

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION ABOUT THE ROLE OF MARRIED WOMEN IN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY IN ASSIN FOSU AND ITS
SURROUNDING AREAS OF THE ASSIN NORTH MUNICIPALITY



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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, George Ampem-Darko hereby declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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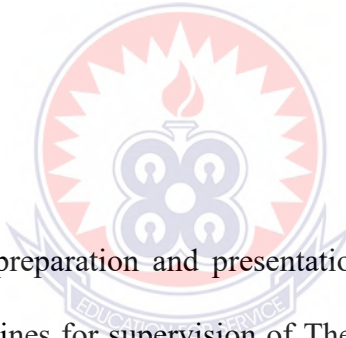
Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dearest friend, Hannah Arthur, who supported me financially and morally throughout my studies as a graduate student, and my daughters, Regina, Gloria and Catherina whose thoughts spur me on to success in my academic endeavours.



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ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation into the perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development in the Assin North Municipality of the Central Region of Ghana. Using a qualitative research method, the study also provides an insight into the reasons that explain the people's perceptions. Data was collected from 200 respondents who were interviewed in twenty focus groups. It is evident that there are several perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development, including the perception that, married women can effectively manage both family and community responsibilities only when there is a permissive, supportive and encouraging husband and that, married women are the least participatory in community development processes. The study also identifies the opinions that married women are biologically fragile, that they have God-given duties, and social ascription as some of the reasons that explain the perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development. It is, therefore, imperative that the situation of stereotyping, which the above reasons seek to justify, be urgently reconsidered. The capacity of the education system comes to the fore in the quest to sensitize the people to be appreciative of the roles of everyone, as complementary to others' in the development of their community. Nonetheless, responses also favoured the empowerment of women which allows the married women to tell their own story which would necessarily be devoid of stereotyping.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In recent years, issues of gender inequality, concept of gender mainstreaming and the demands of some international policy proclamations such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have brought a lot of comments, discussions and debates to the Ghanaian society about women. It has also been argued on many platforms, including the media, in drinking spots, over games of oware and draught and even in religious and academic circles that the campaign for the rights of women is a misplaced one as there is no law that discriminates against women. Usually, at the extreme ends of such debates are the feminists and people who still hold on to the ideas of male chauvinism. According to the Advanced Learner's Dictionary - 3rd edition, feminism refers to the belief that women should be allowed the same rights, powers, and opportunities as men and be treated in the same way. On the other hand, male chauvinism refers to the belief that women are naturally less important, less intelligent, and less able than men. The idea of male chauvinism maintains the view that the only role a woman can meaningfully play is to be a housewife.

A housewife, again, according to the Advanced Learner's Dictionary, means a woman whose work is inside the house such as cleaning, washing, cooking, and so on, and who usually does not have any other job outside the house. Previously, most women accepted that their rightful place was in the home and, therefore, adapted their lives accordingly. Consequently, women were discriminated against in terms of job opportunity and acquisition and control of resources, (Manuh, 1998). However, another school of thought also has it that, without the contribution of women, communities would not have been sufficiently developed.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It may be realized that, as part of the developing world, Ghana has had its fair share of under- development, stagnation of development or even lack of development. It may also be realized that the levels of under-development is more profound in the rural communities and in communities where women, especially, were not motivated to directly and adequately play meaningful roles in the development process (Ozor and Nwankwo, 2008). The under-estimation of the role of, especially, married women in the development process of their communities seems to be as a result of women being more receptive not only to religious and cultural beliefs, but also to ideas of gender-specific social roles and responsibilities.

After extensive interactions with some people on matters concerning development in the Assin North Municipality, the researcher realizes that there is this conflict of perceptions with regard to the roles of women, especially married women, in the socio-economic development of their communities. Some people argue that the role of married women in the development process is not insignificant but, rather, it is the recognition accorded to their roles that is demotivating.

Another school of thought seems to think that the Municipality would have seen more progress in sustained development if women in general, and married women in particular, were playing meaningful roles in the development process. To this latter group, married women are almost handicapped by their roles as wives and mothers. They, therefore, contend that the role of married women in the socio-economic and political development of the Assin North Municipality is just not significant.

Upon the above background, the researcher feels it is worth researching into these perceptions of the roles of married women of the Assin North Municipality in the

development of their community, by investigating the reasons that explain these perceptions, in order to confirm or refute them.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the perceptions that people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, of the Assin North Municipality, have about the roles of married women in community development by assessing the reasons that explain these perceptions and suggest possible measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the role of married women in community development.

1.4 Research Objectives

At the end of the study, the researcher aims at:

1. Describing people's perceptions of the role of married women in community development in the Fosu Municipality.
2. Identifying the reasons that explain the people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development in the Fosu Municipality.
3. Suggesting measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development in the Fosu Municipality.

1.5 Research Questions

With reference to the research objectives above, the following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What perceptions do people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have of the roles of married women in community development?
2. What reasons explain the perceptions that the people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have of the roles of married women in community development?
3. What measures should be adopted to make people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study refers to how useful the expected findings of the study will be to the community and interested groups or individuals. Weiler (2012) suggests that researchers should make a strong case as to why their study is important. The findings will therefore include adding to existing knowledge on the efforts of women in development.

The findings will also serve as reference point for other student researchers and policy makers who are interested in gender issues. The findings of this study will also help parents to modify the mode of socialization of their children, both boys and girls, so that girls, especially, would grow up to assume roles that would make them contribute effectively to community development. Finally, the findings may be used by teachers to explain ideas that tend to favour national policy on female-child education.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study focused on men and women of 20 years and above who can adequately communicate, both orally and in writing, in the English Language in Assin Fosu and

its surrounding areas that form the Assin North Municipality, in order to assess their perceptions about the roles of married women in community development.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into six chapters. Chapter one looks at the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study and delimitation of the study. Chapter Two deals with the review of related literature and conceptual framework of the study. Chapter Three describes the methodology for data collection. This includes the research design (and approach), population, the sample size and sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedure, and method of data analysis, and sources of data. Chapter Four looks at the presentation and explanation of the outcome of the research. This includes illustrations with tables and figures. Chapter Five involves the identification, interpretation and discussion of significant and novel findings. The discussion highlights the major findings of the research and the inferences made from them in view of findings from related previous studies. Chapter Six deals with summary of findings, conclusions, implication and recommendations, as well as limitations and suggestions for future research work.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, relevant literature on the study was reviewed under seven major themes, which include the concepts of Development, Community and Community Development as well as Marriage. The other themes are Socialization into Sex and Gender Roles, Perceptions about the Roles of Married Women in Community Development, the Involvement of Married Women in the Development Process, and Policy Interventions for the Eradication of Gender Stereotyping.

2.2 Development

Development has been the main concern of every human community. This is because modern communities started as very small, simple and purely mechanical in nature. Since it is the nature of communities to grow and expand, their development can be seen as when they grow or change from their simple, small and traditional nature and become larger and more advanced. Development, according to Ayertey (2002), is the change brought about by the quantitative and qualitative improvement or transformation of a country's method of production, roads, hospitals, levels of income, attitudes, and general quality of life of the people in a given society. He goes on to explain that physical structures like those mentioned above and in the attitudes, mentality and lifestyles of the people of a country are what constitute the socio-economic development of that country. From the above, development may be viewed as a state of modernization, as well as a sustained increase in the real per capita incomes, which results in social and structural changes in a community over a period of time. Ultimately, Ofosu-Kusi (2006) agrees with the nucleus of the statements

above - higher standards of living, when he sums up development as the quest for economic, political, and social progress and their consequent transformation into higher standards of living of a people in a given country over a given period of time. The above imply that, for a country to enjoy socio-economic development, there should be a condition of improved infrastructure as well as the institutions and organizations that make up the structure of the economy. For example, if people earn higher incomes and make more profits, and are able to enjoy conditions or afford certain consumer commodities and services that they could not previously afford, there is economic development. Moreover, if the methods and ways of doing things in the community as well as people's attitudes, mentality and lifestyles change for the better, there is social development. As a socio-political concept, development may lead to the transformation of society to higher levels of social and political values. These, according to Ofori-Kusi (2006), might be the eradication of officially recognized forms of social inequalities that, for example, officially declare women and certain category of people as inferior. In this regard, socio-political development may lead to political maturity such as tolerance, and being committed to due process of the law. It may also lead to pluralism such as acceptance of opposing and divergent views in multi-party democracy. Again, socio-political development may lead to respect for human rights as in the principle of equality before the law, equal access to education, health care, and job opportunities for all citizens as well as the creation of democratic traditions such as periodic elections, peaceful change of government, and probity and accountability. Institutions such as an independent judiciary, free press and commissions of human rights may be established as a result of socio-political development to ensure peaceful co-existence for all without regard to race, sex or

creed. Development, as has been discussed above, needs conscious efforts and contributions of the people of that community to make it possible.

From the above, it is quite clear that development is viewed as a generic term for societal advancement or change. Therefore, it can variously be interpreted in the light of what constitute progress or improvement in the life of a society or group of people. In fact, there is no specific definition of the term 'development' (Ofosu-Kusi, 2006).

There are a number of indicators of development which are used in measuring the extent of development in any given society, including, modernization, industrialization, gross national product (GNP), economic growth, needs satisfaction and human progress. Out of the number of indicators of development, this study is interested in the human progress which stands to evaluate progress in human life as a way of determining the degree of development (Ofosu-Kusi, 2006: 6). This is because, according to development economists, there has been significant under-estimation of the importance of life indicators, environmental issues and the need to improve the status of, and opportunities for, both men and women (Ngaaso, n.d.).

2.3 The Concept of Community and Community Development

2.3.1 Community

A community refers to a group of people living in a defined locality who, usually, share common interests, enduring ties, frequent interactions and a sense of closeness (Ayertey, 2009: p. 323; Aketewah, 2006: p.192). According to Prah, (2004: 303), the term community connotes a relatively large group of people with common values, interests, enduring ties, consistent face-to-face interactions, a sense of togetherness among the people and a common past. From the above, the definition of community seems to be limited in scope because it cannot be possible to describe the city of

Accra, the capital of Ghana, in the light of the above terms. In places like Accra, there may be people with differing interests who may not necessarily have frequent interactions and a sense of closeness at all.

Unlike the traditional communities where people live close to each other and share many things in common, a city community like Accra is a mass industrial heterogeneous society which motivates free movement of people from rural to urban areas to either stay for a short while or permanently. Alasah (2008) reiterated that Dominelli (1990) divided the definition of community into three categories which includes (a) geographically based traditional communities, (b) communities of interest and (c) communities of identity. According to Alasah (2008), Dominelli (1990) argued that the physical positioning of a community remains an accepted way of looking at its definition because it simplifies its description and makes the definition of its borders easy and readily mapped out.

Communities of identity have their roots in certain orientations which involve interpersonal interactions among a group of people that surrounds who these people are and how they identify with each other (Dominelli, 2006). Certain qualities differentiate between groups of people and put them in unique identities. Such qualities may include gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, occupation and so on (Alasah, 2008). In one large area such as a country, several communities of identity can be found. In Kumasi alone, for instance, one can find more than dozen ethnic groups living side by side in Zongo communities. Some of the ethnic groups that can be found in Zongo communities are Dagombas, Waalas, Kusaasis and Nanumbas from northern Ghana and some migrants from neighbouring countries such as Malians, Burkinabes and Nigeriens. And this may be especially so because all these groups may share in the Islamic religion. Again, a town like Assin Fosu in the Central

Region of Ghana may contain a number of communities of identity. There are people of different occupations, people belonging to different religious sects and people of differing ethnicity living in the same community.

Interest based communities, according to Alasah (2008), are those that are created on the basis of shared interests and usually thought of as on temporary basis since people's interests can change with time, thus, altering their desire to identify with certain known groups. These interests may include hobby-related activities such as book writing, film-making, photographing, dancing and so on. However, some people have remained photographers almost for a life time. Solidarity, participation and coherence are the three core values that run through the definition of any form of community (Butcher, 1993).

Looking to the discussions of the term community, it could be inferred that individual families come together to constitute a community. A community with a population of 75,000 people cannot be conceived as containing only one family, unless such a community is totally cut off from the rest of the world. Also, a family may, as well, contain different communities of interests and identity. This is to say that different people from the same extended family may be interested in different things, and different family members may be identified with different phenomena for various reasons. For instance, one big family may contain Christians, Muslims and, even, traditional believers at the same time. In much the same way, a family may contain a group of doctors, engineers, agriculturalists, athletes, writers and so on, at the same time. Surprisingly, most definitions of community, as seen above, fail to mention population as a core element of defining any kind of community. However, the population aspect is very significant in grouping communities into small, medium, or large which also helps in the allocation of resources and the provision of social

amenities (Alasah, 2008). In Ghana, the population of an area determines its political status, thus, political attention and interventions to issues. An area's population, for instance, determines its status as a district, municipal or metropolis. In Ghana, the District Assemblies which are created as the pivot of the basic unit of government administration and developmental decision-making are either Metropolitan area with a population of over 250,000 people, a Municipal with over 95,000 people or a District with a population of 75,000 and above (www.ghanaweb.com). Also, the population of a community determines the type and amount of developmental projects that are brought to that community. For example, a small farming community of about 250 inhabitants may not attract asphalted roads, just as a handful of social amenities may not be enough for a municipal community. The discussion of community in this study is based on the element of geographical location because, though it is recognized that there are social and economic forces affecting the nature of community, locality-based issues continue to determine the quality of life of most people (Green & Haines, 2012). In this study, a working definition looks at community as a term which connotes a relatively large population of people living in or frequently visiting a defined locality who share common values, interests, enduring ties, frequent face-to-face interactions, a sense of closeness to one another and a common historical heritage. The relativity in the size of a community's population implies that it has a number of dimensions to its description. That it is heterogeneous, multi-ethnic, multicultural, of different religious beliefs, and consists of a collection of families are all significant to the description of the size of a population.

2.3.2 Family

A family is the basic unit of society which is made up of a network of people who are related by ties of blood of which a person can also become a member through adoption and marriage (Aketewah, 2007; Ayertey, 2009; Prah, 2004). Locally, there are basically two types of family, namely; nuclear family and extended family. A nuclear family, also called a conjugal or traditional family, consists of two married parents and their biological or adopted child or children all living in the same residence and sharing the values, duties and responsibilities of the family unit (www.family.lovetoknow.com). However, the formation of the extended family, which can also be called a complex or multi-generational family, goes beyond the membership of the nuclear family to include cousins, nephews, and nieces, uncles, aunt, grandparents and so on. At times, a nuclear family would only contain a man and his wife with no child or children; a man and his child or children only (where the wife is deceased or divorced) or a woman and her child or children only (where the husband is deceased, divorced or unknown).

2.4 Community Development

Community development would obviously mean positive changes in attitudes, values, and projects of a group of people in a particular locality which eventually, help in improving their living standards, economic endeavours and infrastructural facilities over a period of time (Aketewah, 2007; Ayertey, 2009; Prah, 2004). Sagoe (2011), however, goes further to explain that community development must involve getting access to education, radio and television, good roads, health care delivery, safe water and so on. Community development refers to a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems

(www.peernetbc.com). This collective effort of the people in the community must be augmented by government. Community well-being (economic, social, political, environmental and cultural) often evolves from this type of collective action being taken at the grassroots level. This process which seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills they need to effect changes in their own communities, ranges from small initiatives within a small group to large initiatives that involve the broader community. Therefore, a small group of people such as the family which is a basic unit of society can take initiatives to embark on a project to improve the quality of life of its members. The Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC), a registered charity in Scotland, views community development as the action that helps people to recognize and develop their ability and potential and organize themselves to respond to problems and needs which they share. The above explanation of community development implies that it must, at least, create a conducive environment for the people to, individually and collectively, develop their full potentials and to have a reasonable chance of leading productive and creative lives to meet their needs and interests (Ngaaso, n.d.).

2.4.1 The Evolution of Community Development in the Colonial Era

The events of community development arose from various sources with their roots going back to the social reforms movement in Britain and North America in the late 18th century (www.ohcc.ccsso.ca). Community development principles were formulated and applied in third world development efforts following decolonization. After the 2nd World War, the British, realizing that their resources could not support the government of their overseas colonies, coupled with the fact that there were not enough Englishmen who were prepared to serve as colonial administrators, introduced

the policy of Indirect Rule: ruling the natives of a colony through a class of people who hold high social rank such as their own chiefs or other opinion leaders (Webster, Boahen and Tidy, 1980). This theory was first adopted by Lord Lugard, a colonial governor in Northern Nigeria and, subsequently, by governors in other British colonial territories in West Africa. The indirect rule was a way of involving the people through their leaders in the running of the nation. Some form of community development was realized by the people under the policy of indirect rule. These developments were funded from a pool of resources of the people:

The African chief was the key figure. He appointed all officials who were responsible to him. He or his officials presided over the law courts which, as far as possible, applied African laws. His agents levied taxes for the local treasury. Part of the revenue was sent to the central government and the remainder kept for local improvement such as roads, sanitation, markets and schools, and to pay the salaries of local officials. (Webster, Boahen and Tidy, 1980).

The notion of community development seems to have started among nationalists and colonial government workers together with the efforts of missionaries in the British colonial territories to whip up interest in the people to stand up and challenge structural injustices, discrimination and deprivation meted out to them by their colonial masters. The missionaries mainly employed education as the major intervention to community development and to convert the natives to Christianity (Kwapong, 1995). Mass education, therefore, was seen as the starting point to the gradual movement toward community development. In the early stages of the evolution, several labels were given to the community development process such as community consciousness, rural betterment and rural reconstruction, among others.

However, at a meeting in Jerusalem for the International Missionary Council, the term Community Development was first used (www.ohcc.ccsso.ca). In the late 1940s, after the independence of India and other British colonies in the region, much attention was given to community development in Africa where it became a recognized feature of the policy of British government on Africa. For example, in the Gold Coast, formal education produced highly literate and skilled people like J.W. deGraft Johnson Snr., John Sarbah, J.P. Brown, Nanka Bruce, Hutton Mills, Miss Ruby Quartey Papafio, Paa Grant and others who, not only played leading roles in the formation of such nationalist movement as the Aborigines Protection Rights Society (APRS) and the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA), but also used their knowledge and skills to promote development and defend the interests of the society (Ministry of Education, 1991: 240). The products of the mission schools included teachers, civil servants, shop-keepers and traders, clerks, shop assistants and book-keepers. All these people earned some forms of remunerations which enabled them to pay their taxes to government. They were also able to afford certain consumer goods and services, thus, raising their standard of living. They were able to educate their children to acceptable levels so that they, in turn, were able to help develop their respective families. As individual families were developed, it reflected on the general development of the whole community. The increased economic activities in the country encouraged the people to save, instead of having their money in their safes (p. 250). The more the people kept their money in banks, the ability of the bank to create credit was enhanced. The financial institutions then, had surplus funds from which they granted loans to businesses to expand to engender further socio-economic development. Also, out of the agitations and protests of these nationalist movements, founded and led by the educated elites, against social injustices of the colonial system, the feeling of

nationalism and anti-colonialism were generated, which eventually led to independence (p. 240). Simultaneously, most of these educated elites were involved in the central administration of the colonies to sustain the idea that they were being prepared to take over the political affairs of their country after the colonial masters have left (Webster, Boahen and Tidy, 1980: 198).

2.4.2 The Modern Example of Community Development

In the 21st century, issues and challenges of crossing the Digital divide and increasing community-wide levels of Digital inclusion have become critically important in Ghana, both for affordable access to computers and internet, and for training in how to use and maintain these resources. This has reflected in the numerous promises and pledges that successive governments have made to the people of Ghana to provide the infrastructure and the access to it, especially from the basic levels to the tertiary levels of education. This supposed provision is to ensure that Ghana, as a nation-state community, becomes abreast with the Online Community. Local communities that have not connected and participated in the larger and increasingly global online community are becoming increasingly marginalized and less developed because of that. Initially community development has its focus on buildings and infrastructure as a primary path to socio-economic development, but now, development of computers and online infrastructures and access, and the community enablement they support have become central areas of focus in moving communities forward in social, economic, environmental, cultural and political development.

2.4.3 Links between Human Development, Rights, and Community Development

There are numerous roles that people (men and women) can play to ensure that individual personalities, their families and the whole community develop to appreciable levels. Some of the roles that individuals in the community can meaningfully play in community development include production and distribution of goods and services, reproduction, socialization of individuals, and maintenance of law and order in the community, just to mention a few. The individuals and groups of people who are provided with the skills to take part in the development process comprise both men and women or males and females.

At this point, it can safely be said that both men and women have roles to play in the socio-economic, as well as political development of their communities. It goes on to show that the development of people - men and women - furthers the general development of a whole community; thus, human development stands in the very centre of the socio-economic and political development. This implies that men, women, and children must be the nucleus of attention with development woven around them and not the other way round (Ngaaso, n.d.). To elaborate on the above, Ngaaso (n.d.), goes further to explain that development must be participatory, and for this to be possible, people must be given the opportunity to invest in the development of their capabilities, health, education and training. Community development, therefore, must involve the roles played by men and women alike without any form of discrimination against either males or females. This is because, as a socio-political concept, community development leads to the transformation of society to higher levels of social and political values which might include the elimination of structured forms of social inequalities that tend to officially acknowledge that women and other

special groups of people, such as the disabled, are inferior (Ofosu-Kusi, 2006). Again, to make, especially, married women development partners, there is a need for their economic freedom. Economic freedom, in this context, refers to a condition which enables people to utilize their innovative and creative capacities in the development process; protects individual economic rights to have access to productive assets, including land rights; provides a right to control one's labour in terms of decision to engage in economic activities of one's choice; and conveys a right to control the fruits of one's labour (www.un-ngls.org). It also implies a right to gainful employment.

2.5 The Concept of Marriage

Marriage denotes a union in which the partners, having gone through all the relevant customs and procedures by the appropriate social group and are, legally, religiously and customarily recognized as husband and wife (Aketewah, 2006: 12; Ayertey, 2009: 73; Prah, 2004: 3). Marriage is also seen "as a covenant by which a man and woman establish between themselves a partnership of their whole life and which, of its own nature, is ordered to the well-being of the spouses and to the offspring, and their education" (Arthur, 2007: 1). This explanation of marriage goes further to draw an image of permanence of a family environment, with a possible presence of children, which considers members' rights to proper and adequate care and socialization.

2.5.1 The Married Woman

A married woman is a man's partner in marriage, otherwise known as a wife. Usually, people misconstrue a wife for a housewife; such people think that a wife is the same as a housewife. A housewife, according to the Advanced Learner's Dictionary, means

a woman whose work is inside the house such as cleaning, washing, cooking and so on, and who usually does not have any other job outside the house. From the above, obviously, a wife would represent a slightly different thing - an active citizen who can engage in other vocations other than house chores alone. Lots of studies have been done on the roles and contributions of women to the social, economic, and political lives of people of communities around the universe. However, their focus has been on women in general through various approaches such as Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), and Gender and Development (GAD) (Aggarwal and Aggarwal, 1990; Manuh, 1998; Taylor, 1999; Moser, 2002; Van Marle, 2006; Ekong, 2008). There is little study on some special group of women such as married women who have peculiar challenges which are quiet isolated from the general challenges of other groups of women, such as women who are single, divorced, or widowed, for which reason many people tend to be confused about their actual role in their community's development. This is to say that a number of ideas and theories have been proposed over the years explaining how women in general have been limited to certain roles , and not others, in the family, community, and country. Major tenets of these alternative views and their empirical status have been discussed at length elsewhere. However, this study focuses on people's perception about the role of the married woman in community development with emphasis on the knowledge and attitudes of the people who directly observe and experience the effects of such roles of the Ghanaian married woman in her particular community. The peculiarity of the focus of this study lies in the fact that being a married woman means additional responsibilities as a wife and a mother. Her marriage adds to the duties of the woman because she gets new roles after marriage. For instance, after marriage, the woman becomes a wife and, being a wife implies additional duties. Again, after

marriage, the woman becomes a mother, and being a mother implies more and more duties. In marriage, the woman becomes responsible for housekeeping, which implies more duties as well (www.amualumni.8m.com).

Based on the above, some people are of the perception that the role of the married women in a community's development, just by making the home comfortable for their family, is insignificant as compared to having them to work outside the home in order to contribute to community development. However, others also are of the perception that the role of the married women within the home is as significant as their role outside the home. They also seem to argue that, it is rather the recognition accorded to the role of married women, of any capacity, in any part of the community's development which is demotivating.

2.5.2 Motives for Marrying

According to the income and specialization effects that are emphasized by the economic theories of marriage, individuals (both men and women) with higher incomes and assets are more likely to marry because they have more to share and can provide more access to credit and insurance (McLanahan, 2003; www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov). About 50 percent of women in Africa are married by age 18 and one in every three women is in a polygamous marriage. It is as mothers that women secure claims in their marital homes and to their husbands' assets (Manuh, 1998). In Africa, especially Ghana, most of the women marry early at the expense of their education so that their husbands would take care of them. The 2010 population and housing census revealed that most girls who started primary school dropped out before entering the Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) levels. Females are more likely to be married (43.9%) than males (41.7%). Also, there are

relatively more females (53.0%) than males (40.5%) with primary and JHS as their highest level of education. This implies that females are more likely to drop out at the basic (Primary and Junior High School) levels (GSS, 2012). At this level, the degree of skills acquisition of these female school drop-outs is very less, therefore, their inability to land high-earning jobs. Consequently, they turn to marriage at early ages in order to enjoy being taken care of by their husbands. According to the specialization effect of the economic theories of marriage (Becker, 1991) quoted by McLanahan, 2003), the benefits of marriage are greater when there is more specialization. For instance, when partners' potential wage rates differ; the lower earning partner (usually the woman) will focus more on home production, while the higher earning partner (usually the man) invests more in market works.

Deducing from the above, it can be realized that, in our African, and, specifically, Ghanaian communities, conscious and sustained efforts are made to create a division of labour, leading to specialization, high productivity and increased benefit in high levels of socio-economic development. Consequently, some people are of the perception that when there is specialization between the parties in marriage, the benefits are enormous. Therefore, they seem to suggest that irrespective of the educational background of couples in marriage, they can specialize in one area of the dual roles of work within and outside the home, in order to strike a more stable balance in their marriage life. However, few people who place more emphasis on the individual's capacity to earn income are of the perception that the one who earns more contributes more to community development than the other. But, if work done in the home is to be remunerated, people would not perceive the role of married women whose work is within the home as insignificant. Rather, if people are to perceive development of any kind as being spiral in nature, which starts with the individual's

desire to develop himself or herself through the development of the home environment to the community levels, they would as much recognize and appreciate the role of married women in community development.

2.5.3 Nature of Marriage

Marriage is seen as a contract between two consenting persons who give up some freedom to gain some other rights. This contract is largely based on mutual goodwill and trust. Traditionally, in the olden days, a woman is given to a man in marriage almost as a personal property (Encyclopaedia Americana International, 1990). In Africa, including Ghana, a man marries a woman primarily to aid him to realize his life's dream of starting a new family. That is the reason why the man is made to part with some possession during the marriage ceremony, marking his acquisition of the woman he would call his wife. Aidoo-Dadzie (2010) posits that the legality of the marriage is determined by the payment of the requisite marriage wealth or bride price. In Ghana, as in many African countries, the bride price is the main rite in the marriage arrangement, although there may be other auxiliary rites such as the presentation of various pieces of clothes and sandals for the parents of the woman, scarf for the mother and some amount of money for the brothers-in-law which renders the marriage arrangement complete. A marriage ceremony is usually witnessed by both members of the man and woman who are getting married as well as the members of the community so that they would be in the position to prevent any other person from having intimate access to the married woman, especially, since they consider her as the marital property of her husband. The Encyclopaedia Americana International (1990) posits that when society approves of a marriage, it distinguishes it from other forms of relationships between men and women, and also shows that society has a

shared pattern of behavior that regulates the expression of sexual feelings, procreation and the socialization of off-springs introduced into the society. Aidoo-Dadzie (2010) further argues that no matter how the marriage ceremony is performed, the completed traditional rites and procedures mark the perfection of the marriage. Being recognized witnesses to the marriage, almost all the agencies of societal change such as the family, church, media and the community at large have roles to play in supporting the marriage and making sure that it lasts over time. This means that in times of difficulty or threat to the marriage, the couple would not be left alone to resolve it, but rather, a fair representation of the community steps in to ensure that the issue is resolved amicably to stabilize the marriage. It is widely assumed that stable marriages imply stable families, and stable families constitute stable society. Marriage is also said to be an adored institution in every human society because it is the bedrock of all human cultures (Sam, 2013). This is in agreement to an assertion that “marriage is a basic institution in every society” (Gyekye, 1996, p. 76). Marriage remains a predominant way of life in many cultures which has several traditional functions both at the individual and societal levels.

2.5.4 Types of Marriage

According to staunch supporters of tradition, “traditional marriage is the legal, preferably sanctified by a religious ceremony, heterosexual, monogamous, patrilineal, for life, and for love with a breadwinner husband/home-maker wife, and it is the foundation of a nuclear family” (Sam, 2013). It is assumed that the traditional marriage has been the accepted way to be married or to marry, until recent times. Marriage has existed and continues to exist in various different forms that bear fading semblance to the traditional marriage described by the conservatives. According to a

report released by the Census Bureau in October, 2006, various forms of marriage-clone relationships continue to flourish in America and beyond (Sam, 2013, p.100).

Marriage between two individuals, one man and one woman, is known as Monogamy. Monogamy can mean married to only one person in one's lifetime or, as is usual today, married to one person at a time (Sam, 2013, p. 104).

On the other hand, a marriage in which a person, a man or woman, gets married to more than one woman or man respectively is known as Polygamy. The custom of one person having more than one spouse concurrently is referred to as polygamous (Sam, 2013). Polygamy has two sides to it – Polygyny and Polyandry. Polygyny is the most common form of polygamy in which one male gets married to more than one female at a time. This type of marriage which is still practiced in most parts of the world consists of one man with multiple wives.

Polyandry, on the other hand, is much less common and it depicts one woman having several husbands at the same time. It has developed in Tibet, Mongolia, the Canadian Arctic and Nepal, among other places where, because their population has more males than females, polyandry is a common practice (Encyclopaedia Americana International 1990). Again, in Tibet, because of poverty, two or more brothers could share the same wife. Thus, they were able to establish a single solid group and maintain it in the interest of the wife's children, and also tend to keep family lands and properties intact, allowing them to be passed on to the next generation.

Another form of polygamy where two or more males are married to two or more females, and usually, have interchangeable intimate sexual relationship, is known as Group Marriage or Polyamory. In this type of marriage, there is no primary core couple; rather, each member is equally married to all other members of opposite sex.

This type of marriage may also be suitable for bisexuals as it allows them to express both sides of their sexuality in committed relationships (Sam, 2013, p. 105).

Endogamy, which is also called Homogamy, is the practice of limiting marriage within certain social groups, ethnicities or classes. However, exogamy which is quite opposite to endogamy, requires that marriage occurs outside a group. This means that people must marry outside their social group, clan, class or immediate nuclear family (Lee and Stone, 1980).

2.5.5 Classification of the Types of Marriage

For this work, it is important to study the different types of marriage in society today which reflect in the structure of various types of family and the roles within those families. Dudleston et al (1999) classified the marriages of couples they studied into level of commitment of each partner to the labour market, occupation and hours worked by each partner and domestic responsibilities of each partner which include childcare. This classification comprises the following: traditional breadwinner/ home-maker type, dual-career (mixed) type and egalitarian type of marriages (Green, 1995).

2.5.5.1 Traditional Type of Marriage

The traditional breadwinner/home-maker type reflects a household in which the husband only works and his wife runs the home. Here, there is pure division of labour where the married woman does all the household chores, including child care, while the husband protects and provides for the wife and any dependent they might have.

2.5.5.2 Dual-Career Type of Marriage

The dual-career (mixed) type of marriage reflects a household in which both the man and his wife work, but the wife's work is less absorbing and demanding than the husband's and, therefore, she takes on more of the household tasks which includes cooking, washing and cleaning, as well as looking after the children and attending to the needs of the husband. Though, according to Sam (2013, p.108), this type of marriage, denotes a marriage in which the man heads the family and the wife graciously submits to his authority. Sam (2013) also contends that, in this type of family, though the wife may work outside the home, traditional sex roles are considered the ideal.

2.5.5.3 Egalitarian Type of Marriage

On the other hand, egalitarian type of marriage has both the man and his wife engaged in equally absorbing jobs, and household tasks, including looking after the children, which are also equally shared. Sam (2013) acknowledged that though the egalitarian type of marriage may be a monogamous and heterosexual where the couples consider each other as equal partners in the marriage, he also believes that such a marriage type can also maintain male breadwinner/ female home-maker roles. The egalitarian type of marriage has a high propensity of resulting in marital conflict and eventual divorce. This is because, looking at the way marriage is negotiated and arranged in Africa, and Ghana in particular, it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, for men in particular to opt for egalitarian type of marriage.

The egalitarian type of marriage seems to suggest that a married woman can play equal roles both in home and community activities such that her contributions both in the home and outside the home are appreciable. However, considering the sex roles of

the married couple, the child-bearing partners should, most of the time, stay back at home and make it secured for both adult and child members of the family. Therefore, the role of the married woman in any form of development can best be felt in the home than outside the home. Consequently, some people are of the perception that the role of the married women in community development is quite insignificant. But, since individual families form the basic units of every community, any effort made to develop or modernize the individual homes would reflect in the general advancement of the community. Therefore, the married women whose work is to ensure proper sanitation in the home, good nutrition for the family members, sound socialization of the young ones and security for all family members would be demotivated when some people fail to accord the needed recognition and appreciation for their roles and contributions in community development.

2.5.6 The Effects of Marrying Processes in Ghana

In Africa, especially Ghana, almost all the total cost of marrying is borne by the male. This situation, coupled with the general cultural notion that the woman is given to the husband in marriage as a personal property (Encyclopaedia Americana International, 1990) to help him sustain the perpetuation of his lineage. This is especially so with the patrilineal societies where fathers have more control over their children who, in turn, also have greater legitimate right over their father's properties (Ayertey, 2009). Even males from matrilineal societies are also finding it extremely difficult to accept conditions of the egalitarian type of marriage because they are also made to bear almost all the costs of marrying, putting them in a position to want to claim sole beneficiary (ownership) of the outcome (issues) of the marriage. In view of the above revelation, egalitarian marriage has a great tendency to be rejected by males in

addition to the fact that it is not popular in Africa as compared to the more advanced or western world.

2.5.7 Current Trends in the Status of Married Couple in Ghana

Notwithstanding any argument against the career ambition of the married woman or the concept of shared responsibilities between married couples, studies have shown that few families around the world today have only the husband working. For instance, up to the last quarter of the 20th century, 9.8% of the population of America is married couples with children where the husband alone works to provide for the rest of the family (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1985). This reflects similarly in Ghana where, like most husbands, majority of married women work as self-employed or employees of businesses in the informal sector. A lot of them also are employed as public or civil servants in the formal sector. These are the results of the advent of new and modern courses in education such as Development Studies, Social Works, and Human Resource Development; proliferation of information and communication technologies such as radio, television, internet and mobile phones; and the women's rights movement around the world.

2.5.8 The Dilemma of a Married Woman

Most women look torn between desires to become successful career women and having a family from a successful marriage. Two major effects should be clear when the married woman decides to pursue a career ambition and maintain a family at the same time. In such situations, not only would the structure of the family be affected, but the size of the family would also be affected. In this modern era, women have the same career opportunities as men, so married women must make decisions between

pursuing a career and raising a family (Dudleston et al 1999; Green, 1995). Some careers such as Law, Medicine and Engineering demand that, pursuers spend many more years of education both in and out of school. Therefore, most career women who have had extended education did not engage in long term relationship which eventually led to marriage. Career women who choose to also maintain a successful marriage may attract empathy and little or no motivation from their bosses, leading to frustration and anxiety. Men do not face the same issue of choice because they do not assume primary home-maker roles. Other groups of women such as single, divorced and widowed may also assume the home-maker roles as the married woman, but their home-maker roles may not include attending to the needs of a husband, making it less absorbing than the role of the married woman.

2.6 Socialization into Sex and Gender Roles

Socialization refers to the process by which individuals learn and conform to certain pattern of behaviours expected of them by society (Ayertey, 2009). Basically, socialization is the process where the people of a community train newcomers to behave in a way that is acceptable and suitable to the group. In agreement, Prah (2004, p. 113) posits that socialization refers to a whole range of social interactions through which an individual acquires knowledge, develop skills and learn the values, beliefs, arts and rules of behaviour that he/she requires to function in the society, as a member of that society, continuously throughout his/her lifetime. For instance, through socialization, the individual learns from the older generation how to perform their duties, how to participate in social activities and take up responsibilities that enable them to live as effective and independent members of the society. The duties, activities, and responsibilities of men and women, through socialization, could be

categorized into sex and gender roles. Sex roles refer to behaviours and activities determined by biological indicators such as menstruation, pregnancy, and breastfeeding in females and erection and ejaculation in males (Ngaaso, n.d.). Gender roles, on the other hand, are social constructs that indicate feminine and masculine behaviours and activities, as well as the relationship between women and men.

2.6.1 The Sex Role of the Married Woman

The sex role of females, including the married woman, has its basis in the biological make up of the female. It is believed that because women give birth, they are predestined for child-raising as well as keeping the house where the child will be primarily raised and socialized before going to school. It would look unfair for all stakeholders to leave a few months old baby with its father at home while the mother works all day outside the home. The mother of a child who has been naturally endowed with breast milk which, according to studies, is the best nutrition for the baby in the first few months of its life, must be at home to provide the basic needs of the child, including nutrition, security and early socialization. A major explanation of the above is the patriarchal social system in which men dominate and are often the economic decision-makers (Ofosu-Kusi, 2006). The term 'patriarchy' is sometimes used in a general way to describe the dominant position of men over women from which a form of domination and subordination emerges (Allen and Thomas, 1992). Consequently, women in Ghana are poorer than men. Varieties of cultural practices subjugate women and make them secondary citizens in such traditional societies (Ofosu-Kusi, 2006). These women may have limited rights and may be prevented from direct ownership of land and property, and sometimes, even formal banking institutions would not lend them money on their own merit. Therefore, the only hope

of surviving and making any impact in life is for the woman to get married and be protected and provided for by the husband.

2.6.2 The Gender Role of the Married Woman

Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female and the relationships between women and men and boys and girls (Ngaaso, n.d.). These attributes, opportunities, and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. The infant years are crucial in the development of patterns of personality and behaviours, and in the establishment of beliefs about appropriate masculine and feminine roles (Ngaaso, n.d.). Children are socialized into appropriate gender role behaviours, beliefs, and actions in many ways. Because the infant years are crucial in the development of the patterns of personality and behaviours, the socialization of the individual starts right after birth and continues throughout life (Prah, 2004). Children learn about gender and how to “do gender” because it is central to the way we organize society. Children “learn culturally appropriate ways of thinking and being as they follow routine rituals and respond to the everyday demands of the world in which they live...”. To be considered competent member of society, children must learn how to fit in as appropriately gendered individuals (Coltrane, 2004). Consequently, because people think boys and girls are supposed to be different, they are treated differently and given different opportunities for development. The family is certainly important in reinforcing gender roles, but so are one’s peers, school and the mass media. For instance, parents usually buy toy trucks for their male children and dolls for the females. This way, children are socialized to take up gender roles. The children also learn by observing the activities of people around them such as parents and elders in their community, so that they

would imitate or reproduce the ones which are accepted by their society as appropriate to their sex. Thus, when girls are given dolls to play with, they are being socialized to be nurturing and be prepared to manage the environment where children are supposed to grow up before going to school. These gender-specific roles are taught to infants through rewarding them for engaging in sex-typed behaviors that are consistent with their assigned sex category (Bandura, 1963). For example, while a girl may be soothed when she cries, a boy may be told that boys don't cry. Crying is a sex-typed behavior, seen as OK for girls and therefore not a punishable behavior. But because it is not seen as an appropriate behavior for boys, the little boy may be punished or corrected for his crying behavior. Through these kinds of interactions, gender socialization occurs and gender roles are learnt.

2.7 Perceptions about the Role of Married Women in Community Development

A married woman whose job is to stay home and care for the house, her husband, and sometimes, the children is usually known as a housewife. This term, housewife, looks to be the source of the confused perceptions that people have about the role and being of a married woman or wife. People tend to equate the meaning of wife to housewife, thus, many of such people seem to hold on to the idea of male chauvinism. Male chauvinism, according to Your Dictionary.Com (2013), refers to the belief that women are naturally less important, less intelligent and less able than men. In view of the above, those people who equate a wife to a housewife also hold the view that the only role a married woman can meaningfully play is to be a housewife. Consequently, any amount of contributions that married women make towards community development may not be appreciated, underestimated, overlooked or even ignored. Several reasons may explain these perceptions that people have about the role of the

married woman in community development. The study identifies, apart from socialization, factors such as level of education, religious background and psychological perspective as some of the things that influence people's perception about the role of married women in the development of their community. Also, people have had problems with having to recognize and appreciate the contributions and roles that married women have been playing in the development of their communities. This situation is as a result of certain phenomena and occurrences pertaining to the capabilities and readiness of these married women to take part in the process of development of their communities. There is reasonable evidence to show that married women have potentials that can be tapped to enhance social, economic and political development of countries (Allah-Mensah, 2005). For example, before colonialism in Ghana and other parts of West Africa, married women played very important roles in ensuring peace, stability and development of their societies, and they still do the same in post-colonial era (Allah-Mensah, 2005).

However, people's perceptions have been influenced by their level of knowledge of what community development is really about, and whether married women have any significant roles to play in this development process. The acquisition of knowledge and skills may be linked to education as a concept.

2.7.1 Education Perspective

Education refers to the total process of human learning by which knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation, faculties trained and skills developed (Prah, 2004). Also, education has been defined as the act or process of imparting or acquiring knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life. The above

definition of education is in agreement with another which refers to education as the process by which people learn skills and acquire knowledge and understanding about the world and themselves (Ayertey, 2009: 171). So, when people acquire knowledge about the importance of participating in the development of their communities, they must be in position to make a sound judgment about the need for a very important component of individual families of a community (married women) to be active and participatory in the development process. Martorella (1994) contends that the enduring goal of Social Studies as a subject in Ghanaian schools is to develop reflective, competent, concerned and participatory citizens. A concerned citizen investigates his or her social world, addresses issues he or she identifies as significant, exercises his or her rights and carry out his or her responsibilities as a member of a social community (Martorella, 1994). It would therefore, be unfair to perceive a married woman who has acquired extensive education and training as only good for the home. People who are of such perception are still holding on to the idea that women in general and married women, in particular, are not intellectually made to venture into spheres of endeavour reserved for men. Education is not supposed to be limited to the classroom; it is a continuous learning process that takes place on daily basis. Therefore, the education of a person puts him or her in a position to make sound judgments about certain phenomena. For example, through education, the understanding the learner acquires about the world informs him or her that the development processes anywhere in the world involves both men and women; and that the role and contributions of women are as critical and important as that of men in the in such a process.

2.7.2 Religious Perspective

2.7.2.1 The Christian Perspective

The religious background of people also influences their perception in certain ways. Christians, for example, take guidelines from their scriptures as to the roles played by both man and woman in marriage. The Bible is very categorical about the positions and roles of husband and wife in the union. For example, wives are supposed to “submit to their husbands, as to the lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church” (Ephesians 5:22-27). The husband, by Christian virtues, is the head of the family and sometimes he is expected to protect and provide for the wife and children. Thus, Christian religion places the husband at the breadwinner position. This also implies that the wife, by Christian virtues, is supposed to bear children and care for them, the home and the needs of the husband as well. The above is to say that Christians, as a group, tend to limit the role of the married woman to the four corners of the home. However, the Bible also makes provision for the married woman who works outside the home to contribute financially to the family (Omartian, 2001). A perfect woman, according to the Bible, is a hard worker. This woman creates, manages and provides. She buys and sells property; she plants vineyard; she makes clothing and sells it. She is a woman of strength, energy and vision, works far into the night and knows that what she has to offer is good. In the midst of all the above, the perfect woman takes care of her family, gives to the poor, and makes her husband proud (Proverbs 31).

2.7.2.2 The Islamic Perspective

Islamic religion also spells out the role and position of married couple, individually and collectively, in the union. Certain verses in the Qur’an emphasize that “it is for

the women to act as they (the husbands) act by them, in all fairness; but the men are a step above them” (Q. 2:228). “Men have authority over women because Allah has made the one superior to the other” (Q. 4:34). These verses echo the verse in the Bible where the man is portrayed as the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. Here, it is clear that the man is seen as the head of the family too. Again, in Islam, men are seen as the breadwinners and protectors of women who are thought of as fragile, emotional and nurturing; as is evident in the Holy Qur’an: “Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more strength than the other; and because they support them from their means...” (Q. 4:34). However, some scholars of Islam believe that the woman can follow any profession that suits her nature and role provided that she does not mix with men and that she gets the approval of her husband or guardian. To them, the woman in Islam has a full control over her property and can inherit property as a man can although the shares differ owing to financial responsibilities (www.amualumni.8m.com). Apart from the religious connotations of the working married woman above, many work simply because they love what they do or they have abilities that are valuable to people who are willing to pay for them (Omartian, 2001). For other women, working gives them fulfillment and satisfaction of accomplishment if it makes life better for them, their families and other people (p. 186).

2.7.3 Psychological Perspective

It was, also, commonly believed during the 19th century and the early parts of the 20th century that a woman’s small brain limited her intellectual horizons (Doyle and Paludi, 1995). As a result, women were prevented from pursuing certain professions such as medicine, law or engineering. Some people also believe that because of a

woman's fragile nature, she needs to be protected and catered for. For example, women conceive, deliver and breastfeed their babies as they are provided their needs and protected by their husbands. The conditions under which African women have been participating in the development process have not enabled them to enhance their capacity to utilize their physical and intellectual energies in promoting community development. Previously, women accepted this status as has been described above and therefore, adjusted their lives accordingly. Consequently, women were discriminated against in terms of job opportunity, and acquisition and control of resources (Manuh, 1998).

2.8 Involvement of Married Women in the Development Process

Going according to the definitions of socio-economic development given above, women's contributions or roles towards community development cannot be measured in terms of what they do inside the house alone. Deliberating on this, Manuh (1998) raised a pertinent issue of the emancipation of the Ghanaian and African women, in general, in national development without which the womenfolk will slow down the pace of socio-economic advancement. This assertion is true and possible because the Ghanaian society is divided into male and female with women outnumbering the men in most areas. Therefore, if more than half of Ghanaians (51.2%), from our recent Population and Housing Census, are women and as Julius Nyerere, a former premier of Tanzania, opined: "A person does not walk very far or very fast on one leg", then the socio-economic development of this country had depended and must continue to depend on the contributions of women on all levels. Otherwise, we would be working on the assumption that only males (less than half of the population) are contributing to national or community development (Ekong, 2008). Merton (1968) postulated that

social systems have structures of opportunity, such as education, training and capacity-building, among others, that enable the individuals and groups to pursue and achieve their individual and collective goals and aspirations. This suggests that wherever and whenever such opportunity structures are absent or are limited in a social system, it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, for individuals and groups to achieve their goals and aspirations. For instance, when a woman misses the opportunity to be educated or trained in any vocation, and she gets married, her responsibilities towards the upkeep of her family, coupled with her missing out on the opportunity to be upgraded, makes it very difficult for her to be participatory in socio-economic and political activities of her community. However, whenever structures of opportunity are viable and fully functioning, people and groups feel a sense of fulfillment and security in their community (Opare, 2003). Majority of women, especially the married ones, encounter many challenges in their quest to contribute to the development of their families, communities and nations (Dako-Gyeke et al., 2013).

Women in Africa, and for that matter Ghana, have been socialized purely on traditional basis which is grounded in home-making and marriage so much that, they are almost more dependent (than independent) on their husbands who are supposed to be in the breadwinner, protector, or provider position. Consequently, women in the Assin North Municipality, like other parts of the country, have been relegated to the background so much that their roles as development partners have been undermined by certain negative perceptions as mentioned somewhere in this study. This non-acknowledgement of women's contributions towards community development had risen out of the fact that, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, about 85% of women in the Assin North Municipality are engaged in one form of vocation

or another - ranging from farming to petty trading. Notwithstanding this, most families in the Municipality continue to live in abject poverty. The indicators of poverty as identified in the general Ghanaian society are not quite different from what prevails in Assin Fosu, the administrative capital of the Assin North Municipality. Ofori-Kusi (2006) listed low income, low educational attainment, poor sanitation, and ill health as some of the indicators of poverty in Ghana, and for that matter, the Assin North Municipality. The above-mentioned indicators of poverty, as reflected by Ananga and Ayaaba (2003), are the very issues of society which, when left unattended to, can pose serious threats to the very existence of man in a given society. Despite these obstacles, women have and continue to make huge contributions towards progress in different parts of the world (Dako-Gyeke et al., 2013).

2.8.1 Maintenance of Law and Order (Governance)

In Africa the 2012 report of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) indicated that by the end of 2012, the region averaged 20.4 percent women MPs - seven percent points higher than in 2002 (13.6%) with significant strides made in Senegal (up 24.7 percent points) with 42.7% women MPs; and Burkina Faso making the 15.7% mark with a moderate increase of 4.0 percent. Ghana also made some progress by moving up 2.4 percent to 10.2% women MPs. Fortunately, this period witnessed the first time females headed both the Legislature and Judiciary in Ghana. Despite the moderate success chalked by Ghana in the parliamentary representation, women have contributed greatly towards Ghana's political life (The Women's Manifesto for Ghana, 2004). For example, in 2001, Ghana's parliament recorded only 19 women members out of the total of 200, representing just 9.5% of membership. In 2005, there were 25 female members of parliament, representing just 10.9% (Ngaaso, n.d.). The

few women who found their way into parliament greatly influenced legislations, especially where they affect the very existence, rights and well-being of women and children in areas such as education, health care and sanitation.

However, with regard to the issue of access to power and decision-making in Africa, representation of women at the household and community levels shows gender imbalance with men dominating the various National Assemblies, Cabinets, and National Executive of political parties (UNDP,1995; Tsikata,2001). Based on the above observation, it would not be out of place to assume that, taking into account the household responsibilities of married women as mothers and wives, their roles in power sharing and decision-making is far below expectation. This has been possible because of a patriarchal systems and institutions which make it more difficult to eliminate gender-based discrimination, particularly within a complex framework of customary and statutory laws (Ngaaso, n.d.). In Ghana, for example, most of the women who went to parliament were of advanced ages; an indication that they were married or have been married in the past for which they have accumulated immense experience in the areas of children's education, their health care and sanitation in general.

2.8.2 Production and Distribution of Goods and Services

Married women have played meaningful roles in many other capacities in the development of their communities, such as production and distribution of goods and services, reproduction and socialization of the young ones, as well as the preservation and maintenance of natural, human and capital resources available to their communities. Among the majority of rural and low-income urban dwellers, women, especially those who are married, perform all domestic tasks, while many also farm

and trade (Manuh, 1998; Dako-Gyeke et al., 2013)). In Africa, it is argued that women provide the backbone of the rural economy because about 80 percent of the economically active female labour force is employed in agriculture and women comprise about 47 percent of the total agricultural labour force (Manuh, 1998). Based on a United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) survey in 1996, Manuh (1998) noted that African women, most of whom are perceived to be married, are responsible for 70 percent of food production, 50 percent of domestic food storage, 100 percent of food processing, 50 percent of animal husbandry and 60 percent of agricultural marketing (Dako-Gyeke, Iddrsu & Baffoe, 2013). Married women work on their family lands to produce, among other things, food crops both for domestic consumption and the market. Married women also engage in the post-harvest processing and preservation for immediate and future consumption respectively. They also engage in agro-based industries such as gari processing, palm oil and shea butter extraction, fish smoking and "dawadawa" processing as well as the distribution of these farm produce through the market system (Ngaaso, n.d.). The activities of these married women typically include tending livestock, processing and preparing food, working for wages in agricultural and other rural enterprises, fetching fuel and water, engaging in trade and marketing, caring for family members and maintaining their homes (SOFA Team and Cheryl Doss, 2011). However, most of these activities are not considered as economically active jobs in the national statistical accounts but they are very essential to the well-being of many families, communities and countries. In Ghana, for example, almost all the ready-made food that one can find right from the roadside to restaurants and from the local food-shops, popularly called "chop bars" to hotels are prepared and sold by women, most of whom are married. On the market, food stuffs, which are produced by either men or

women, are exclusively sold by women, again, most of who are married. Thus, the status of these women as the main distributors of agricultural produce to the final consumers is determined. Married women, as in the case of women in general, highly participate in the services sector with about 55% of them engaging in the wholesale and retail sub-sector and another 13% engaging in hotels and restaurant businesses (Amu, 2005). This goes to confirm the traditional perception of married women as potential traders, cooks and caretakers at home and in the community as a whole. In the area of socio-economic development, Ellis et al. (2006) argue that African women have historically been workers, property owners, and entrepreneurs who contributed in various capacities to the growth and development of their respective societies. For instance, Ghanaian women have traditionally occupied key positions in the production of goods and services both for subsistence and for the market (Arteetey, 2000). Most of these married women are either, self-employed or, unpaid family workers, who do all household duties and tasks which are easier to combine with economic or productive activities in the informal sector (Manuh, 1984). Therefore, in the informal sector, many women find work, earnings from which they use to meet their family obligations. Many married women also find themselves in the informal sector because of the slow growth of the formal sector, women's relative lack of education and skills, and the sexual division of labour. However, the productivity of most married women, even, in the informal sector is constrained by various factors which include limited access to and ownership of productive resources of land and credit, among other things (Manuh, 1998).

2.8.3 Reproduction

Being married means the woman has a role to play, first and foremost, as a wife and as a mother, as well as her role as the homemaker. One basic purpose of marriage in Ghana is reproduction, and therefore, married women through this means are offered the legitimate avenue to add to the population of a community. Thus, married women have been the main conduit through which the perpetuation and socialization of future generations materialize (Prah, 2004; Aketewah, 2007). Through this means, a community is assured of continuous supply of human resource both in skilled and unskilled capacities to help further development in that community. Married women are a powerful force and key actors in development because they contribute immensely to the development of the next generation (Ellis et al., 2006; Muhibbuddin, 2011). Naturally or scientifically, it takes two, a man and a woman, to engage in the reproduction process. That is to say that no man can naturally become pregnant, but can only make a woman pregnant. However, just after conception, the woman alone carries the foetus for the entire duration of pre-natal development of the child. Therefore, the mother has a responsibility to ensure that the child is kept safely and delivered alive. At such times, the condition of the pregnant woman becomes so delicate that she needs special treatment and preference. During pregnancy, women should not be expected to work long hours. Thus, a married woman needs to enjoy some time off duty to pay attention to her health and that of the unborn child. Conditions such as maternal nutrition, maternal stress, maternal disease and drug use can have influences on pre-natal development (Owusu-Banahene, 2007). Owusu-Banahene (2007) goes further to explain that mal-nutrition in pregnant women usually results in premature births, still births, anaemia and miscarriages. Also, married women are expected to take care of vulnerable family members, such as persons who

are ill and the aged, as well as perform important social functions in their communities (Manuh, 1998). However, the married woman also has a responsibility to help control the population of a community so that it does not out-number the amenities and natural resources available to the community. One way to control the rapid population growth of a community is to create an avenue for married women to determine the size of their families that collectively form the community, through the exercise of their reproductive rights. These rights allow married women to decide freely and responsibly, the number of children they want, their spacing and timing, among other things, without force, threat or violence (Aketewah, 2007; Ayertey, 2009). The size of a population needs to be controlled to avert its grave effects on the development of the community. The effects of rapid population growth on communities in Ghana include unnecessary pressure on social amenities, high rate of unemployment, high cost of living, over-crowding and congestion, with their attendant social vices such as prostitution, armed robbery, drug-trafficking, child-labour and so forth (Aketewah, 2007, p.168; Ayertey, 2009, p. 281). The presence of any one or combination of the effects of rapid population growth in any society slows down its development. Thus, when the married woman exercises her reproductive rights, it constitutes her contribution toward her community's development. A visit to hospitals in Ghana, especially the maternity sections, will reveal that most of the staff (nurses) are women, most of whom are married and are mothers as well. These women, apart from their own family responsibilities, ensure that appropriate treatments are rendered to patients and also help toward the elimination or reduction of maternal and child mortality, one of the indicators of the Millennium Development Goals which have been designed to eradicate disease and poverty from developing countries round the world.

2.8.4 Socialization of Children

A child, once born into the world, needs to be socialized. The very first agents of the socialization process are supposed to be the immediate family members of the child such as mother, father and older siblings. Among these family members, the prime agent is the mother of the child unless where she is absent due to sickness or death. In socializing the child, the housewife (mother) finds herself in a highly skilled profession, but is only trained on the job (Omartian, 2001). The married woman trains her child or children in language or speech development. For instance, a mother will always correct the child to say “ma`ma” instead of “nya`nya” when she or he wants to say “mama”. Again, mothers always correct their children to receive a gift with the right hand instead of the left one (it is a norm in Ghana to receive a thing with the right hand to show gratitude), and say “Thank you” when they receive a gift from anybody. These socialization processes might be the role of the married woman in the development of a community’s human resource. The nature of this socialization processes makes them traditional, indigenous and culturally tailored. The secondary socialization (school education) seems to depend on the primary socialization as the foundation upon which knowledge, skills, and desirable attitudes are consolidated. According to UNESCO, quality education is locally and culturally appropriate, and is also informed by indigenous and traditional knowledge. UNESCO also contends that quality education is relevant to the present, and prepares individuals for future by developing knowledge, life skills, perspectives, attitudes and values geared toward molding a learner to become a concerned and participatory member of society (The Teacher, 2013). The learners who graduate from the secondary socialization are going to become the community’s human resource in their capacities as doctors, teachers, engineers, accountants, nurses, planners and so forth. Human resource, which

represents the mental and creative abilities as well as a wide range of human activities, is essentially the most crucial property of any society (Ofosu-Kusi, 2006; Aketewah, 2007). The literature above, seem to be skewed towards the role and contribution of women in general (because there has been little on married women in those aspects) the researcher believes most of these women are either married or have been married in the past. The study also assumes that the above review of literature on women in general should have also covered married women because they (married, single, widowed and divorced women) share almost the same roles, duties and responsibilities. The exception is that, married women have additional obligation of attending to the needs of their husbands.

2.8.5 Policy Interventions

2.8.5.1 Educational Interventions

Certain behaviors or attitudes of females, especially married women, in Ghana also influence the perception that they cannot play any meaningful roles in the development of their communities, apart from what they can do in the households. As indicated somewhere in the literature, most girls drop out of school by the end of primary, and the early parts of JHS levels (GSS, 2012); leaving them with little or no skills - a prerequisite for effective and participatory citizenship (Ayaaba, 2011). Also, because some married women are purported to have left school earlier to get married, some people are of the opinion that they do not have the acumen to play great roles in the community development process. Therefore, there must be some policy provision to integrate these girls who dropped out of school into other training programs so as to make them useful to themselves and society. For instance, to remove barriers to formal education of the girl-child, the Girl-child Education Project (GCEP)

encouraged head teachers to re-admit girls who dropped out for one reason or another (www.isodec.org.gh). Also, school curricula must incorporate concepts like gender equality, mainstreaming and peace at all levels, so that learners will imbibe them throughout their lives (Manuh, 1998). To validate the above policy interventions, in curbing the rate at which girls were dropping out of school due to, either, discrimination, poverty, or early pregnancy, a number of strategies and policies have been promulgated. Some of these strategies and policies have been quite successful while others have not been very successful. The few that have been successful include the creation of the girl-child clubs at schools of various levels which were used as pivot for promoting, among other things, sex and reproductive health education, and environmental sanitation to the members (Akpajiak, 2005 for ISODEC). The establishment of the girl-child clubs was to help to retain the girl-children in school over a long period of time so as to let them complete the various levels of education and obtain the qualification to take up roles to contribute to the development of their communities (adhdghana.org). In the absence of such strategies as mentioned above to help females in Ghana to acquire knowledge and skills that make them contributory and participatory, certain persons tend to form the opinion that females, especially when they get married, cannot contribute more to community development than what they are able to do in the household.

2.8.5.2 The Concept of Leadership and Followership

One thing which has been missing in the socialization process in our homes, media, religious circles and schools is the teachings and training on the twin concept of leadership and followership.

2.8.5.2.1 Leadership

Leadership is the state or process of influencing people to co-operate or direct their efforts towards the achievement of a set goal (Aketewah, 2007; Ayertey, 2009). Leadership is seen as an influence relationship between leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes (Rost, 1991; p. 102, quoted in Afful-Broni's (2004) *Theory and Practice of Educational Leadership in Ghana*). For "leadership is a process by which members of a group are empowered to work together synergistically toward a common goal or vision that will create change, transform institutions, and thus improve the quality of life", (Astin and Leland 1991; Afful-Broni, 2004). The ability to command the respect and attention of a group of people so that they, in turn, are ready or accept to execute directives and implement policies in order to achieve a common goal, depicts leadership.

2.8.4.2.2 Followership

Followership, on the other hand, refers to the state of accepting to be guided or co-operating towards the attainment of a set goal of a group (Aketewah, 2007; Ayertey, 2009). Followership also refers to the willingness on the parts of a group membership to co-operate in working together towards the accomplishment of the group (leadership.uoregon.edu). From the above, it could be inferred that followership either means a situation when an individual or a group has a great interest in someone or something; or when a group supports and co-operates with a particular person or idea in order to accomplish a mission. Thus, while a leader plans, makes decisions, controls and directs the activities of a union to which he or she belongs, followers, on the other hand, focus their attention and interest on the set goals for the group, support

the decisions of the leader and obey his or her directives in order to achieve their aims.

2.8.5.3 Lessons in Socialization for Leadership and Followership

What humans must have learned about leadership and followership is that they are two sides of the same coin. Leaders can accomplish nothing unless they can induce others (followers) to implement their decisions. Followers, therefore, need to remember that their attitudes and behaviours affect the quality of their leaders' performance (www.sagepub.com). Leadership and followership are not, and have never been permanent. This means that, on one occasion, a person may be the leader, but in another instance, he or she may be the follower. For instance, after the tenure of office of former president Clinton, he continued to live in America as a citizen under a different leadership. This presupposes that a wife who lives and works in the household under the leadership of her husband may also assume the leadership in, at least, a single situation in the same household or outside the household; thus, she can plan, make decisions, control and direct the activities in any situation that calls on her leadership. This process as has been described above can be integrated into our socialization processes so that children grow up knowing that leadership and followership can be undertaken at different times by any qualified person, irrespective of one's religion, sex, level of education or tribe.

The final line that must separate the perceptions and the actual contributions of married women towards community development lies in the fact that, nowadays, advancement in education and technology, and democratic dispensations have created the enabling environment for the Ghanaian woman to strive for any opportunity and to shake off the negative perceptions about their capabilities and roles in their Ghanaian

society. Deckard (1983) confirms the above dichotomy when she reiterated that, presently, the most important clue to a woman's status or roles in society, anywhere in the world, is her level of participation in social and economic activities and her ability to acquire and control resources or factors of production.

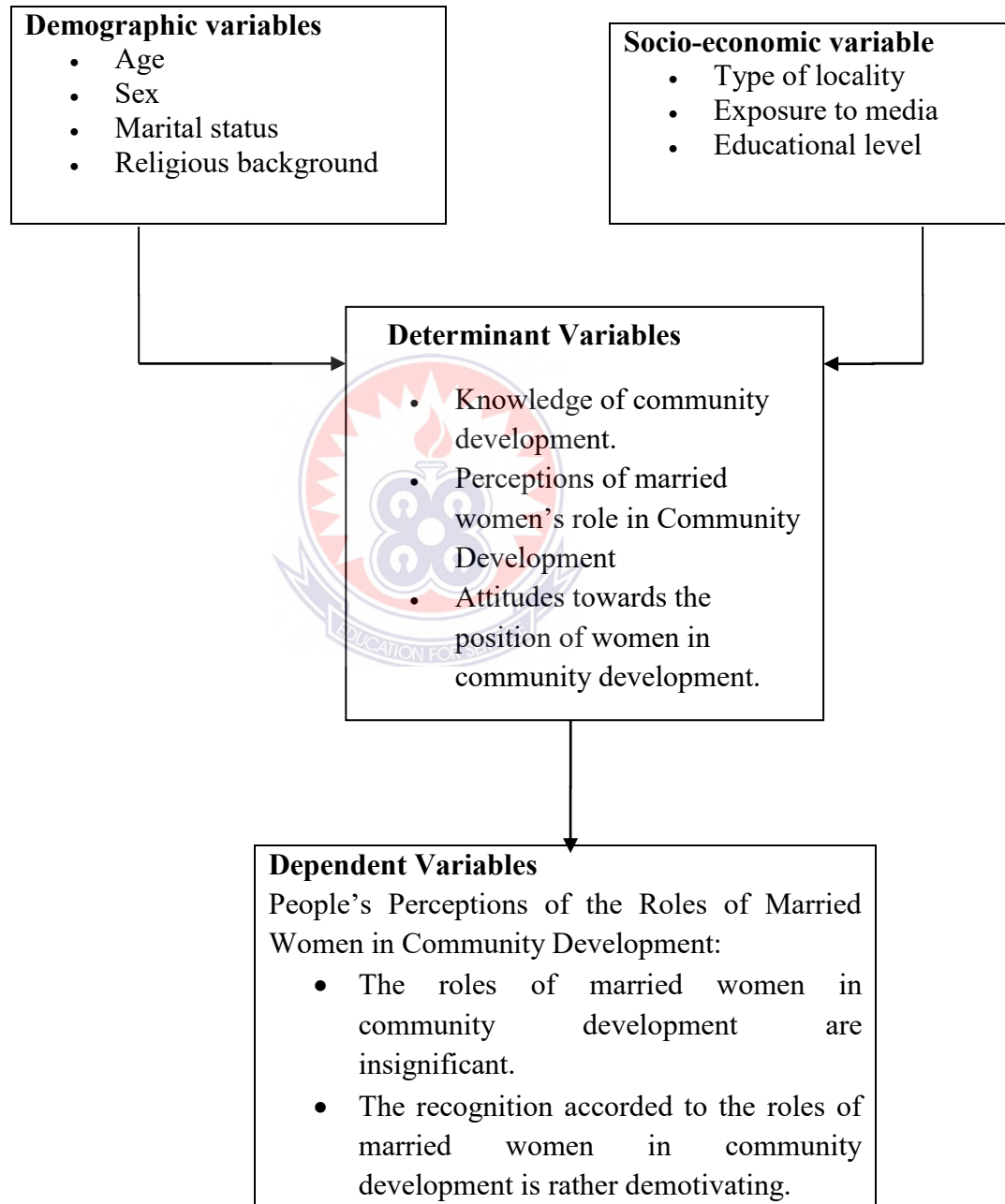


1.7 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1 below shows the graphical presentation of the conceptual framework of the study.

Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables



Source: Researcher's Construction (2014).

In the conceptual framework, two groups of variables were used to examine factors influencing people's perceptions of the roles of married women in the development of their communities- dependent variables and independent variables. The independent variables were sub-divided into three sets, namely; Demographic variables, Socio-economic variables and Determinant variables. The demographic variables were indexed by some important factors such as age, sex, marital status and religious background, while the socio-economic variables were indexed by factors such as the type of locality, occupational status, exposure to media, and educational background. The third group of Independent variables is the determinant variables which were indexed by indicators such as people's knowledge of what Community Development refers to, their level of recognition of married women's roles in Community Development, and the people's attitudes toward the position of married women in Community Development. For this study, the dependent variables were indexed by two alternating perceptions of the people about the roles of married women in Community Development- the perception that the roles of married women in Community Development are insignificant against the perception that, it is rather the recognition accorded to such married women's roles which is demotivating. The concern of people for married women's roles in community development refers to how important, or otherwise, those roles are to them. For example, when people consider the fact that the knowledge and skills acquired through long period of education and training of married women will be wasted by limiting them to household chores, it helps to shape their perception in favour of the active participation of married women in the development of their community.

The knowledge of what community development refers to, and how meaningful the roles of the married woman can be to it, may influence people's level of recognition

of the roles of all categories of people in the community - men or women (married, single, divorced or widowed). For instance, when people have a great deal of knowledge about the importance of the roles of educated people, including some married women, in community development, their level of recognition skews in favour of allowing such educated married women not only to effectively and efficiently manage the home, but also to transfer these effectiveness and efficiency to the broad area of community development. Thus, people's level of recognition of the roles of married women in the community development process can be influenced by their knowledge of such married women's roles.

People's level of recognition of the roles of married women in community development can also influence their attitudes towards the position of married women in community development. Invariably, the knowledge and level of recognition that people have about certain phenomena can determine the rate and intensity of their actions and reactions towards such things. For example, when people have the opinion that the only role a married woman can meaningfully play is to be a housewife, it blurs their imagination about a knowledgeable and skillful married woman who can play more significant roles in the socio-economic and political development of their community. Consequently, they tend to ignore, disregard or underestimate the contributions of such married women in the community development process. However, when people have the opinion that married women, who are very educated and resourceful, can also contribute immensely to community development, they tend to acknowledge and appreciate their roles in the development process. People, then, consider these married women as development partners whose roles are as important as that of their male counterparts. Thus, the effects of the syntheses within the three sets of independent variables (the demographic variables, socio-economic variables

and determinant variables) were expected to reach the ultimate dependent variables (the perception that the roles of married women in community development is negligible, against the perception that, it is rather the recognition accorded to such married women's roles which is inadequate). In comparison, the above assertion about the knowledge, the level of recognition and the attitudes of people towards the position of married women in community development supports Zimmerman's (1995) position that, empowerment psychology considers changes in terms of what people believe, what they understand, and what they do.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a description of the study area. It also describes the outline of the other sub-themes discussed which include the research design, population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedures, and method of data analysis.

3.2 Description of Study Area

The present study was conducted in Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas of the Assin North Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. The surrounding areas of Assin Fosu include Assin Atonsu, Assin Juaso, Assin Nyankumasi, Assin Akonfuidi, Assin Bereku and Assin Praso. Assin Fosu is the administrative capital of the Assin North Municipality, one of two District Assemblies recently created out of the erstwhile Assin District and it lies on the main Cape Coast-Kumasi highway.

The Municipality is bordered to the north by the Pra River and the Adansi South District of the Ashanti Region. The Municipality is bordered to the south by the Assin South District. Again, the Assin North Municipality is bordered on the west by the Twifo-Hemang-Lower Denkyira District and, on the east, by the Birim South District of the Eastern Region. Also, Assin Fosu houses the only Immigration Training School in the country.

The Assin North Municipality is populated by some 161,341 people. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census report, 80,254 of the above figure, representing 49.7% of the total population were males and 81,087, representing 50.3% were

females.

Traditionally, the people of Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas are farmers specializing in food crops as well as cash crops like cocoa, palm fruits, oranges and so on. However, apart from farming, the people of Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas trade in a wide range of commodities from food stuff to hardware as in construction materials. Predominantly, the people of Assin Fosu are Twi-speaking people. This means that the people of Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas are also matrilineal, implying that, generally, women have a bigger role to play in decision-making and ownership of resources. Consequently, in such a place, women are highly expected to play significant roles in areas such as sanitation, health care delivery and the socialization of the youth, as well as ensuring that there is enough food for all. Invariably, the women, especially married women in Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas should also be expected to have the capacity to help in controlling the needless increase in the population of the community, so that the resources of the community would match the care for its members, by acknowledging and practicing their reproductive rights. Thus, married women are expected to be part of the community development process. With regard to the above, it is therefore important to investigate into the perceptions that the people of Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas have about the roles of married women in community development

3.3 Research Approach and Design

The study employed the qualitative method. To make inference for in-depth understanding of the reasons that explain people's perception about the role of married women in the development of their communities, the researcher also

employed a case study because qualitative research designs use case studies in examining a small group of subjects in-depth (Weiler, 2012).

3.4 Population

The study was conducted in Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, of the Assin North Municipality, in the Central Region of Ghana. The major economic activities in the area are trading and farming. Assin Fosu has a fairly large population, particularly, because of its flourishing commercial activities as well as the presence of second cycle and tertiary students and a good number of people working in both government and private institutions. The target population was made up of only adult residents of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding towns and villages, who are fairly educated (minimum of Senior High (SHS) level) as they could communicate satisfactorily both verbally and in writing in the English language. The adult residents, as referred to in this study, comprised of men and women who are 20 years and above.

However, due to academic time constraints, the researcher decided to limit himself to the formal and informal sector institutions in the municipality to select majority of the respondents, for the study. The above decision was because, after all, these institutions contain men and women who live in the municipality and its surrounding areas. So, as shown by Table 3.1 below (pg. 59), the population from which the sample size was selected for the study was one thousand and fifteen (1015) adult men and women. In all, there were five hundred and twenty-five (525) women, representing 51.7% of the total population, and four hundred and ninety (490), representing 48.3% of the total population.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

3.5.1 Sample

The sample size for the study that was selected from the target population consisted of 200 men and women of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, of the Assin North Municipality. The selected men and women were of immense assistance to the study because they have their own views about issues of development in the Assin North Municipality which includes the capabilities and willingness of married women to play meaningful roles in the development of their communities. In all, the sample size consisted of 200 respondents, representing about 19.7% of the targeted population. Here, again, there were one hundred and three (103) females, representing 51.5% of the total respondents, and ninety-seven (97) males, representing 48.5% of the total respondents selected for the study.

3.5.2 Sampling Technique

For the research to be accurate, meaningful and as representative as possible, with regard to the different categories of adults in the locality, the simple random, stratified and purposive sampling techniques were employed. The institutions of the formal sector of the local economy, as shown by Table 3.1 below, formed the strata on which the stratified sampling technique was used in selecting number of institutions from whom respondents were selected for the study. After that, the random sampling technique was employed to select respondents from the various institutions so that every member of each institution would have equal chance of being selected to take part in the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents from the informal sector of the local economy because, the researcher has the idea that, activities in the informal sector are organized in a way that makes it quite

difficult, if not impossible, to have everybody presenting himself or herself for sampling. Also, the researcher knew that majority of the human resource of the informal sector of the local economy have had little or no formal training; thus, the question of their ability to communicate, effectively, in the English language came to the fore. All of these respondents, from each category of workers, of the formal sector were involved in a focus group interviews.

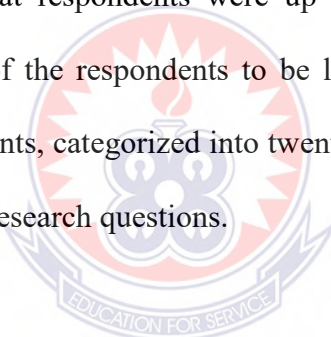
Table 3.1 Institutions from which Respondents were selected

| S/N | Institution | No. of Workers | No. of Respondents |
|--------------|--|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. | Fosu College of Education. | 225 | 30 |
| 2. | Assin North Senior High and Technical School, AssinAsempaneye. | 95 | 25 |
| 3. | ObiriYeboah Senior High School, AssinFosu. | 99 | 25 |
| 4. | Juaso Methodists Basic School, AssinJuaso. | 24 | 10 |
| 5. | Ghana Police Service, AssinFosu. | 50 | 10 |
| 6. | Ghana Immigration Training School, AssinFosu. | 55 | 10 |
| 7. | Dompim D/C Basic School, AssinDompim. | 22 | 10 |
| 8. | FOSCO Demonstration Basic School. | 28 | 10 |
| 9. | Ghana Commercial Bank, AssinFosu. | 32 | 10 |
| 10. | Agriculture Development Bank, AssinFosu. | 27 | 5 |
| 11. | St. Francis Xavier Catholic Hospital, AssinFosu. | 165 | 15 |
| 12. | Ghana Judicial Service, AssinFosu. | 42 | 10 |
| 13. | Local Crop and Fish Farmers Association, AssinBereku. | 78 | 5 |
| 14. | Progressive Producers and Transporters Union, AssinPraso. | 52 | 5 |
| 15. | Bereku Catholic Basic School, AssinBereku. | 23 | 10 |
| Total | | 1015 | 200 |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

The table above showed that teachers contributed 100 respondents (40 teachers from the basic schools, 40 teachers from the second cycle schools and 20 teachers from Fosu College of Education), other educational workers (non-teachers from the various second cycle institutions) contributed 20 respondents, health workers contributed 15 respondents, bankers contributed 15 respondents, security services (police and immigration) contributed 15 respondents each and the judiciary services contributed 10 respondents. Table 3.1 also showed that the informal sector produced respondents such as traders (5), and farmers (5).

Few respondents from the informal sector were interviewed because of the nature of their work and space. From among the traders and farmers, the respondents were hand-picked to ensure that respondents were up to the task. The researcher also wanted a major portion of the respondents to be literate - those who can read and write. In all, 200 respondents, categorized into twenty focus groups, were interviewed for in-depth responses to research questions.



3.6 Research Instruments

There was an interview guide that consisted of two sections, namely 'A' and 'B'. These sections sought to gather information on the perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development and the reasons that explain these perceptions, as well as, the socio-demographic indicators that influence people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development. Information was also gathered on the measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development. Section 'A', for example, covered the bio-data of both the researcher and respondent in which the researcher announces the purpose of the study while assuring the respondents of the

confidentiality of their identity as well as their honest and candid opinions about the subject.

Section B covered three sets of subsections (views), namely; the Perceptions that People have about the Roles of Married Women in Community Development, Views on the Reasons that Explain People's Perception of the Role of the Married Woman in Community Development and Views on Measures to be Adopted to Make People have a Fair Judgment of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development.

The interview was used to solicit detailed data for in-depth understanding of the reasons that explain people's perception of the roles of the married woman in the development of her community, as well as the possible measures that should be adopted to make people fairly perceive the role of the married woman in the development of her community. The administration of focus group interview allowed the researcher to cover a large number of respondents within a relatively short period of time. It was also relatively less expensive since it took a shorter period of time to administer, and this resulted in fewer visits to the respondents, thus, reducing cost of transportation. The interview guide, also, took the form of conversation in which the researcher solicited data by asking questions relating to his research problem.

3.6.1 Report on Pilot Study

3.6.1.1 Setting of the Pilot Test

Interview was conducted to the people of Assin Darmang, who are socially, politically, economically, and traditionally similar to the people of Assin Fosu, where the actual study was conducted. The test sample size of 20 people comprised of both men and women of ages twenty years and above, who are residents of Assin Darmang. Darmang is a suburb of Assin Nsuaem-the administrative capital of the

Assin South District. Consequently, Darmang is inhabited by a fairly large number of people from the formal sector such as teachers and other educational workers, bankers, judicial workers, security personnel and others. A sizable number of people from the informal sector such as petty traders and peasant farmers can be found there too. The researcher interviewed the people of the formal sector, and few selected ones from the informal sector, in order to ensure getting reliable and accurate responses. In order to remove doubts from the minds of respondents, copies of introductory letter from the researcher's department (Social Studies Education) were given to the heads of the sampled institutions to inform them of the purpose of the pilot test.

3.6.1.2 Pilot Test Sampling

Through the help of a resource person, the researcher was able to acquire the addresses of several institutions. He then wrote all these institutions' addresses on pieces of paper and put them in a container. Researcher subsequently shuffled and picked an address at random. This process was repeated till researcher had five schools. The same process was repeated in each school, using the names of staff therein, to select men and women to form the sample size for the pilot test. The interview guide was held with the respondents on Friday, 23rd May, 2014 at mid-day and, by 5 O'clock of the same day, the whole process was over.

3.6.1.3 Aim

The aim for conducting the pilot test was to assess the construct validity and reliability of the items on the interview guide. Construct validity is regarded as the evidence that each item has an underlying theory which can facilitate the prediction of

a person's behaviour (Eshun and Effrim, 2007). It is the extent to which the items in the interview guide tap the concept that one is trying to measure.

Reliability on the other hand, may refer to the consistency with which an item measures or produces similar results given similar conditions. Most of the items of the interview were researcher-made. Therefore, it was of great importance to test them to ascertain their reliability and validity.

3.6.1.4 Validity Results

The tools were studied and scrutinized by some teacher-educators of Fosu College of Education and provided feedback which helped to revise and refine the instruments. In spite of such extensive validation, the interview questions were shown to a lecturer in Modern Approaches to Research of the Department of Social Studies Education of the University of Education, Winneba, and, later, to the School Counselor of Assin Manso Senior High School for comments. All suggestions given were taken.

3.6.1.5 Reliability Analysis

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), the value of reliability, if it is determined, is good at 0.7 and preferably higher, for research purposes. However, the reliability coefficient of the items on the interview guide of this study was difficult to calculate because, like extended response essay, one disadvantage of open-ended interview responses is scoring reliability or being difficult to objectively scored (Eshun and Effrim, 2007).

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

When permission was granted, the researcher introduced himself, made his intentions known and arranged for a face-to-face meeting with selected participants after sampling out the targeted population. Before the first meeting, researcher prepared the respondents for the exercise by explaining the purpose of the study for which the interview was being conducted. Researcher, for example, explained to respondents that there was no penalty for giving conflicting responses to those of others, and that, respondents' identities would be kept totally confidential. He only entreated them to give accurate and honest responses to the best of their ability. However, during the analyses in chapter four, the names which were used in identifying the respondents are pseudo names which are not respondents' real ones, and do not refer to anybody anywhere.

The researcher used the focus group interviews because he wanted to cover a large number of respondents within a short period of time. Therefore, in all, 200 respondents, consisting 20 focus groups, were interviewed

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Demographic data gathered through the interviews were analyzed using frequency tables and charts showing simple percentages, where appropriate. These tables and charts clearly displayed the socio-demographic information such as age, gender, marital status, religious background, type of locality, exposure to media, and level of education. Responses on people's perceptions, the reasons that explain people's perceptions as well as measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the role of married women in community development from the interviews were transcribed and inferences made from them for in-depth

understanding of the research problem, and also, to collect detailed views from participants (Creswell, 2003).

3.9 Sources of Data

For the purpose of this study, there were two main sources of data available to aid the researcher to complete the study, namely; primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were the original responses and reports which were solicited from respondents. It was useful to employ primary sources such as the interview guides to gather data on the people's perception about the role of married women in the development of their communities, as well as the reasons that explain the people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development. Also, the interview guide, for instance, aided the study in gathering data on the measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment about the role of married women in community development.

Secondary sources, on the other hand, were the books and reading materials which were obtained from various sources such as the library and internet to find out what others have written about the topic for the study. Materials from these sources were used to review literature on areas such as development, community development, people's perception about the roles and the involvement of the married woman in community development as were pertaining to the problem under investigation. The secondary sources were relevant when making comparisons to gain more insight into the area of study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation and explanation of the data of this study. The first section of the data which covered the socio-demographic data of the respondents was analyzed using simple percentages represented on tables and figures. The second section of the data, which presented analyses of the main outcomes, was to find answers to the research questions and satisfy the objectives of the study.

4.2 Demographic Data of Respondents

4.2.1 Sex Distribution

Table 4.1 below shows the sex distribution of the respondents. It was observed that, out of the Two hundred (200) respondents selected for this study, one hundred and three (103), representing 51.5%, were females and ninety-seven (97), representing 48.5% of the total number of respondents, were males. The sex distribution of the sample appears to be representative of the population from which it was drawn. Estimations from the 2010 Population and Housing Census of the Assin North Municipality show that 81,087 (50.3%) of the, population were females and 80,254 (49.7%) were males (Source: 2010 Population and Housing Census (MPCU Computation, 2010).

Table 4.1 Sex Distribution of Respondents.

| Gender | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| Female | 103 | 51.5 | 51.5 |
| Male | 97 | 48.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 200 | 100.0 | |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

4.2.2 Marital Status of Respondents

Table 4.2 presents the distribution of the respondents' marital status. The table discloses that one hundred and thirty-nine (139) of the respondents, representing 73.2%, were married, another forty-six (46), representing 24.2%, were single, while five of them, representing 2.6% of the total number were women whose husbands were dead. There was no representation for divorcees in the sample.

Table 4.2 Marital Status of Respondents

| Gender | | Marital Status | | | Total |
|--------|-----------------|----------------|---------|---------|--------|
| | | Single | Married | Widowed | |
| Female | Count | 31 | 67 | 5 | 103 |
| | % within Gender | 30.1% | 65.0% | 4.9% | 100.0% |
| Male | Count | 15 | 82 | 0 | 97 |
| | % within Gender | 15.5% | 84.5% | .0% | 100.0% |
| Total | Count | 46 | 149 | 5 | 200 |
| | % within Gender | 23.0% | 74.5% | 2.5% | 100.0% |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

The table also reveals that fifteen (15) of the total male respondents, representing 15.5%, were single and eighty-two (82), representing 84.5%, were married. But, there were no representation for those who were divorced and widowed. The table further reveals that thirty-one (31) of the female respondents, representing 30.1%, were

single, another sixty-seven (67), representing 65.1%, were married and the remaining five (5), representing 4.8%, were those whose husbands were deceased. As a result, the Table above shows that majority of the respondents were married with males (41.0%) covering large portion of the married respondents for this study.

4.2.3 Age Groupings of Respondents

Table 4.3 below displays the age distribution of total number of respondents selected for this survey.

Table 4.3 Respondents' Age Groupings

| Gender | | Respondents Age Groupings | | | | | Total |
|--------|-----------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|
| | | 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60+ | |
| Female | Count | 39 | 39 | 16 | 9 | 0 | 103 |
| | % within Gender | 37.9% | 37.9% | 15.5% | 8.7% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| Male | Count | 12 | 43 | 28 | 12 | 2 | 97 |
| | % within Gender | 12.4% | 44.3% | 28.9% | 12.4% | 2.1% | 100.0% |
| Total | Count | 51 | 82 | 44 | 21 | 2 | 200 |
| | % within Gender | 25.5% | 41.0% | 22.0% | 10.5% | 1.0% | 100.0% |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

The table above reveals that there were two hundred respondents for the study, and fifty-one (51), representing 25.5%, were in the 20-29 years age grouping, eighty-two (82), representing 41.0%, were in the 30-39 years age grouping, and some forty-four (44) others, representing 22.0%, were in the 40-49 years age grouping. Whiles twenty-one (21) others, representing 10.5%, were in the 50-59 years age grouping, the last two, representing 1.0%, were sixty years and above. The table also reveals that, out of the total number of male respondents, twelve (12), representing 12.4% within the gender, were of ages between 20 and 29 years, another forty-three (43),

representing 44.3%, were between the ages of 30 and 39 years. Moreover, while some twenty-eight (28) of the number of male respondents, representing 28.9%, were between the ages of 40 and 49 years, another twelve (12), representing 12.4%, were of ages between 50 and 59 years and the remaining two (2), representing 2.1%, were sixty years and above. The table further discloses that one hundred and three (98), of the total number of respondents, representing 51.5%, were females and, out of this number of females, thirty-nine (39), representing 37.9%, were of ages between 20 and 29 years, another thirty-nine (39), representing 37.9%, were between the ages of 30 and 39 years, some sixteen (16) more, representing 15.5%, were of ages 40-49 years and the remaining nine (9), representing 8.7%, were between the ages of 50 and 59 years. Consequently, the dominant age group was those between the ages of 30 and 39 years (41.0%), followed closely by 20-29 years group (25.5%), 40-49 years group (22.0%), 50-59 years group (11.5%) and 60+ years group in that order.

4.2.4 Religious Background of Respondents

Table 4.4 presents the overview of respondents' religious background. The table reveals that one hundred and eighty-five (185), representing 92.5%, were Christians and fifteen (15), representing 7.5%, were Muslims. However, none of the respondents was a traditionalist or belonged to any other religious affiliation.

Table 4.4 Religious Background of Respondents

| Gender | | Religious Affiliation | | |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------|--------|
| | | Christian | Muslim | Total |
| Female | Count | 100 | 3 | 103 |
| | % within Gender | 97.1% | 2.9% | 100.0% |
| Male | Count | 85 | 12 | 97 |
| | % within Gender | 87.6% | 12.4% | 100.0% |
| Total | Count | 185 | 15 | 200 |
| | % within Gender | 92.5% | 7.5% | 100.0% |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

4.2.5 Level of Education of Respondents

Table 4.5 below presents the educational background of all respondents selected for the study. The table reveals that, out of total number of respondents, none has the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) as his or her highest qualification. However, twelve (12) of the total number of respondents, representing 6.0%, were Senior High School (SHS) Certificate holders, another thirty-four (34), representing 17.0%, were holders of certificate in either Vocational or Technical Education, while some fifty-one (51), representing 25.5%, were Teachers' Certificate 'A' or Diploma in Basic Education holders, and the rest of the respondents (103), representing 51.5%, were degree holders in various fields from various tertiary institutions.

Table 4.5 Educational Background of Respondents

| Gender | | Educational Level | | | | Total |
|--------|-----------------|-------------------|------------|-----------|----------|--------|
| | | SHS | VOC./TECH. | POST-SEC. | TERTIARY | |
| Female | Count | 6 | 23 | 36 | 38 | 103 |
| | % within Gender | 5.8% | 22.3% | 34.9% | 36.9% | 100.0% |
| Male | Count | 6 | 11 | 15 | 65 | 97 |
| | % within Gender | 6.2% | 11.3% | 15.5% | 67.0% | 100.0% |
| Total | Count | 12 | 34 | 51 | 103 | 200 |
| | % within Gender | 6.0% | 17.0% | 25.5% | 51.5% | 100.0% |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

4.2.6 Rate of Exposure of Respondents to Media

Table 4.6 shows the rate of exposure of respondents to media. It was revealed in Table 4.6 that, out of the total number of respondents selected for the study, one hundred and fifty-seven (157), representing 79.5%, indicated that they were always exposed to the media, another thirty-one (31), representing 16.5%, indicated that they were occasionally exposed to media and the remaining twelve (12), representing 4%, indicated that they were rarely exposed to any form of media

Table 4.6 Rate of Exposure of Respondents to Media

| Gender | | Exposure to Media | | | |
|--------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|--------------|--------|
| | | Always | Rarely | Occasionally | Total |
| Female | Count | 75 | 23 | 5 | 103 |
| | Expected Count | 77.9 | 15.5 | 4.6 | 103.0 |
| | % within Gender | 73.5% | 22.4% | 4.1% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 37.9% | 11.6% | 2.1% | 51.6% |
| Male | Count | 82 | 8 | 7 | 97 |
| | Expected Count | 73.1 | 14.5 | 4.4 | 97.0 |
| | % within Gender | 85.9% | 8.7% | 5.4% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 41.6% | 4.2% | 2.6% | 48.4% |
| Total | Count | 157 | 31 | 12 | 200 |
| | Expected Count | 151.0 | 30.0 | 9.0 | 200.0 |
| | % within Gender | 79.5% | 15.8% | 4.7% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 79.5% | 15.8% | 4.7% | 100.0% |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

4.2.7 Type of Locality of Respondents

Table 4.7 below presents the distribution of type of locality of respondents. The table reveals that, out of the total number of respondents selected for this study, twenty-five (25), representing 11.6%, were living in the rural areas of the Municipality, another fifty-three (53), representing 26.3%, were living in the suburbs of the Municipality and one hundred and twenty-two (122), representing 62.1% were residing in the Municipality's urban centre itself.

Table 4.7 Type of Locality of Respondents

| Gender | | Type of Locality | | | |
|--------|-----------------|------------------|----------|-------|--------|
| | | Rural | Suburban | Urban | Total |
| Female | Count | 20 | 35 | 48 | 103 |
| | % within Gender | 18.4% | 33.7% | 48.0% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 9.5% | 17.4% | 24.7% | 51.6% |
| Male | Count | 5 | 18 | 74 | 97 |
| | % within Gender | 4.3% | 18.5% | 77.2% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 2.1% | 8.9% | 37.4% | 48.4% |
| Total | Count | 25 | 53 | 122 | 200 |
| | % within Gender | 11.6% | 26.3% | 62.1% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 11.6% | 26.3% | 62.1% | 100.0% |

Source: Fieldwork data (2014).

4.3 Analysis of Major Outcomes

Analyses were done on the qualitative data to answer the research questions employed to determine the characteristics of participants and the effects of these characteristics on their responses. Qualitative analysis was done to determine the responses pertaining to all the research objectives, however, much attention was placed on the reasons which explain the research problem and suggest ways of making the people have a fair judgment of the role of the married woman in community development.

4.3.1 Perceptions of People in Assin Fosu, and its Surrounding Areas, about the Roles of Married Women in Community Development

This section focuses on general views of the people in Assin Fosu and surrounding areas on the concept of Community Development, their understanding of the concept and its importance to their local economy. It goes further to describe the perceptions that the people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have about the roles of married women in community development.

4.3.1.1 General Views on the Concept of Community Development

Description of the perceptions that the people of Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas have of the roles of married women in community development is dependent on their understanding of Community Development. This, in turn, depends on the people's level of education or the amount of information they are exposed to. Consequently, in the interview, respondents were asked to talk of their understanding of the concept of Community Development and how the concept is important to the local economy.

4.3.1.2 Responses on people understanding of the term “Community Development”.

Education, as has been said somewhere in this write up, is a means of acquiring or imparting knowledge which is critical in solving societal issues in its application. But, knowledge can only be applied if some understanding has been derived. Therefore, participants were asked of their understanding of community development. For example, respondents were asked to explain their understanding of the term “Community Development”. In reacting to the demand above, Mary, a 52 year-old married woman said:

“There are so many generics about community development. We have Christian community, Muslim community, and intellectual community and so on. However, community development refers to a group of people with varying backgrounds coming together to form a society”.

Agreeing with the opinion above, Adiza, a 48 year-old married woman had the following views:

“Community development is where a group of people from diverse cultural backgrounds congregate at one area where they share common ties and see to the growth of their area qualitatively and quantitatively”.

On the other hand, some people also think that community development goes beyond just co-habiting at an area over a period of time. To this group of people, community development involves not only coming together of the people but also pooling their resources together to put up structures and conditions that are further going to raise the standards of living of the people presently and in the future. Consequently, Cletus, a 38 year-old married man puts it thus:

“Community development is a shared responsibility of members within the community who partner the district assembly or the government in order to provide services like schools clinics, and construction of feeder roads. One can even think of the provision of toilet facilities, market centres and so on”.

Supporting the above opinion, Charles, a 36 year-old married man said:

“Basically, community development refers to the process where the inhabitants come together to help to put structures in place to move the society forward and also to maintain the existing projects”.

Again, in agreement to the opinions expressed above, James, a 46 year-old married man summarized his opinion as follows:

“Community development is the structural change of society in terms of infrastructure and behaviours. With regards to infrastructure, we have road networks, hospitals, schools and so on, while in terms of behaviors the people of a community make efforts to put up positive behaviours and attitudes such as punctuality, hard work and dedication to aid in the development of the area”.

By the aggregate of responses given above, it was deduced that, not only did community development depict the coming together of a group of people to co-habit within a framework of set standards and societal norms, but it also refers to the process of putting up structures and behaviours that create the enabling environment for higher standard of living

4.3.1.3 Responses on how community development is important to the economy of a community

Responses were sought on how community development is important to the people's local economy. How community development is important to the people of a community shows the level of their concern for the whole process and who should participate in it. However, responses gathered on the above demand indicated that the importance of community development reflects from the development of the human resource of the community. Consequently, responding to the demand above, Seth, a 39 year-old public servant said:

“It caters for the human capacity of the community. For instance, the hospital in the area helps to maintain good health standards among the people; if there is a school, the literacy rates would go high. Generally, it would help to improve the general development of the people of a community. In terms of education, if the human resource is developed, it puts them in a position to manage the physical structures like roads, hospitals, and schools”.

In agreeing to the view expressed above, Napoleon, a 47 year-old public servant said:

“I would say, as individuals we cannot live in isolation, we would have to depend on one another in times of need. So, community development is a

concept that is very important because when it brings people together, it helps as far as interpersonal relations are concerned. Even, if we have to live in peace, unity and harmony, it would all have to boil down to how well we are able to develop our community to get rid of diseases, help one another in terms of employment and so on. So, in this regard, it is very important that, as people, we all come together in a community that would help improve upon the economic gains of the community not as individuals but collectively in the supreme interest of the members of that community”.

Again, in support of the opinions expressed above, Oparebea, a 37 year-old farmer said:

“It helps to increase people’s understanding of government initiatives or projects that can assist the people. Also, it allows the people to be involved in whatever project that is being carried out. So that, in the end, it would not look like the project has been done and nobody is ready to use it. But, because they were part of it, the participation or utilization becomes successful”.

Furthermore, there is this view out there that community development itself is about the development of the people of a community, making it the most important resource of the community. To this school of thought, once the human resource base of the community is developed, it would aid the further development of other areas of the local economy. Therefore, Theodora, a 42 year-old spinster summarized her opinion this way:

“Talking about community development, the people come to mind. They are supposed to champion the course of community development in areas such as construction of school, markets, tourism sites and so on. When the people are

developed, they would in turn help to develop other resources in the community”.

In agreement to the opinion above, Zack, a 35 year-old farmer said:

“Community development is very very important because if the community comes together to put up a school structure, for example, the government must also come in with equipments and teachers. By so doing, it enables the inhabitants of the community to have access to formal education which helps people to be enlightened and keeps them abreast with happenings around them. They would also be aware of health issues. Also, with the presence of internet, the people would have access to more information that would help them to develop skills”.

In aggregation, the opinions expressed above indicated that community development is very important to the economy of the community because it seeks to develop the capabilities of the people which is a catalyst to the development of other resources of the community.

4.3.1.4 People’s Perception of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development in Assin Fosu, and its Surrounding Areas.

Based on the peoples educational background and/or the amount of information available to the people of Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas, a couple of perceptions were established/identified: the perception that “married women are the least participatory in community development activities” and “the perception that a married woman can effectively manage both family and community responsibilities

only when she is encouraged and supported by her husband” were among the ones that attracted lots of responses and, subsequently, were accepted as the truth. Again, a perception such as, “Unlike other groups of women, married women are less independent to work outside the home unless they are permitted by husbands” attracted quite some amount of agreement and, subsequently, was taken for one of the perceptions that people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have about the roles of married women in the community development process.

4.3.1.4.1 Group of women who participated more in community development activities in your community so far- (married women, spinsters, widows and divorcees).

Interviewing participants on the people’s perceptions of the roles of married women in community development, the researcher gathered data on the opinions of respondents of their observation of the roles of married women in community development. Upon the above basis, the question; “Which group of women has been more participatory in community development activities in your community so far (married, single, divorced or widowed)?” , was posed. The responses indicated that there were varying perceptions of the roles of married women in community development. Whiles some respondents perceived the married women to be less participatory in community development than the other groups of women, others were of the view that in spite of their family responsibilities, married women can be much involved in community development. The perception of the first school of thought implies that all other group of women are more participatory than married women. In response to the question above, various responses were gathered.

4.3.1.4.1.1 People in support of the perception that in spite of their family responsibilities, married women can be more involved in community development.

Responses on perceptions that in spite of their family responsibilities, married women can be more involved in community were sought. Whereas some participants supported the above opinion, others thought otherwise. Napoleon, a 47 years old male respondent who is also a public servant said:

“Married women perform more duties than those who are single or unmarried. They attend to work in the home, nurtured children and at the same time go to work toward the physical development of the community. After all, what is community development, if you will not talk about the upbringing and training of the young ones. In my view, married women are the real direct and indirect movers of community development right from the home to the public place. Married women are really contributing”.

In support of the view expressed above, George, a 50 years old farmer said among other things that:

“Women, especially married women form the backbone of every community. They contribute a lot to development in every community. This is because they are settled in the mind especially if they have children. I think development in the community is advantageous to them and they know. For example, if schools are built, water extended to the community and if clinics are there, they become most happy. They will benefit and their children too. If the environment is neat and healthy, their children remain healthy too. In this our place it not uncommon to see married women sweeping and burning

rubbish. For this awareness, I presume that married women contribute more to community development than the other groups of women”.

Female respondents have also equally expressed their opinion on the subject matter.

For example, Adzoa, a 35 year-old married woman said:

People think we are less concerned about what goes on in our society’s development. This is untrue. Anytime the gong gong is beaten, I go. I take part in everything. For example, we carried stones and sand whether married or not when they were building the Kindergarten through self-help. If you do not go, you will be asked to pay. But where is the money? People who think married women do not help in community development have no eyes”.

A 23 year-old female respondent, Densua, who was a trader and unmarried at the time also contributed nicely when she said,

“I think we have to give praise to where praise is due. I do not expect a married woman to do the same volume of work as a woman who is not married and who is young. Our strength depends on our age. Married women are, these days, above 25 years and are grown. Because of child birth, their strength has reduced. I am only 23, unmarried and have not given birth yet. If it comes to physical work, I can do better than most of the married women. However, this is not to say that married women do nothing. The volume of work they did before attaining their present status and what they are doing now, cumulatively, is more than what we are doing”.

Again, some respondents also argued that, it is rather the married women who played most roles in the community development process. Cletus, a 38 year-old Christian who is also a teacher said:

“I believe married women are the ones who really participated in the community development process because they have more responsibilities than the rest. For example, the married women ... have to ensure that the husband’s needs are catered for and their children are taken care of, but for the single women, it is only their children”.

On the aggregate, views expressed above indicated that some people are of the view that it is rather the married women who play major roles in the community development than any group of women and men. This implies that some people think married women are the real movers of development in our societies.

4.3.1.4.1.2 Response that favour the perception that married women are less participatory than the other groups of women

Apart from the above, responses that were given by a cross-section of the respondents indicated that the married women were less participatory in community development. For example, Charles, a 36 year-old male respondent who is also a graduate teacher said,

“To me, they all play important roles but it is the single women and men who do better. When the gong gong is beaten, they respond almost immediately. Married women have genuine problem preventing them from coming early. Sometimes too, married women go to communal labour with their children at their backs. Some too are lazy and do this intentionally. The children cry and would like to be carried. Sometimes, they are excused and do not participate

effectively. The unmarried women and young women work better. They put in their maximum and could be sent to any place anytime because, most often, they are accountable to themselves”.

Also, in agreeing to the perception above, Adiza, a 48 year-old muslim who is also a post-secondary certificate holder put it this way:

“Looking at the educational background of the people, most married women who are educated would rather like to be responsible to their families. And because most of them are uneducated or semi-educated, they come up as single mothers and single women without children who form the majority who participated in community development processes”.

Consequently, on the aggregate it was concluded that, married women have been less participatory in the community development processes than the others. This implies that all other groups of women such as single, divorced and widowed women are more active or participatory in the community development processes than the married ones.

4.3.1.4.2 Responses on how effectively a married woman can manage both family and community responsibilities.

The people of the Assin North Municipality, per their representation in this study, seem **not to agree that a married woman can effectively handle both family and community responsibilities.** As Charles, a 36 year-old married man and a graduate teacher puts it:

“For the word ‘effectively’, in my opinion I don’t think it would be possible and secondly, yes! A married woman can play both roles effectively

sometimes depending on the sort of husband she has. If the husband gives her that maximum co-operation or encouragement, the married woman can make it”.

On the other hand, Marya 52 year-old married woman and a graduate teacher indicated that married women can effectively manage both family and community responsibilities.

However, other respondents do agree that, if a married woman would be able to handle any situation, in addition to her household duties, then there should be a co-operative, encouraging and permissive husband: Abena, a 31 year-old JHS leaver and a trader said;

“They cannot manage both effectively, unless their husbands come in to help or co-operate. Through the encouragement of their husbands, married women can do the impossible”.

Regina, a 41 year-old married participant, also reflected on the above perception thus, “Majority cannot because marriage itself is a full time occupation. So, sometimes it becomes extremely difficult to effectively manage both because, sometimes, it leads to negligence of children. However, if the husband gives her the maximum co-operation or encouragement, a married woman can play both roles effectively”.

In conclusion, the aggregate of all the opinions expressed above indicated that married women can effectively manage both family and community responsibilities only when there is a permissive, supportive and encouraging husband. This implies that married women, unlike other groups of women are often not accountable to themselves.

4.3.1.4.2.1 Dual Role of Married Women

Married women are divided. Should they concentrate on community development activities or concentrate on their husbands and children. Even though people express opinions supporting the perception that married women can and must be made to take up roles to contribute to community development, it is only because they do not critically observe the activities of women in general. Consequently, Akushika, a 32 year-old married woman and a trader said;

“To me, a married woman can do only two-thirds of what a healthy unmarried woman can do during communal labour and in contribution to the community development processes. Some married women even think that their husbands should support them when they are absent”.

Apart from the above, the married woman can be made handicapped in playing the dual-roles in the community development process by pregnancy and the aftermath of pregnancy. During pregnancy and lactation, the married woman finds herself in a condition for which she needs special treatment and care from those immediately closer to her such as the husband, friends and relatives. In the light of the above reason, married women find it very difficult to effectively play the dual-roles in the community development processes and cannot give of their best during these periods. Consequently, George, a 50 year-old married man said:

“During pregnancy, women need special treatment and good attention such as care, love and affection, regular advice about their conditions, a very hygienic environment and a balanced diet for the growth and development of mother and child. The rest are regular exercise, regular attendance to post-natal care and adequate rest. So, they would have to adjust their schedule so that

relatives, friends and community members can help with the household chores and other works”.

Furthermore, most married women are torn between wanting to play the dual-roles of making equal contributions to the maintenance of a healthily successful home and being sufficiently participatory in the community development processes. However, typical of African women, most married woman would like to maintain a healthy family. In agreeing to the above assertion, Doris, a 28 year-old spinster said:

“But, unless her husband is supportive, the married woman would have to shun community duties to concentrate on her family’s needs just to save her marriage. Or, else, her attention would be divided and, consequently, one side would suffer”.

Going by the aggregate of the views expressed above, it was concluded that most married women cannot effectively manage both family and community responsibilities, unless they are supported by their husbands. However, there are few participants who were of the opinion that married women can play both roles effectively when given the opportunity in an enabling environment

4.3.2 Reasons that Explain the Perceptions of the People of Assin Fosu, and its Surrounding Areas, about the Roles Married Women Play in Community Development

This section concerns the second major objective. To identify the reasons which explain people’s perceptions about the roles of married women in community development. “Why do people perceive things the way they do in Assin Fosu”? In the quest to answer the above question, a number of sub-questions were raised to guide this study in that direction. Subsequently, questions such as “What reasons explain the perceptions which the people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have about the

roles of married women in community development?; “In your view, why do people perceive married women, but not married men and other groups of women as good home-makers”?, “Why are married women supposed to stay back at home and take care of the needs of their family”?, and “Why are married women supposed to take up roles outside the home”? were posed.

Here, respondents who were interviewed were looked at in categories such as married women below 40 years, married women above 40 years, single women below 40 years, and single women above 40 years. The rest are married men below 40 years, married men above 40 years, single men below 40 years and single men above 40 years.

4.3.2.1.1 Married Women above 40 years

In reaction to the question **“What reasons explain the perception that people have about the roles of married women in community development”?** in relation to why people think in a particular way, Mary, a 52 year-old married woman and a graduate teacher summarized her opinion as follows:

“This can be answered from a cultural perspective of the society we find ourselves in. Over the years, that has been the norm and practices. Men are expected to pay the dowry, go out in search of money. ...women’s duties are to ensure that the needs of their husbands and children are catered for. Because of this, some married women do not have any choice than to stay home and attend to domestic chores. Therefore, they cannot take part effectively in physical community development activities”.

Another respondent, Regina, a 41 year-old married woman and a graduate said the following in responding to the above:

“I think it is about the socialization of the child. Especially in Africa, men can’t be good home makers because the girls are socialized to bear children and care for their children and husbands and make the home while the boys are socialized to be aggressive and bold so they are given toys like cars, gun and so on”.

4.3.2.1.2 Married women below 40 years

Furthermore, Oparebea, a 37 year-old married woman and a vocational school certificate holder responded that:

“One of the reasons that explain people’s perceptions of the roles of married women in community development is their level of education. Education involves the dissemination of information however, based on the individual’s understanding of the information given through education, he/she can form his/her perception of anything which includes the roles of married women in community development”.

Adzoa, a 35 year-old married woman thought that it is a natural phenomenon to perceive women the way they are perceived by alluding to the story of creation when God made a pronouncement saying that the woman will struggle to deliver her babies and that the man will suffer to work the land to feed his family.

“If I should go to the bible, you will see that at creation, God shared the roles to be played by both men and women when he said that Eve is going to give birth and Adam is going to work to feed his family”.

4.3.2.1.3 Single women below 40 years

The reaction of Hope, a 28 year-old post- secondary certificate holder who is also a spinster supports the opinion that a person's level of education or the rate at which he is exposed to information may influence his/her perceptions about things:

“Certainly, the higher or lower a person's education level, the more or otherwise his perception, opinion or views. This is to say that a person's perception can be different from the normal view only if his level of education is higher or lower than that of the average person of the community”.

In support of the view that the reasons which explain people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development are natural, Doris, a 28 year-old spinster expressed her opinion as follows:

“During creation, God directed that the man, that's Adam should do a hard work and suffer to look after his family and He also said that the woman, that's Eve should be the man's helper. These mean that women should stay back at home and do the cooking, washing, and cleaning whiles the men are working very hard to make the family happy”.

4.3.2.1.4 Single women above 40 years

Also, in reaction to the question above, Catherine, a 44 year-old single mother who is also a civil servant indicated that:

“Another reason that explains people's perception of the roles of married women in community development is because they think it is a natural phenomenon. Naturally, women are made to give birth and they must care for their children. They are trained to be tender and caring”.

This implies that people have an opinion that men and women were created in such a way that they must undertake activities which are commensurate to their biological make up.

Some respondents also believe that nature is the only explanation to perceptions which have been expressed somewhere in this literature about the roles of married women in community development. Contributing to the interview, Theodora, a 42 year-old unmarried woman tried to cite the natural difference in the physical strength of the sexes as a reason why, for example, people perceive women, especially married women to be the ones to remain at home to ensure that the home is a safe place to live in:

“Naturally, women were created to cook or do little works because they do not have enough strength to work hard as the men do. Some people even believe that the rightful place for a woman to operate in is the kitchen”.

4.3.2.1.5 Single men below 40 years

Again, in responding to a question on reasons that explain the perceptions that people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have of the roles of married women in community development, Daniel, a 29 year-old bachelor who is also a commercial vehicle driver indicated that it can be as a result of social ascription. This view was expressed in a statement below:

“So far as this community is concerned, people have been socialized to believe that women are supposed to deal with the duties of home-makers where most of their contact hours must be spent within the home with the husband and children...these have been the duties assigned to married women by society”

Some participants were supportive of the idea that what women can do or cannot do is as a result of how special they were created by God. To this school of thought, because of the specialty in the creation of women, they were endowed with certain values that enable women to do some things better than men. Kojo, 25 year-old unmarried man and a farmer said:

“Women are so special that they understand babies when they cry and try to attend to the needs of these babies. This makes them the right people to socialize the young ones before they leave home for school”.

4.3.2.1.6 Single men above 40 years

Reacting to the question above, Eric, a 43 year-old unmarried man and a farmer responded that:

“Our cultural setting is such that women, especially married women, are not supposed to go beyond certain limits. For example, if a married woman decides to get involved in local politics, all manner of insults would be rained at her. So, to avoid such situations, most married women would never venture into those areas at all”.

Societies round the world have their own way of socializing their members to conform to widely accepted standards of the group. Therefore, it would not be far from right to assume that people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas have determined that women who bring forth children should be in position to cater for them. Thus, Atta, 47 year-old unmarried man summarized his opinion like this:

“Our society determines that a married woman with children would surely have her children around the home before they start schooling and so, it is just

acceptable that the married woman stays around the children to ensure their safety”.

4.3.2.1.7 Married men below 40 years

This opinion was expressed by Seth, a 39 year-old married man as follows:

“Biologically, men and women were made to deal with activities that their bodies were made for. For example, people are of the opinion that, unlike men, women by their nature should not engage in aggressive, rough and risky activities”.

In our local societies, women, especially married women are expected to play certain assigned roles and forbidden to venture into others. Women, in general, are expected to get married, bring forth and make a good home. However, they are forbidden to engage in activities which are strenuous, aggressive and dangerous such as engineering, medicine and mining and so on. Consequently, Charles, a 36 year-old married man and a graduate teacher thinks that social ascription accounts for why the people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas have about the roles of married women in community development:

“I believe it is a standard which has been established historically. Any form of adherence to the set values makes one a successful married person, but deviation will attract negative perceptions”.

4.3.2.1.8 Married men above 40 years

In agreeing to the opinion of Theodora, James, a 46 year-old married man said:

I believe it is natural thing. Women are, naturally, people who take care of the home. So, naturally they have the flair for that endeavour. Nature has it in

such a way that, biologically, males and females are not the same, thus they cannot perform the same amount of work or play the same roles”.

There have been lots of controversies surrounding the reasons that explain the perceptions that the roles of married women in community development is insignificant or, that it is the recognition accorded to the efforts of married women in community development which is demotivating. Consequently, George, a 50 year-old farmer contends that it is the work of God that women in general have been assigned to roles that make them successful married women:

“Odomankoma, the Almighty, chose women to bear children and take responsibility for the home, as a servant takes stewardship of the properties of her master. God gave males and females qualities that make them efficient wherever they find themselves. So, a man cannot be as efficient as the woman when it comes to home-making and, woman cannot effectively efficient as the man in what he does”.

From the foregoing, the aggregate of all the views expressed above indicated that, among the reasons that explain the sort of perceptions that people have of the roles of married women in community development, the fact that it is a biological phenomenon was strongly expressed, just as it being as a result of the socialization processes was also widely accepted. Also, the people’s cultural practices as well as their levels of education accounted for some of the reasons that explain their perceptions about the roles of married women in community development. However, on the whole, it being a natural phenomenon was the most prominent reason that explains the perception that people have of the roles of married women in community development.

4.3.2.2 Responses on why people perceive married women, but not married men, and other groups of women, as good home makers.

Again, data was sought from respondents as to what reasons explain people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development, when respondents were asked, **“Why do people perceive married women, but not married men and other groups of women, as good home makers?”** In response to this question, references were made to certain connotations that emanate from the socialization process, certain cultural practices, natural phenomenon and religion. Responding to explain the cultural practices as one of the reasons which explain people's perceptions, Napoleon, summarizes his opinion when he puts it this way:

“Well, this can be answered from a cultural perspective of the society we live in. Over the years, that has been the norm and practice...men are expected to pay the dowry, go out in search of money to come and make the home. A woman's duty is to ensure that the children and husband are catered for”.

Reflecting on the socialization aspect of the reasons given to explain people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development, the responses reflected by Mary, a 52 year-old married woman was as follows:

“Especially in Africa, men can't be good home-makers because the girls have been socialized to bear children, care for their children and their husbands, and make the home. Therefore, other groups of women are equally good home-makers, but you see, single women are accountable to themselves and can decide to keep it just the same. But, married are obliged to keep the home at a required standard”.

Also, another reason that was given to explain people's perceptions about the roles of married women in community development connotes to it being natural. Here, again,

a section of respondents contended that women in general were naturally created with values and abilities to make the home and cater for the needs of inhabitants therein.

Charles, a 36 year-old married man concluded the above analysis thus;

“I believe it is a natural thing. Naturally, women are people who take care of the home... so, naturally, they have the flair for that job”.

Irene, a 33 year-old spinster who is also a trader gave religious reasons to explain people’s perceptions about the roles of married women in community development.

The view of the above respondent was summarized when she said,

“If we go back to the bible, it is seen that women, by their nature, are very patient when it comes to handling children, and they can also keep the home very well”.

Here, a number of reasons which were given by participants included the socialization process, cultural practices, a natural and religious connotations. However, on the aggregate, the socialization process was identified as the dominant reason, followed by cultural practices, natural or religious connotations, in that order.

4.3.2.3 Responses on why married women are supposed to stay home and take care of the needs of their family.

In looking for explanation for the perceptions that people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have of the roles of married women in community development, respondents (interviewees) were asked to **explain why married women are supposed to stay home and take care of the needs of their family**, the responses indicated that the roles of the married women are always ascribed by society, and that, any other thing apart from what the society has prescribed, is unacceptable and deviant in nature. Consequently, respondents responded that, in a typical African

society, people respect married women with a lot of children. To them, it is a sign of God's blessings. This implies that married women in Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, may be receptive to socially ascribed roles and responsibilities. All the above was summarized by Abena, a twenty-eight year-old banker, when she said:

“In our community, married women give birth to a lot of children which they see as prestige ...so they hardly have time to recover from previous births”

Regina, a 41 years old married woman and a graduate teacher, was in support of the idea that women were created to be caring and tender, but at the same time, she acknowledged that the roles and responsibilities of women, especially, in the marriage settings are socially ascribed as well. Thus, she put it this way:

“I believe it is something that they were made for. Women, naturally, are home-makers and, therefore, people expect them to manage the home”.

Here, Regina, who agrees that it is only natural for the married women to stay back at home and take care of the needs of the family, also acknowledges that married women are widely expected to be good housewives as well.

Some respondents gave a socio-cultural connotation as the reason why the married women should stay back at home and take care of the needs of the young ones. Cletus, a 38 year-old married man who is also a graduate teacher reiterated that:

“A woman going outside and neglecting the home is more a taboo than a man neglecting the home”.

After analyzing all the above responses, it became clearer that, to the people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, social ascription is the main reason why a married woman would have to stay back at home to take care of the needs of the family.

4.3.2.4 Married Women Outside the Home

Respondents' conceptions about the roles of women, especially married women outside the home were sought

In response to the above question, Asuo, a SHS leaver who is also a farmer was of the view that the perception that a married woman is not suppose to engage in activities outside the home is negative:

The perceptions about married women taking up job outside the home are not all that good in the African context. People's perception is that married women are not efficient in their work because when there is a program that eats into their time, they would go and attend to the needs of their families. So, any activity that disturbs their domestic duties becomes a problem because they are not able to handle those assigned roles very well.

In support of the perception above, James, a 46 year-old Teachers' Cert 'A' holder said,

“In the African context, it is very difficult for a married woman to take up roles outside the home because we expect her to do a lot of things; caring for the children, home and needs of the husband. So taking up roles outside the home would be burdensome. Sometimes too, married women themselves don't want to get involved because of their roles at home”.

The above opinions are not the only views expressed in reaction to why it is necessary for the married women to take up roles or engage in activities outside the home. The following are positive opinions expressed by some respondents. Abena, a 31 year-old spinster said that:

“The world today is advancing and prices of goods and services are not standing still, so it would not be prudent for the married woman to remain

home only to perform house chores alone. Sometimes the income of only the husband might not be okay for the family, so it is very important that the married woman also works outside the home to come and support what the husband brings home to prevent hardship, misunderstanding and conflicts. If husbands would encourage and motivate their wives to work outside the home, much of their collective income would be left to be committed to community development activities or projects”.

In support of the above opinion, Charles, a 36 year-old married man had this to say:

“Looking at the economic situation now, one work would not suffice for the livelihood of a family. Definitely, you would realize that if within a family it is only the man who works and bring the money, within a shortest possible time, the money would be exhausted. Perhaps, whether educated or not, married women can engage in petty trading or anything that can bring daily income to the family so that, hand in hand, they can pool their resources together to cater for their family and have some left to be spent on community development projects”.

Again, in agreeing to the above, some respondents made an assumption that if more than half of the population of the Assin North Municipality (51.4%).from the recent Population and Housing Census, are women then the socio-economic development of the Municipality had depended and should continue to depend on the contributions of women, especially married women even if it means taking up roles outside the home to support their husbands in taking care of the needs of the their families and community. Consequently, Theodora, a 42 year-old civil servant said:

“Looking at the economic situation in the country, the working wife supports her husband financially. An average man would tell you he cannot marry a

jobless woman because he alone cannot carry the whole financial burden of the family”.

In further agreement to the opinion above, Napoleon, a 47 year-old married man and a public servant linked the effects of the working wife to the development of the family and its members which is the basic unit of every society when he said:

“Now, we all know the economic conditions that we find ourselves in. It has become very difficult putting food on the table so married women who work outside the home bring in added income to shore up what the husband has been bringing home before. The working wife also knows more about the needs of her children because she interacts with them and she makes efforts to provide these needs before they become a problem. The significance of the working wife becomes more evident when her children grow and advance in their education and their financial demands also increase as the father could not meet financial obligations”.

Also, some participants were of the view that because of globalization, modernity and advancement in socio-economic development, women, especially married women should work outside the home to reflect the changing world. James, a 46 year-old married man made an observation thus:

“I believe they have to work because of changing times. Naturally, women play two roles: the productive roles and the reproductive roles, and we don’t expect them to put aside the reproductive roles. But, a married woman going outside to work, I think, is in the right direction. After all, she would earn income to help take care of the very family she is supposed to take care of”.

In further agreement to the above opinion, Cletus, a 38 year-old married man and a graduate teacher added:

“We are developing gradually from the lower income levels to middle income levels. But, once a country is in the lower income levels, the people are bound to face many financial challenges, so the women are supposed to work beyond the home to support the husband to be able to take care of the children, the home and what have you”?!

The aggregate of the above responses indicated that the married women should also work outside the home because of the difficult economic conditions. The economic conditions as mentioned above, refers to a period of unstable prices of consumer goods and services, high rate of inflation and energy crisis. Therefore, to the above group of participants, married women would have to take up roles outside the home setting in order to rope in extra income that would enable the family to afford quality health delivery, education, security, clean environment and to contribute to the development of the community.

Therefore, on the aggregate, responses given above indicate that most of the respondents were of the view that married women have to or should be allowed to take up roles outside the home in order to help, financially, to resolve one familial/communal problem or another.

4.3.3 Measures to be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development

Under this subsection, data was gathered on the measures to be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development. In view of the fact that a couple of conflicting and stereotypical perceptions have been discovered, there was a need for some measures to be suggested to help in making people cultivate a fair judgment of the roles married

women play in the development of their communities. Subsequently, questions such as “What measures should be adopted to make people have fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development?”; “How can people be made to recognize the roles married women do or do not play in the development of their community” were posed

4.3.3.1 Responses on measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development.

In responding to the question “**What measures should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development**”? participants indicated that the empowerment of women can help to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development. The opinion above was summarized by Cletus, a 38 year-old married man as follows:

“When there is a law demanding of married women to freely choose between community and domestic responsibilities, they would feel obliged to take up roles outside the home to earn income, not for themselves alone, but for the betterment of the whole family and, also to be able to contribute financially to the development of the community. That would make people in societies recognize and appreciate the roles that married women can play both in and outside the home all in interest of community development”.

Again, in responding to the above question, participants reported that education, in its many forms, especially education of the people can help to make them have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development. Therefore, Adiza, a 48 year-old married woman summarized the foregoing opinion as follows:

“Most Ghanaians are ignorant of what Community Development is all about, therefore, they must be educated on what it is and its importance to the people”.

Alberta, a 36 year-old married woman and a public servant, in support of the above view said,

“Through mass (public) education, people would be sensitized to be aware of the community development process and the participation of all the people, including married women”.

Also, in response to the question above, some participants indicated that the socialization of the youth on gender roles and responsibilities can also help in making the youth to grow up having a fair judgment of the roles of all community members, including married women, in community development. Zack a 35 year-old married man and a farmer expressed the above view like this:

“Because society determines what is acceptable and what is unacceptable, the primary socialization agents should make conscious efforts to impart what is relevant in order to enhance the perceptions of these youth about everything, including the roles that men and women play in every endeavour”.

4.3.3.2 Recognizing the developmental roles of married women

Views on how to make people recognize and appreciate the roles married women do or do not play in the development of their community, brought forth some interesting responses. Thus, the question above was posed. In reaction to the above, a number of measures were suggested, but prominent among them was education. In response to the above, Baaba, a twenty-eight year-old trader who also holds a certificate in technical and vocational training suggested that the education of the people of the

society and that of the women folk, especially married ones can help members of the society to recognize and appreciate the roles of married women in community development:

“When women are educated, they tend to know their rights; they stand up for them and decide on what they want and what they do not want. The minds of people should be sensitized in the area of the major roles that married women play when it comes to community development. Because it is believed that no single individual has all the knowledge in the head. A man or woman can be so gifted in a field or area and can also contribute his/her quota to the development of the community. So, I think married women should be brought on board to be educated and allowed to take part in decision-making”.

Typical of the above expressed opinion is a statement made, below by Kojo, a 25 year-old bachelor when he said:

“Most of Ghanaians are ignorant of what community development is all about because it is an emerging concept. Therefore, they must be educated on the concept and its importance to the people. Through mass (public) education, people can be sensitized to be aware of the community development process and the participation of all including married women”.

Again, in agreement to the above, Charles, a 36 year-old married man postulated that the education of the community members should have much emphasis placed on the education of our womenfolk so that together with the men, they contribute to the development of the community.

“We know a lot of married women who have made it big as far as the economic, social and political landscape in this country are concerned. So, the most important thing is to let our women be given quality education that

would ensure that they come up with ideas in contributing to the development of our community”.

Moreover, some respondents indicated that society would have to do away with prejudices and stereotyping which are outmoded and detrimental to society’s development, such as unnecessary unfairness, marginalization and discrimination against any group of people with regard to their age, sex, creed or ethnicity. For example, Ameyna, a 27 year-old unmarried man and a farmer had this to say:

“It is about time we started discarding some of these prejudices – prejudices which are unfair or prejudices which are contributing to high levels of marginalization in the society. People would have to be critical minded in their observation of the importance of what married women do both in and outside the home before expressing their opinions. ”

Consequently, from the foregoing opinions expressed about measures which should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development, it was concluded that, out of the handful of measures which were suggested, the major ones are women’s empowerment and mass (public) education, as well as the socialization process.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, significant and novel findings were identified, interpreted and discussed. The purpose of this study, as stated elsewhere in this report, was to investigate the perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development in the Assin North Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana. The findings of the present study have been discussed in relations to the findings of previous studies. In addition, explanations for contradictory findings have also been discussed.

5.2 People's Perceptions of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development

Under this section, the findings on the perceptions that the people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, have about the roles of married women in community development were discussed. The findings which were discussed include the fact that married women can effectively manage both family and community responsibilities only when there is a permissive, supportive and encouraging husband, that married women do not have the utmost freedom to pursue personal ambitions, unless they were permitted by their husbands and that married women are the least participatory in community development processes.

5.2.1 Married women can effectively manage both family and community responsibilities only if their husbands would support them

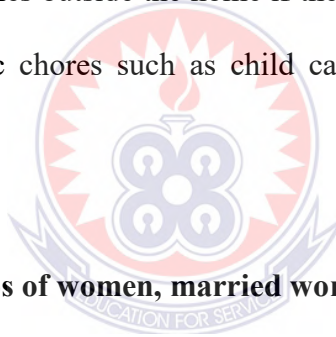
The analysis revealed that the people of Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas are of the perception that married women cannot effectively manage both family and community responsibilities unless they are supported and encouraged by their husbands. Respondents believed that the married women can participate in every economic activity in order to earn remuneration that would enable them to meet their personal needs and contribute to family and community projects (development). Lewis (2009) posited that young women are on similar footing with their male colleagues when it comes to career ambitions and expectations.

In contrast, Lewis's (2009) survey in 2008 concluded that roughly the same percentage of men and women believe in traditional roles, where about 42% of men and 39% of women agreed with the statement that it is better for everyone "if the husband earns the money and the wife takes care of the home and the children". But, it could be argued out that the perceptions expressed above could stem out of the type of marriage that a couple indulges in – the traditional breadwinner/home-maker type, the mixed or dual-career type or the egalitarian type. For example, if a couple practices the traditional breadwinner/home-maker type of marriage, then it would not be out of place to agree to the idea that it is better and widely acceptable if the man works outside the home to earn income which helps to procure almost all the needed items to make a better home, build a healthy family or enjoy a successful marriage, and the woman attends to the needs of the children (if there is any) and her husband, and make the home with the items provided.

Again, if it is the mixed or dual-career type of marriage, then it would be right to say that the married woman, like her husband, can work actively outside the home to

contribute to the welfare of the family. This, according to Dudleston et al (1999), can occur where the wife's work is less absorbing and demanding than the husband's. Thus, the wife takes more of the household tasks just as the husband contributes more in earnings to the care of the family.

However, if the couple lives in an egalitarian type of marriage, then both husband and wife should be engaged in equally absorbing and demanding jobs and are to make equal contribution in earnings toward the upkeep of the family and household tasks. In comparison, the breadwinner/homemaker type of marriage we have in our local settings would only allow the people of Assin Fosu and its surrounding areas to accept arrangements that would limit the married women to the perimeters of the home or enable them to take up roles outside the home if their husbands encourage, support or help with some domestic chores such as child care, cooking and washing, just to mention a few.



5.2.2 Unlike other groups of women, married women are less independent

to work outside the home unless they are permitted by their husbands

The analysis showed that, unlike other groups of women in the Municipality, married women are not very independent to work outside the home, unless they are permitted by their husbands. So, in effect, it was concluded that every married woman in the Municipality who works outside her matrimonial home must have obtained her husband's permission or blessing.

In permitting their wives to engage in any activity outside the home, husbands should be doing certain things to keep the family intact and on track, by doing some chores to help alleviate some of the burden off the shoulders of the wives (mothers) or provide certain things to make the work of the wives (mothers) easier and faster. Recent

findings by Lewis (2009) show that men are taking up more responsibility for their children's care when, in 2008, 49% of men said they take most or equal share of child care responsibilities, up from 41% in 1992. Women (including married women) agreed that their husbands are stepping up with 30% saying their spouse takes or shares the responsibilities, up from 21% in 1991.

Apart from child care arrangement, there is enough evidence to show that husbands are permitting their wives to engage in activities outside the home by taking the responsibilities of helping in some other areas of family life. Ghanaians, particularly those in the Assin North Municipality, are yet to witness the fact that 'it has become socially acceptable for men to be and say that they are involved in child care, cooking and cleaning as has been the case in other places over the past decades', Lewis (2009).

However, it is also clear that, looking at the economic situation in Africa, now, it would be prudent that wives are allowed to take up paid-jobs in order to help raise the family income at all times so as to be able to raise their standard of living and also contribute to community development through financial means. This explanation gains support from the suggestion made by the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) of the UNDP that the more the women in our local communities are empowered, the higher the gains in earnings, which can help to develop other human resources (Huh, 2011, p. 389). The explanation to the findings above is in agreement with Blee and Tickamyer (2001) who concluded that husbands are increasingly allowing their wives to work outside the home because of the financial gains it brings to bear on the family's standard of living. The obvious is that, even if the wife's earnings are less than half of the man's income, it adds up to make them afford things they could not afford before, such as having their children in schools of their choice

and also to financially and materially contribute to community development activities. Here, it was realized that the female respondents were very influential than the males. These results are a reflection of the trends in historical accounts, where women's movement activists like Emmeline Pankhurst, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were influenced by the Quaker theology of spiritual equality, which asserted that men and women are equal under God (Gerda, 1993; Taylor, 1999), to have more to say on issues of equal rights and opportunities, in favour of women, than males. This is a clear case of telling the story of females, by females and for females. However, there are pro-feminist groups who support feminism without implying that they are members of the feminist movement and vice versa. (www.amazoncastle.com/feminism/ecocult.shtml): accessed on April 28, 2004.

To some men, the roles of married women should either be in the household or outside, while to others, the two can concur. But, as culture demands, the traditional roles between men and women have undergone some changes which make dual-career partnership in marriage acceptable for some communities or people. Attitudes toward married women in the family and married women in employment may form an underlying dimension of gender beliefs among some men, but be separable dimensions among others. Thus, African-American men may hold more liberal attitudes than white men about married women's employment, but share similar or more conservative attitudes toward household division of labour and women's roles within the family (Blee & Tickamyer, 2001). This is a confirmation of Hunter and Davies's (1992) argument that African-American manhood is generated from the synthesis between "family role expectation grounded in patriarchy and the comparatively egalitarian work and family roles in Afro-American families".

Also, studies of women and girls have found racial differences in the definition of appropriate feminine gender roles, with African-American women and girls more likely than their White counterparts to see paid employment as compatible with maternal and familial responsibilities (Collins, 1987, 1990; King, 1988; Herring & Wilson-Sadberry, (1993).

5.2.3 Married women are the least participatory of all groups of women in the community development process.

The analysis in chapter four above showed that most of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the above findings which suggest that other groups of women, such as the single, divorced and widowed, are more involved in community development activities than married women. These findings are consistent with Omartian's (2001) survey of wives that women voted motherhood as one of their top three needs for prayer, saying that one of the most worrisome aspects of parenting is finding the perfect balance between being a good mother and being a good wife. Omartian (2001) went on to report that no matter what happens to a woman's husband, her children need her for everything, and the younger they are, the more they need her. Hence, the need for the married woman to stay back at home and take care of the needs of the family, which makes her directly less active in the community development process. Again, the findings of the present study are in consonance with Sabarwal & Sinha (2009); UNRISD (2010); and Bhaumik et al (2011) who reported that if it is difficult to employ women, in general, in the formal sector, then it becomes almost impossible to employ married women into it because of the possible divided attention that they may experience between domestic responsibilities, coupled with inflexible working terms, and the job. The above purported divided attention may render the

contributions of the married woman to the formal sector as to community activities ineffective and inefficient.

Also, the findings of this study agrees with Pedrero's (1996) position that an unmarried female head of household has more responsibilities as she must earn a living and, at the same time, manage a home. This implies that other groups of women, other than the married ones, are active both in and outside the home. Thus, they contribute more to community development processes than married women. In the light of the foregoing, it was concluded that other groups of women such as the single, divorced and widowed are more involved in community development activities than married women in Assin Fosu and its surrounding towns and villages of the Assin North Municipality.

5.3 Reasons that Explain People's Perceptions of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development

The findings of the present study revealed that the reasons that explain people's perceptions about the roles of married women in community development are educationally, culturally, biologically and religiously related.

The above findings conforms to UNDP's (1991) observation that, in some communities, rigid social and cultural patterns, traditions, prejudices, stereotypes and the unwillingness on the part of families often results in restricting women's movements outside the home and limiting their access to educational training, and subsequently, working in the science and technical vocations, making most of these women to opt for less absorbing and demanding, and the less promising careers, thereby, worsening the gender segregation in the labour market. Consequently, the level of contributions of married women to community development cannot be

significantly substantial as compared to what other groups of women and men do or what the married women themselves do in the homestead.

In agreement to the findings of this study, the UNDP (1995) posited that married women's lives are largely affected by reproduction, which has an incisive and direct consequence on their health and on their educational, employment and earning opportunities. The findings of the UNDP (1995) also reveals that, in societies where women marry very young and much earlier than men, wives rely more on husbands, and this has a substantial bearing on their chances of finding paid work and getting educated, or even participating in activities in the larger society in contribution to community's development.

Also, the findings of this study conforms to that of the UNDP (1995) which reveals that, biologically, men and women have different health needs, but lifestyles and socially ascribed roles arising from prevailing social and cultural patterns also play a part in the whole picture.

Furthermore, findings of this study suggest that more males than females have had tertiary education which is the highest point in formal education. Formal education provides the requirement for higher standards of living for women, especially married women and for improving their families' socio-economic statuses (GSS, 1994; 1999; and 2002). Academicians have complained locally and internationally that the continuous inequality in female access to formal and relevant education is the main cause of women congregating in certain professions often referred to as feminine, resulting in most married women being engaged in vocations that they could do alongside their household chores (Ngaaso, n.d.). Such vocations as mentioned above do not attract higher remunerations, thus, affecting the income of these married women and how much they can commit to community development projects.

Consequently, Ngaaso (n.d.) agrees that improving women's access to quality education and skills training will help to improve their situation and enhance their capacity to contribute to community development.

From the foregoing, it was concluded that people's perceptions about the roles of married women in community development in Ghana, and the Assin North Municipality in particular, have social, cultural, biological and religious connotation attached to them.

5.4 Measures that should be Adopted to make People have a Fair Judgment of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development.

Under this section, suggestions that were made by respondents as to what should be done to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development were discussed in order to draw conclusions in relations to findings of other people's work in a related area.

5.4.1 Education, Women Empowerment and Socialization of the People, the Panacea to make People have a Fair Judgment of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development.

The analysis showed that education can significant impact on people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development. According to the Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2010), 'Education' refers to the process of teaching or learning in a school or college, or the knowledge one gets from this process.

Perception, according to Wikipedia (2010), refers to a set of beliefs or opinions held in a society and based on how things look. Therefore, people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development may only refer to the set of

beliefs and opinions, often held by a large group of people, about the roles of married women in the development of their communities.

Blee & Tickamyer (2001) found out in a study that more highly educated people hold consistently more liberal attitudes toward married women's gender roles than less educated ones. This implies that, because participants of this study are fairly educated, they had little or no problem understanding the demands of the questions or interview. Therefore, based on the level of knowledge shown by the respondents of this study, it is just in the right direction to note that if education has a significant influence on the perceptions expressed then it would equally help the people to cultivate a fair judgment of the roles that married women play in the development of their communities.

The findings of the present study also showed that, among other things, education and sensitization of the people of a community would help to make them have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development. It was suggested somewhere in this study that education needs to go to the general public and to women, especially, of what community development refers to, its importance to the people and the major stakeholders thereof. It is believed that it is only when the people have fair ideas or knowledge of issues of community development that they would be in position to acknowledge, appreciate and cultivate a fair judgment of the roles that all members of the community (including married women) play in such a process as the community development. Lim (2012) believes that education in its many forms is the key to solving numerous social problems and it tends to open up new opportunities to people so that they would in turn help to make the society comfortable and safe place to live in. So, as more women get more educated, they are likely to be active in public activities or represent various groups in decision-making

and that would definitely result in some adjustments in the perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development.

Blee & Tickamyer (2001), in a study, found out that more highly educated people hold consistently more liberal attitudes about married women's gender roles than less educated ones. In a research, Lim (2012) found that females have limited access to education. That is the reason why this study suggests that much of the education to sensitize the people must be directed to women. Looking at Table 4.5 in chapter four, it could be seen that about sixty-two of the male respondents, representing 32.5% of total respondents, and just thirty-seven of females, representing 19.4% of total respondents have had tertiary education.

The education of the people can also be taken from the early stages of the individual's life through the socialization process so that he or she grows up knowing what are accepted as relevant knowledge, perception and attitudes in the community. Again, here, the women have a role to play in making it worthwhile. Blee & Tickamyer (2001) and Weitzman (1979), in agreement to the finding of the present study, reported that because children model their behaviours on those of significant others, mothers, being primary figures for most children, will significantly influence the future perceptions of these children towards all phenomena such as the roles of all people, especially married women, in community development.

One of the demands of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is the achievement of equality between the sexes in decision-making and power sharing. According to a UNDP Report (1995), there is a strong correlation across Africa between women's access to power and decision-making and their lower status. In confirming the above claim, UNDP (1995) and Tsikata (2001) reiterated that representation of women in decision-making at the national levels show gender

imbalance with men dominating the various national assemblies, cabinets and national officialdom of political parties. As a result, women were relegated to the background, making their contributions to community development insignificant or unrecognized among the people of a community. Based on the above revelation about the status of women, especially married women, there would always be the need for some measures to be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development. Consequently, according to Ngaaso, (n.d.), some people believe that the empowerment of women is one measure which is most suitable for that purpose. The empowerment of women concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives by creating awareness, building self-confidence and expanding their choices. It also involves increased access to and control over factors of production and actions to transform the structures and institutions which support and encourage gender discrimination and inequality. The empowerment of women would help to involve our married women especially in our community's development which would, in turn, attract positive perceptions and judgment about the roles of married women in community development.

However, if care is not taken, the empowerment of women can be taken to a certain heights which can make the whole process be seen as a zero-sum game where gains for women automatically imply losses to men, a catalyst for the eruption of misunderstanding, disagreement and conflict between men and women, especially married couples.

From the foregoing, it was concluded that the empowerment of women is one of few measures that can be adopted to make people cultivate and maintain a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development in Ghana, and the Assin North Municipality in particular.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the present study have been summarized. In addition, recommendations and limitations have been given. Also, conclusions have been drawn and, finally, suggestions for future research were made.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The findings of the present study showed the perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development. Also, the findings of the present study revealed the reasons that explain perceptions that people have about the roles of married women in community development. Finally, findings of the present study also suggest measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development. The findings are:

1. Married women can effectively manage both family and community responsibilities only when there is a permissive, supportive and encouraging husband.
2. Married women do not have the utmost freedom to pursue personal ambitions in the Municipality, unless they were permitted by their husbands.
3. Married women are the least participatory in community development processes.

4. The people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development were explained through educational, cultural, biological and religious reasons.
5. Women's empowerment, education and sensitization of the people as well as the socialization of the youth were suggested as the prominent among other measures to be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development.

6.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The stakeholders of Ghana's education system should make conscious and sustained efforts to develop and infuse gender sensitive programmes into the existing curriculum to help eradicate gender stereotyping among our school children so that they grow up knowing that gender roles, unlike sex roles, should not discriminate between the sexes.
2. The mass media should see it as a matter of great importance to educate the masses on the inevitability of the process of community development and the importance of the roles and contributions of every member of the community.
3. Families should socialize the youth in such a way that would make them grow up knowing that gender roles, unlike sex roles, should not differentiate between males and females.
4. Community and Local Government authorities should make efforts to introduce more family-friendly communal activities to help married women, in particular, to be able to efficiently manage the dual roles of family and community responsibilities.

6.3 Conclusions

On the basis of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

- i. That, in spite of their family responsibilities, married women in the Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, can be much involved in community development.
- ii. That, married men in the Assin Fosu, and its surrounding areas, need to help with the household duties if their wives would have to be more participatory in activities of the larger community.
- iii. Modification of social norms and cultural practices would allow married women more access to community activities thereby helping to shape people's perceptions of the roles of married women in community development in the Fosu Municipality.
- iv. Education and sensitization of the people are the measures that should be adopted in the Fosu Municipality, and surrounding areas, to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of married women in community development.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The study was limited to just the Assin North Municipality, and its surrounding areas, in the Central Region of Ghana. Therefore, the findings may not be applicable to the whole region or entire country. Again, due to the academic time constrains, the study was limited to a manageable sample size of 200 respondents. Consequently, it is suggested that, a study like the present one be conducted on a larger scale and with a bigger sample size:

- a) To confirm or refute the present findings, and
- b) To make a generalization covering the whole region or the entire country.

6.6 Limitations

The qualitative method is new to this researcher, so it was applied with a lot of caution, thus, delaying the compilation of the report. However, in view of the above limitations, the validity and reliability of the findings and conclusions were not compromised. It is also hoped that with consistent practice, the usage of the qualitative method would be easier and more comfortable in the future.



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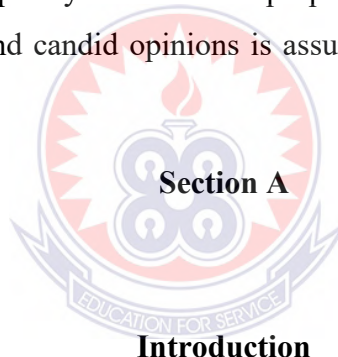


APPENDIX A

INFORMATION TO BE GATHERED ON THE REASONS THAT EXPLAIN PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE MARRIED WOMAN IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS MEASURES TO BE ADOPTED TO MAKE PEOPLE HAVE A FAIR JUDGMENT OF THE ROLES OF MARRIED WOMEN IN SUCH A PROCESS

Interview guide

An interview to be conducted to ascertain the reasons that explain the perception that people have about the roles of married women in community development and the measures that should be adopted to make people have a fair judgment of the roles of the married woman in such a process. The interview will be conducted at the convenience of the respondent, especially at work, during break periods. It will explain that this study is purely for academic purposes. Therefore, the confidentiality of respondent's honest and candid opinions is assured. The interview is supposed to last for 20-25 minutes.



BIO DATA

Introduction

The researcher will introduce himself to the respondent and ask the respondent to do same, willingly and honestly. E.g. I am Mr.(.....), an M. Phil student from the University of Education , Winneba, conducting a research on the perception that people have about the role of married women in community development. As such, I will like to ask you a few questions that will help me to finish this study.

1. Tell me about yourself.

E.g. Respondent's name (not very important), age, gender, marital status, educational background, religious background, type of locality, etc.

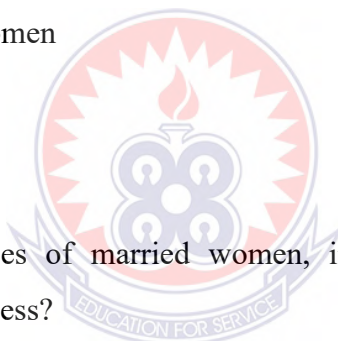
Section B

General views on Community Development

2. Have you heard about the term “Community Development” before?
3. What is your understanding of the term “Community Development”?
4. How is community development important to the economy of your community?
5. Who are the main actors in Community Development in your society?

Views on People’s Perceptions of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development

6. Which group of women has been more participatory in Community Development activities in your community so far?
 - (a) Married Women
 - (b) Unmarried Women
 - (c) Widows
 - (d) Divorcees
7. What are the roles of married women, in particular, in the Community Development process?
8. (a) How do people generally perceive married women taking up roles outside the home?
 - (b) Why?
9. Can a married woman effectively manage both family and community responsibilities?
10. Do you feel married women have been left out or involved in the Community Development process in your community?
11. Please give reasons for your answer
12. What activities would you like to see married women do in the Community Development process?



Views on the Reasons that Explain People's Perception of the Roles of the Married Woman in Community Development

13. In your view, why do people regard women, but not men, as home-makers?
14. Why are married women supposed to stay at home and take care of the needs of their family?
15. Why are married women supposed to also work outside the home?

Views on measures to Be Adopted to Make People have a Fair Judgment of the Roles of Married Women in Community Development

16. How can people be made to recognize the role married women do or do not play in the development of their community?
17. Do you think married women should be given similar opportunities as men and other groups of women (spinsters, divorcees, or widows) to be leaders in the community?
18. If 'yes', how?
19. If 'no', why not?



Conclusion

The researcher will ask if the respondent has any question or suggestion to make on the topic. If there is no question or suggestion to be made, the researcher will thank the respondent for making time to take part in the interview. However, if there is any question or suggestion, one or two minutes will be allowed the respondent for that purpose.

NOTE: *Probes will be used for clarifications of issues raised on the topic which are not very clear*