gather additional or supporting views, items 12 and 13 of the interview guide for the opinion leaders were used. The responses have been grouped under three main sub-headings; educational attainment has positive

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influence, negative influence and no influence on the attitude of the youth towards marriage. A summary of the responses are represented in table 4.9.

Table 4.9 The Impact of Educational Attainment on Marriage

Responses	**Youth**		**Religious Leaders**		**Traditional Leaders**		**Social Workers**		**Total**	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Positive Effect	7	23.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	10	25
Negative Effects (Education as a barrier)	20	66.7	3	66.7	2	66.7	2	66.7	27	67.5
No Effect	3	10.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	7.5

Table 4.9 shows the effects of educational attainment on attitude towards marriage.

From table 4.9, it was revealed that a large number of the respondents representing 67.5% (27 out of 40) were of the opinion that education delayed most of the youth in getting married. This figure comprised of 20 youth, 3 religious leaders, 2 traditional leaders and 2 social workers. In response to whether education delayed the youth in getting married, a youth had this to say:

> *Yes, I was with a certain man and he went to school so one day he later came to tell me that he wants to concentrate on his academic work so we should break up the relationship (a youth's response).*

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A social worker in her response also said

> *Combining learning with marriage and family life can be quite cumbersome, so most people would want to attain the height they have decided to reach on the educational ladder before they marry (a social worker's response).*

However, a small number of the respondents representing twenty-five (25%) percent comprising seven (7) youth, one (1) religious leader, one (1) traditional leader and one (1) social worker were of the view that education rather positively influenced the youth to enter marriage. For example, a respondent commented thus:

> *Education enables the youth to meet their rightful partners at school. It exposes them to competent and potential husbands and wives as they move forward on the educational ladder (a social worker's response).*

Another respondent also had this to say

> *The 'September rush' at the tertiary schools will help me to identify my lover (a youth's response).*

Aside these two opinions, a fraction of the respondents who form seven and half (7.5%) percent of the total respondents disagreed with the two opposing views. They were neutral in their response on the influence of educational attainment on attitude towards marriage.

DISCUSSION

Data from this research revealed that there were three main divergent opinions regarding the impact of educational attainment on the attitude of the youth towards marriage. The interview responses suggested that, educational attainment has either been making a

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positive impact, negative impact (has become a barrier) or no impact on the youth's attitude towards entering marriage.

It did appear that, majority of the youth (20 out of 30) had been influenced negatively by their educational attainment in their attitude towards marriage. Educational attainment has therefore become a barrier to them in getting married. This view was supported by the majority of the religious leaders (2), traditional leaders (2) and social workers (2). The majority's assertion is evidenced by the sample statements below:

- *All the guys who have been dating me end up disappointing me because they say I have a master's degree and I am too high for them as wife (a youth's response).*
- *Yes, I was with a certain man and he was in school but one day he told me he want to concentrate on his academic work so we should break up. He later went in for another woman who was his mate at school (another youth's response).*
- *Yes somebody had wanted to marry me but because of school I did not allow that I want to have master's degree before I get married. (Another youth's response).*

A social worker also had this to say:

> *The young guys want to further their education these days before getting married. This delays them a lot besides, they use education as a cover to disappoint their lovers (a social worker's response).*

It is seen from the above that, the youth who are of marriageable age prefer to have all certificates before they settle to marry. This assertion is consistent with Ofei's (2003)

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assertion that higher educational attainment has delayed some elite Krobos especially females from getting married. He noted further that the youth spent more years in obtaining certificates that can earn them good living.

The researcher is however of the view that the youth are hiding behind education and as such refusing to accept the social responsibility of getting married. The males would want to have higher education in order to earn good salaries so that they could enjoy better living standards before they settle down to marry. They also use this as a ploy to leave the local women who have helped them all this while to marry women who are of equal standards in qualification with them (males). The frustrated women who have lost hope in getting married also take consolation by pursing further education with the hope that they might meet the men who would marry them. Further education has become a reason for the youth who want to have better marriage and job in future. This observation is in line with a finding from a survey conducted by Rhonda, (2005) in which 88% of the high school students in Tokyo, Japan wanted to marry people who had equal qualifications to their own in education. The reason they assigned was that it would make them have a better marriage.

Positive impact of educational attainment on attitude towards marriage

On the contrary, the minority of the youth was of the view that educational attainment has had positive influence on their attitude towards entering marriage. Pursuing further education enables one to meet a responsible and highly respected person to marry. Education enables one to be independent and to have a better work to do which can

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enhance the chances of getting a better spouse to marry. Two of the youth interviewed about the influence of educational attainment on the attitude towards entering marriage said:

> *In fact the lady I am moving with is a graduate like me and that is probably motivating me to get married to her soon (a male youth's response).*

> *My education at UCC has given me a deeper understanding on the importance of marriage. I also had my would-be husband among my mates (a female youth's response).*

This idea was supported by one of the religious leaders, a traditional leader and a social worker. They were of the view that the youth are motivated to go into marriage after attaining a high certificate. Some get married while they were in tertiary schools. The chances of getting a suitor to marry in the tertiary schools are higher; therefore pursuing further education motivates the contemporary youth to get into marriage. This is in line with Mensah's (2000) assertion that majority of the graduates from University of Ghana – Legon end up marrying their mates after school. This presupposes that relationship among students mostly ended up in marriage. For example a religious leader said:

> *The youth who further their education in my church mostly get better people to marry them while they are schooling or soon after their graduation (a religious leader's view).*

A social worker also had this comment:

> *Some of the young people I interact with normally become serious in attitude towards marriage after or during their university education (a social worker's view).*

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Based on this, the researcher is of the view that educational attainment is a significant factor in the formation of positive attitude towards marriage. The youth (males) might consider educational level or background of people before they may settle with them in marriage. Further education has therefore become a pre-requisite in selection or choice for future spouse.

The data from the current research has further revealed that, to a fraction of the respondents, (3 out of 30) educational attainment had not influenced them in their attitudes towards entering marriage. Several reasons might account for this. Prominent among them is low educational background as shown on table 4.2 on the demographic characteristic of the respondents. On educational attainment not having any impact on the youth's attitude towards marriage, a respondent commented as:

> *I can marry anybody at all educated, or not educated, worker or no worker provided I love the person and the fellow is ready to reciprocate my love (a youth's comment).*

This assertion is in agreement with Gyasi-Appiah's (2006) assertion that the foundation of a meaningful marriage is love. This supported Anokye's (2001) assertion that 'love is the major ingredient of marriage'. Anokye further said that 'love comes first before education, riches, religion or ethnicity in selecting a future spouse'.

It is therefore evidenced that educational attainment may not always influence peoples attitude towards marriage. Love might therefore play a leading role in the formation of people's attitude towards marriage. Love rules out the idea that educated people should marry people with similar qualifications. This is in agreement with Apostle Paul's

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assertion in his first epistle to the Corinthians (Corinthians 13:6-7) that love does not look down on others.

The reason why some of the youth had not been influenced by the educational attainment in selection of a spouse might also be attributed to the fact that their understanding about the concept of marriage is shallow. They see it as a union between two people without considering what to look for from marriage partners. The unwillingness of the youth could be attributed to the fact that they could have unaccomplished vision and marriage could prevent them from accomplishing it.

Research Question Five

How does the Type of Job the Youth Engage in Influence their Attitude towards Marriage?

Research question five (5), sought to find out the role job plays in the attitude of the youth towards marriage. Item seven (7) on the interview guide for the youth was used to elicit the opinion of the youth on how the kind of job one engaged in influenced his or her attitude towards marriage. For additional information, items fourteen (14) and fifteen (15) on the interview guide for opinion leaders were used to gather the views of the religious leaders' traditional leaders and social workers on the role of job in determining people's attitude towards marriage. The responses are stated under the sub-headings; positive, negative influence and no influence. The results are shown in table 4.10.

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Table 4.10 Job Influence on Attitude towards Marriage

Responses	Youth		Religious Leaders		Traditional Leaders		Social Workers		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Positive Influence	10	33.3	2	50	1	33.4	1	33.4	14	35
Negative Influence	18	60.0	2	50	2	66.6	2	66.6	24	60
No Influence	2	6.7	-	-	-	-	-		2	5

Table 4.10 shows the role of the job that the youth engage in, play towards their attitude to marriage

Data presented on table 4.10 reveals that, majority of the youth (18 out of 30) representing 60% interviewed, perceived the job the youth engaged in to have negative influence on the attitude of the youth towards entering marriage. Fifty percent of the religious leaders, (2 out of 4), 66.6% of the traditional leaders (2 out of 3) and 66.6% of the social workers (2 out of 3) were in agreement with the majority of the youth (60%) that, the kind of job people engaged in made them develop negative attitude towards marriage. A youth and a traditional leader said these respectively.

- *Yes, since everyday I am in the bush as Agric Extension Officer, it is difficult to meet the kind of ladies I want to make selection from and that has been drawing me away from getting married (a male youth's comment).*

- *There are certain jobs that do not expose the workers to a lot of customers or clients hence the*

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> *workers may not have the chance to be selected by potential men or women as husbands or wives(a traditional leaders view)*

However minority of the youth (10 out of 30) shared a contrary view that their jobs have influenced them positively towards marriage. A number of the youth (10 out of 30) representing 33.3% were of a different view that one's job may have a positive effect on his attitude towards marriage. Two of the religious leaders, one traditional leader and one social worker representing 50%, 33.4% and 33.4% respectively expressed the same view with the minority of the youth. A youth and a social worker gave these comments.

- *No, it rather opens the way for me to interact with a lot of people which I can make my choice when the time is due. (a female youth's comment)*

- *An Akan adage says, "Monkeys play by sizes." One's job influences him to look for a spouse who may be supportive in his/her job area and may understand the job. Some people even look for those who are in similar job environment.(a social worker's view)*

Apart from the two opposing views on the role of job on attitude towards marriage, a small number of the youth (2 out of 30) were of a neutral stand that job does not influence them in anyway towards marriage. One of such youth had this to say:

> *As for me, I have a good job with good pay but I am only waiting for God's appointed time to select for myself a good wife (a youth's comment).*

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DISCUSSION

Positive Influence of Job on Attitude towards Marriage

The result of the study shows divergent opinions on the role job plays on attitude towards entering marriage. It did appear that, minority of the youth (10 out of 30) agreed that job played an important role in their attitude towards entering marriage. The job the youth engaged in influenced them positively in the selection of their future spouse. The type of job someone does exposes the fellow to potential would be spouses. This is evidenced in the statements of some of the respondents (Youth):

- *I meet a lot of customers everyday as a banker and my spouse to be is a customer of our bank (a youth's comment)*
- *As a busy worker I need someone whose job is a bit relaxed so that she can take care of our home and the kids whilst I am away (a youth's view)*

This view was supported by half (2 out of 4) of the religious leaders, one traditional leader and one social worker that the kind of job the youth engage in influence their attitude towards entering marriage. The youth mostly look out for future partners who may understand their work. A social worker had this to say:

> *The nature of one's work may influence him/her to look for a person as spouse who may understand or support in a way to do the work (view of a social worker).*

A traditional leader also commented thus:

> *An Akan adage says' 'abofra bo nwa na ommo akyekedee' literally means people play with mates. It is rare for a kayayo (porter) to marry a banker or a teacher. Today's youth want to marry those who are also working' (a traditional leader).*

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The above statements are indications that the type of job someone engages in affects that person's attitude towards marriage. The youth who are doing good jobs may desire to marry early. The nature of ones job also influences the person's decision on whom to marry. It became evident that those who were engaged in tight work schedules would always want to marry those who have relatively less work schedules. The reason for this desire was that it would help make a good home. The partner who has less work to do would manage the home. These statements above are consistent with Furguson's (2005) assertion that couples who have busy or tight work schedules always come home fully exhausted or tired and by that may not be good companions to their spouses. He further stated that children born to such parents lack parental affection, love and care. A survey conducted by Anzo (2003) in the United State of America affirmed further that, 1000 out of 1200 first year students from university of West Alabama wanted to marry people who were gainfully employed but did not have tight schedules. The researcher is however of the view that, the youth who were delayed in getting married may not have met their potential men and women whose job may satisfy their requirements of a good spouse for them.

Negative Influence of Job on Attitude towards Marriage

On the contrary, the result of the study indicated that majority of the youth respondents (18 out of 30) were of the view that the job they were engaged in had played negative role on their attitude towards entering marriage. Certain jobs they were engaged in were perceived to be either too high or low for all the people who came their way.

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The jobs these youth engaged in had placed them at a corner that they hardly had time to socialize with customers or people who patronized their work places. The work had shelved them from the public. This view was supported by two (2) religious leaders, two (2) social workers and two (2) traditional leaders. To them certain jobs conferred certain status on people in society and society expected that only those with the like qualifications could approach them. This is evidenced in the statements of some respondents presented below;

- *As a nurse all the guys who approached me for marriage later left me with a simple reason that I hardly had time for them due to my job (A youth respondent).*

- *All the women I am in love with reject my proposal because they consider my job as a tailor as insignificant. Meanwhile I have money that I can take care of them (A youth respondent).*

- *I hope to marry someone who is gainfully employed but not somebody who is jobless who will be dependent on me for everything (a youth respondent).*

A religious leader also said:

> *The situation has been that the higher you go jobwise, the lesser you become in getting spouse who has equal job with equal pay (a religious leader's view).*

The above views show clearly that the kind of job some of the youth engage in have been preventing them from getting married. Such jobs prevent them from socializing with potential men and women who could become their spouses. Certain jobs (banking and nursing) placed the workers especially the ladies in odd and high positions which make them not accessible for interested average income men to approach them.

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The economic situation in Ghana too might push the youth to select partners from those who are gainfully employed instead of marrying anybody especially the jobless. The influence of the western culture might be contributing to why the youth preferred to marry people who would understand their job so that they could manage their home. These might therefore delay the chances of the youth in getting married. The above views are in line with Ferguson's (2001), assertion that workers who perceive their work as a haven is overwhelmingly in some sense against their wishes for happy marital home. Such workers according to Ferguson engulf themselves with their work to the neglect of their home.

No Influence of Job on Attitude towards Marriage

The data further revealed that few of the youth (2 out of 30) were of the opinion that, their jobs had no influence on their attitude towards marriage. This was a neutral stand. The job they were engaged in had nothing to do with their delay in getting married. They attributed their reasons to the unwillingness to settle with one person for the rest of their lives. This might also be due to the behaviour of some co-workers (the opposite sex), their perception about marriage and the environment in which they found themselves. This view however received no support or comment from the religious leaders, traditional leaders and the social workers. On this issue of their job not having any influence on their attitude towards marriage, a youth said:

> *I have a good job with a satisfactory salary but I want to have fun with friends before I settle down one day.*

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From the above, it is evident that these few youth shared a neutral stand on the influence their jobs could have on their attitude towards marriage. Their stance could be attributed to lack of commitment to their lovers. It might also be due to the fact that they only want to cheat the unfortunate people they engage in relationship with. This might be an indication that these few number of the youth had had no proper understanding about the concept of marriage and its importance as shown in Tables 4.6 and 4.7.

To probe further, a question was posed to the youth as whether they would be willing to marry either employed or unemployed spouse. The responses revealed that all the 30 youth agreed that they preferred to marry someone who was gainfully employed to someone who was unemployed. All the religious leaders, traditional leaders and the social workers supported this opinion that it would be good for the contemporary youth to be gainfully employed before they get married due the economic situation in Ghana.

These are some of the comments:

- *I will marry someone whose work is as equal as mine or better than I do (A youth respondent).*
- *The economic situation in Ghana is hard so I will go for someone who is also working to generate income so that he can support me (A youth respondent).*
- *I am not ready to carry some ones' financial burden totally so I will look for someone who is already working (A youth respondent).*

Similarly, a religious leader and social worker said these respectively.

- *The economic situation in Ghana is not good for beginners in life to start with jobless spouses therefore I will encourage the youth to be*

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gainfully employed before they settle down to marry (a religious leader).

- *Over dependency in marriage creates series of problems therefore would be couples should be somehow independent before they settle to marry" (a social worker).*

It is evidenced from the above responses that the youth preferred to marry someone who is gainfully employed. The researcher is therefore of the view that, the youth might want to marry someone who is gainfully employed so that they can support each other financially. It may also be attributed to the low wages and salaries Ghanaian workers receive which push people to desire to marry people who are in employment so that they can make ends meet. The youth therefore prefer to marry someone who is gainfully employed. This assertion is in line with Abrah's (2001) assertion that couples who are gainfully employed can cooperatively manage their homes and enjoy marital satisfaction.

Research Question Six

How does gender affect the attitude of the youth towards marriage?

To answer this question, item nine (9) on the interview guide for the youth was used to gather the views of the youth on how their biological make up and age influence their attitude towards entering marriage. Item eleven (11) on the interview guide for the opinion leaders was also used to elicit additional opinions from the religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers. The views from the respondents were categorized under two main headings "the gender group that desired to marry early" and "the gender group that delayed in getting married." The responses are summarized in table 4.11.

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Table 4.11 Gender influence on attitude towards marriage

Responses	Youth		Religious Leaders		Traditional Leaders		Social Workers		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Gender that desired to marry early (M)	9	30	-	-	1	33.1	-	-	10	25
(F)	21	70	4	100	2	66.9	3	100	30	75
Gender that delayed in getting married (M)	21	70	4	100	2	66.9	3	100	30	75
(F)	9	30	-	-	1	33.3	1	-	10	25

Table 4.11 shows how gender affects the youth's attitude towards marriage.

From the data presented in table 4.11, it could be seen that 21out of the 30 youth, all the 4 religious leaders, 2 traditional leaders and all the 3 social workers representing 75% of the total respondents agreed that female youth desire to get married earlier. Minority of the respondents comprising 9 out of the 30 youth, one of the traditional leaders forming 25% of the total respondents were however of the opinion that the male youth desired to get married earlier than females.

On the other hand, 30 of the respondents representing 75% (that is 21 youth, 4 religious leaders, 2 traditional leaders and all the 3 social workers) shared the view that the male youth delayed often in getting married. Twenty five percent of the respondents (10 out of

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40) shared a contrary view that the female youth delayed in getting married. These are some of the responses;

> *A male youth remarked that As for me I want to have fun with a lot of young girls till I am about 40 years before I get married"(a youth's response).*

A traditional leader also said this:

> *The youth of today are not like our time where one gets married after learning a trade. The young men are running away from responsibility (marriage) because they think they have more time to themselves (a traditional leader's response).*

On the contrary a young lady said:

> *I am ready to settle with any man who will be serious and will be caring or responsible because I am getting old and my menopause is just at the corner (a female youth's response).*

Generally, most women believe that marriage is the ultimate in life so they say "seek ye marriage first and all other things shall be added unto you." Most of the young women the researcher interacted with believed women have limited time within which to marry because of menopause hence they desire to marry early.

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DISCUSSION

The Gender that desires early Marriage

Data from the interview, revealed the fact that, gender has influence on the attitude of the youth towards marriage. It was evidenced from the interview findings that the majority of the youth who were females desire to get married early. This view was supported by all the religious leaders, two of the traditional leaders and all the three social workers. Two respondent's comments encapsulated the views of the majority of the youth in this study.

- *I am ready for any man who will be willing to take me as a wife so that I can get my own children before menopause catches me (views of the youth).*

- *The pressure on me from parents and others have made me have different mind about who to marry. I am ready to date any man who will be serious in his approach to date so that we can marry to have children. For I am getting to thirty-five (a female youth's response).*

While a traditional leader stated

> *Women grow older than men and have limited time to reproduce therefore most of them rush into marriage by accepting any man at all into their lives especially when they see they are growing (a traditional leader's view).*

Asante-Boahene (2001) commenting on trends in Akan society acknowledged similar problems confronting single women who are pressurized by society for not having husbands and children after thirty years. According to Asante-Boahene, women who are not married in society but have had higher education are considered, proud, insolent, insubordinate and selective. Aspects of the present study corroborate with Asante-Boahene's view on single women in Akan society. It is worth noting that the Akuapems form part of the Akans of Ghana. The researcher is therefore of the view that young

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women who rush into marriage might be pressurized by society to do so. Fear of being caught up by menopause was also seen to be a contributory factor to why the young women desire to get married early. The desire to reproduce healthy children in their youthful years might also be a reason why the young women want to marry early. Most children born to women above 35 years mostly seem not to be healthy enough. Pregnancies among women who are above 35 years also create series of complications for them (Boakye, 2007). Again, marrying in the youthful days may reduce the fear of loosing all age mates who can become their prospective husbands.

Another reason why the young women desire to marry early may be attributed to the competition they find themselves in with their peers. Women according to Kottak (2005) are fond of making comparism and do well in competition than men. Most of the young women desired to get married with the simple reason that all their peers were getting married. These and several other factors make the female youth desire to get married earlier.

However, few of the respondents were of the view that young men rushed into marriage earlier than females. This was later supported by a traditional leader. There was however, no consensus among the religious leaders and social workers. One of the youth interviewed confirmed this by saying:

> *Now the girls are delaying in marriage I don't know why. When you talk to them about marriage, they say that they do not have time but rather want to do something for themselves (a youth's comment).*

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A religious leader also said that:

> *The young ladies want to have at least 1st degree before they settle to marry so that they may not be taken for a ride by their future husbands (a religious leader's view).*

This assertion compares with Husman's (1996) assertion that women in South Asian communities desired to be educated to a higher level in order to be liberated and independent in marriage. He further stated that noble men in South Asian communities looked for the few educated women to marry while the women were even in school.

The researcher is of the view that the desire of a few males (youth) to marry may be due to the fact that they would not want any man to compete with them for their identified lovers. It could also be that the young men who rush into marriage would want to prove their ex-lovers wrong that they were responsible and capable of marrying. It could also be that they wanted to tease suitors who had bluffed them. Trying to avoid societal pressure and peer pressure could also lead some male youth to marry early. Some men may also marry earlier than women as a way of avoiding the temptation of lust for women.

Gender Group that Delay in Getting Married

Data from the interview conducted in this study further revealed that the majority of the male youth delayed in getting married. This view was confirmed by all the religious leaders, two traditional leaders and all the social workers. Some of the youth had this to say:

- *As a male I think at 35 years, I have more time so I am not worried (A male youth's response).*

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- *I am 29 and my boyfriend is 34 but he keeps on saying he is too young to get married meanwhile I am approaching the deadline for marriage (30 years) (A female youth's response).*

While a traditional leader said:

- *The Akan adage says: 'Akoko nnini nsare awoo nanso oberee dee osare anaa opa ho' which literary means a male can marry at anytime but a female has a limited time to marry else she cannot give birth.*

A social worker also had this to say:

- *Men of today believe they have more responsibilities to care for wife, kids, family and themselves hence would like to wait and prepare adequately before they settle for marriage (a social worker's view).*

An opinion pool by a local Radio Station Adom F.M 103 (Ofie kwanso by Abeiku Santana) on the 28th June 2007 confirmed that most of the young men in Ghana today delayed in getting married. The majority of the callers (15 out of 20) were of the view that men have greater responsibilities in marriage than women hence they would want to prepare adequately before they settled down to marry. Abeiku's opinion pool agrees with the majority of the respondents that male-youth delay in getting married than female-youth

Another reason why some of the youth delayed in entering marriage could be, men biologically have longer years to andropause than women who have limited years to menopause. There is also a connection between high ambition the males have for

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improving upon themselves academically, socially, financially and why they delay in getting married. The delay might also be caused by the fact that most of the young men lack the understanding about the importance of early marriage. The researcher is of the view that much counselling services have not been given to these young men who want to acquire everything materially before they settle down to marry.

On the contrary, a small number of the youth (9 out of 30) had a view that women delayed in getting married. This number, according to the demographic characteristic was mainly females. This view was shared by a traditional leader that females rather delayed in getting married. This is in agreement with Ferguson's (2001) assertion that the female youth in India perceived traditional motherhood as boring hence would want to study or learn a trade before they considered marriage. Ferguson also noted that the young Indian women have had visions of becoming businesswomen than solely housewives. Learning a trade or schooling to acquire certificate for employment therefore delayed them in getting married.

The researcher is of the view that the contemporary young ladies may delay in getting married as a result of their desire to learn a trade or be educated to get employment afterwards. This pattern may reduce the issue of boredom in marriage as housewives. There is also a connection between the economic situations in Ghana which makes the youth zealous to look for work before they consider marriage.

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To conclude, it was perceived that religion, cost on marriage formation, educational attainment, job the youth engage in and gender difference have had both positive and negative influence on the attitude of the youth towards marriage.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

Marriage is an important social phenomenon among indigenous Africans. It is a means through which continuity of human existence is ensured. It also enables married couples to satisfy their sexual gratification. Marriage brings families of different ethnic background, social status and races together for peaceful co-existence. It was traditionally used to remove war and tension from society. The youth of today especially those in Akropong town and its environs have had different understanding about marriage. Their understanding about marriage has led to formation of different attitudes towards entering marriage. Traditional leaders, pastors and social workers are doing their possible best to advise the youth to change their attitude for the better towards marriage but the advice has yielded fruitless results.

However, many Ghanaians were of the view that the negative attitude of the youth towards marriage is the result of cultural clash with the west. This research was therefore carried out to find out the possible causes (main) of the current attitude the youth have toward marriage in the area of study. The study is also to help create the awareness of the need for pastors, elders, parents and society not to place too much emphasis on flamboyant and expensive marriage formation process especially on the payment of bride price and wedding.

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For fruitful study, various literature related to the topic was reviewed under the following sub-headings.

- theoretical background
- types of marriage
- religious marriage
- traditional marriage
- civil/ordinance marriage
- cohabitation
- concept of attitude
- concept of youth
- the process of marriage formation

The study obtained information from the youth in the Akropong Township in the Eastern region regarding their attitude towards entering marriage. Additional or supportive views were solicited from religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers. In all, a sample size of 40 respondents comprising 30 youth, 4 religious leaders, 3 traditional leaders and 3 social workers were used for the study. Two sets of semi-structured interview guides were used to gather data on the topic under study. Data obtained was analyzed using the thematic approach.

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5.2 THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Data collected and analysed yielded the following findings.

1. Respondents in the area of study had divergent perception about the concept of marriage. Most of the respondents were of the understanding that marriage is a legal union between two adult female and a male who have gone through the formalities to become a husband and wife. Others also understood marriage as a union between two people whiles few considered cohabitation as marriage.
2. The major benefits from marriage that the youth identified were support, unity, sexual gratification and procreation. However few of them did not see any benefit of marriage at all.
3. Religion has both positive and negative influence on the attitude of the youth toward entering marriage. Most of the youth have developed a positive attitude towards marriage as a result of the impact of religious activities and doctrines whiles certain religious restrictions deter them from entering marriage. Few of the youth had however not been influenced by any religious affiliation, activity or doctrine.
4. The youth acknowledged the legal implications church or court-wedding placed on couples. The restrictions on the freedom on the couples had made them develop a negative attitude towards entering such marriage. The flamboyant nature and the protection or security church or court wedding provides had however influenced a section of the youth to such an extent that they had developed a positive attitude toward entering marriage.
5. The high cost of bride price coupled with the high cost on church or court wedding had desuaded most of the youth in entering marriage.

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6. Three main views emerged on the impact that educational achievement has on the attitude of the youth toward marriage. They are;
    - The youth especially the males preferred furthering their education to settling down to get married.
    - The frustrated young women used further education as a reason for not being married.
    - Most of the youth chose their suitors whiles pursuing higher education. Others got married whiles they were pursing higher educational courses.
7. The type of job the youth engaged in was a determinant of their attitude toward entering marriage. Certain jobs exposed the workers to potential would-be spouses hence such workers stood a better chance of marrying early whiles others had the tight schedules of their jobs hence barring them from getting and interacting with potential suitors to marry in time.
8. The youth especially the females whose schedules were tight at work places were not easily accepted by their male counterparts as would-be spouses. The males expressed the fear that such workers might not be able to give their children the necessary attention.
9. The youth preferred to marry people who were gainfully employed to the jobless youth so that they might get adequate support for managing their future homes.
10. The youth who were females desired to get married earlier than their male counterparts.
11. The fear of entering menopausal age and inability to deliver healthy babies at later age influenced the female youth to desire early marriage.

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12. Societal pressure and peer influence on the females who were of marriageable age contribute greatly to the desire of the females to get married.
13. The male youth acknowledged their delay in getting married. They however attributed it to the inability to afford the cost in contracting marriage.
14. Generally some of the youth, who were not influenced in any way by any of the five factors, indicated they wanted to have fun in life before they settled down to get married. However some few genuine ones attributed their delay in getting married to tribal barriers, inability to identify the rightful person to marry and negative experiences their previous relationship have had on them.
15. Proper counseling activities, seminars and education on the usefulness of marriage and preparation towards marriage were seen to be lacking among the youth.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Based upon results, one forms the opinion that the youth have different understanding about marriage. This has therefore influenced them to develop negative attitude towards marriage. The results further revealed that factors such as cost on marriage formation, high educational attainment, gender differences and the job the youth engaged in emerged significantly as the reasons why majority of the youth delayed in getting married. However religious doctrines and certain activities have had positive influence on the majority of the youth towards entering marriage. Expensive wedding was seen to be deterring the youth from entering marriage. The fear of getting late among the females also caused a burning desire in some of them to get married earlier. Again societal pressure on the females was pushing a lot of them into relationships that ended only in

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cohabitation. The majority of the males were seen to be running away from accepting the social responsibility of entering marriage partly because of the high bride price and the high cost on wedding. Others who could not stand the societal pressure embarked on furthering their education.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

The finding that the youth craved for church or court wedding in a bid to feel secure in their marriages implied they were ignorant of the fact that true traditional marriage rites is as binding and as socially recognized as any other. This therefore calls for the education of the youth on the status or essence of traditional marriage ceremonies and the stated laws on it. This falls squarely in the courts of opinion leaders and counselors who can take this up in individual and group counselling.

The finding that some of the youth do not see any benefit in marriage implies that they are ill-informed from the way some people order their marriages. This means that some marriages are full of problems to the extent that those who are contemplating marrying fear to enter. This might make the youth to perceive marriage wrongly. Effective marital counselling services need to be intensified in the churches to enlighten the youth on marriage.

The revelation that the high cost of bride price and wedding desuade the youth from marrying implies that the majority of the youth may find it difficult to marry unless something is done about it. This means the high cost of marriage must be reviewed. This

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calls for a revision of customary laws and rites on marriage. Opinion leaders in the communities must lead in the exercise in which consultation, advocacy and counselling could be employed.

Another finding that the youth preferred to marry people who were gainfully employed implies that the unemployed youth would find it difficult to get married. This calls for the development of comprehensive educational programmes for the youth to make them employable. Career counselling is also needed to help the youth to take effective vocational decisions.

Furthermore, the revelation that the female youth were desirous of early marriage implies that late marriages affect them in divers' ways. This means that women are very much aware of the on-set of menopause and its repercussions on child bearing. Counselors however need to orientate the female youth to correct any wrong ideas they may be holding about menopause. This will go a long way to reduce their fears about it.

Finally, the finding that effective and systematic counselling services and seminars were lacking implies that the youth probably hold some negative perceptions about marriage and might not even possess the skills to handle conflicts in marriage. This means the youth might face certain problems that could rock their marriages. Purposeful pre-marriage counselling therefore needs to be given serious attention in schools, churches etc.

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4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Religious leaders, traditional leaders and social workers as well as parents should educate the youth on the true meaning of marriage. Local newspapers like the "Akuapem Amannee" of the Presbyterian church of Ghana should be giving weekly highlights on the importance of marriage. These will go a long way to change the perception and the understanding of the youth about marriage.
2. Religious leaders should be liberal when it comes to selection of future partners among the youth. They should not be restricted to only selection from their Churches or one particular sect. This will relieve the youth to choose their suitors based on their values, love, belief and other important factors but not on religious beliefs alone.
3. Programmes that will give the youth insight-into issues on marriage such as peer counselling, pre-marital counselling workshops on preparation towards marriage, seminars on dating and other related topics on marriage should be organized by religious bodies and social clubs. This will help the youth to develop proper attitude towards marriage.
4. National Commission on Civic Education and the media houses should educate the general public especially the youth on the benefits couples derive from ordinance or Church marriage. They should also educate the public on the effects expensive wedding are having on the youth especially those in Akropong and its environs.
5. Chiefs, Church leaders and the District Assemblies should collaboratively enact by-laws that will regulate the payment of bride price so that parents will not sell their

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daughters at high prices which in effect push away men from formalizing their relationship.

6. Counselling services should be organized in churches, clubs and schools to orientate the working youth about the possibility of getting married while they pursue their academic agenda. This will help reduce the rate at which the youth are pursuing higher education as a way of relegating their social responsibilities to the background.
7. Vocational counselling should be organized by qualified personnel in second cycle and tertiary institutions on the characteristics of every job and their effects on marriage. This will prepare the minds of the youth before they enter or select certain jobs.
8. The district social worker's office and the social workers unit at Tetteh Quarshie Memorial Hospital should be given much publicity and be equipped with adequate counselling materials. This will motivate the youth who are saddled with various challenges pertaining to marriage to go for counselling.
9. The District Assembly should also collaborate with various religious bodies and the traditional authorities to provide a well furnished youth resource centre where the youth can come together to socialize as that can also promote friendship among the youth in the town.
10. Sex education should be made part of the second cycle school curriculum by G. E. S. This will make the youth realize the need to start preparing early towards marriage before they reach menopausal age.
11. Religious leaders, traditional authorities and the social workers should use any available platform such as pulpit, festivals and durbars to orientate the minds of the

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public not to put pressure on the youth especially the females to rush into marriage. They should rather be encouraged to remain faithful until they married formally.

12. The youth who are willing to marry through traditional way should only be encouraged to register their marriage at the registrar's office or law court to legalize the marriage. This will help protect the couple and their future children.
13. Pastors should encourage parents to organise the engagement at registered premises (chapel or courtroom) so that the couple can sign the register right away in order to reduce cost, manage time and organise a wedding.
14. Pastors and Imams should be present at the engagement ceremony to pray over the marriage so that couples can go to court afterwards to register the marriage.
15. Marriage couples especially parents should be educated during church services, fellowship meetings, durbars and festivals to live lives worthy of emulation.

It is hoped that if these suggestions are observed and implemented the youth will have a better understanding about marriage and develop good attitudes toward it.

4.6 Limitations of the Study

Nothing good in life comes easy, however perseverance rewards. Many obstacles were encountered from the genesis of the study till submission of thesis. Typical among them was the respondents initial unwillingness to avail themselves to be interviewed. Again the objection some of the respondents raised against the use of tape recorder for fear of the researcher revealing their confidential issues to the public was also a challenge to the researcher. However, upon perseverance and the use of persuasive skills by the

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researcher, the respondents finally co-operated and expressed their feelings, sentiments, and views freely without fear or favour. These actions however did not affect the credibility and reliability of the results in any way.

4.7 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study was limited to only one community (Akropong Akuapem). Thus the research findings are limited to this area. In order that this study could be generalized country wide, further studies need to be conducted in all communities in Ghana. A further study may also be conducted on the high rate of divorce not only in the Akuapem area but also in the whole nation.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Guide for the Youth

Occupation: Religion:

Sex: Age:

1. In your opinion, what is marriage about?

2. How useful is marriage to you?

3. What do you think could be problems marriage people encounter?

4. In your opinion, do you think cost on marriage formation influence the youth in getting married?

5. In what ways do you think cost affects the attitude of the youth towards married?

6. What role do you think religion plays in influencing the attitude of the youth towards marriage?

7. What influence does the job one engages in has on his or her attitude towards marriage?

8. In what ways do you think educational attainment affects the attitude of the youth towards marriage?

9. In your opinion, do you think sex has any influence on the attitude of the youth towards marriage?

10. What measures could be put in place to improve on the attitudes of the youth towards marriage?

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APPENDIX B

Interview Guide for Opinion Leaders

Occupation: Religion:

Sex:

1. What is your perception about marriage among the youth in your locality these days?

2. Do you perceive of any importance of marriage among the youth these days?

3. Why is it that some youth in your locality prefer to cohabit than to go through the necessary procedures to formalize their relationships?

4. Base on the complaints you receive from clients especially the youth, do you consider religion as a determinant on why the youth rush into marriage or delay in getting married?

5. Should the religious leaders be liberal or strict when it comes to choice for marriage partners among the youth?

6. Base on your interaction with the youth, do you consider the cost on marriage formation as a barrier to them in getting married or does it influence them to get married. (Does cost on marriage formation influences the youth of today in Akropong to get married or it rather hinders them).

7. What do you think or has it come to your notice that parents of brides take too much money as bride price before given their daughters in marriage?

8. Is there any difference you perceive to be between the cost on marriage formation in the olden days and now?

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9. What is your opinion about social or church wedding? Is it necessary, important or just an addition to the traditional marriage?

10. Do you think, the district assembly in collaboration with the religious leaders and traditional rulers should enact bye-laws on how marriage formation or process should be?

11. Do you estimate gender as a determinant on why the youth in Akropong either rush into marriage or delay in getting married?

12. In your opinion and perhaps base on what you have gathered from the youth, do you consider educational attainment as a determinant for why the youth either delay or rush into marriage?

13. In your personal assessment, has education become a cover for the youth of today who are running away from marriage or it influences them to get married?

14. How do you regard job as a determinant on why the youth delay in getting married or are influenced to marry?

15. Do you run programmes for the youth to either motivate them or expose them to importance of marriage?