UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

GENDER ROLES AND FEMINIZATION OF POVERTY: 
THE CASE OF NADWOLI IN THE UPPER WEST REGION OF 
GHANA

BY

JUSTICE PATERNUS SABOGU (BA. Integrated Development Studies) 
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DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

NOVEMBER, 2014
DECLARATION

Candidate

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

Signature: .................................................. Date: 11/11/2014
Name: Justice Paternus Sabogu

Supervisor

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

Signature: .................................................. Date: 14-11-2014
Name: Dr. Cuthbert Baatar
ABSTRACT

This study seeks to examine the influence of gender division of labour in household arrangements on poverty feminization taking Nadowli in the Upper West Region as a case study. A qualitative case study design was employed to investigate the nature and influence of gender roles on poverty feminization. The study was descriptive, cross-sectional and non-interventional. A quota sampling technique was used to select 100 respondents (women and men) from Nadowli who were interviewed and administered with questionnaires. The findings revealed that the gender role activities of men are productive in nature and are mostly performed outside the home while the gender role activities of women are reproductive in nature which mostly limit women to the home. It emerged that the gender reproductive roles of women, coupled with illiteracy and inability to take independent decisions account for the gender differences in poverty. Women reproductive roles are time consuming, non-rewarding in monetary terms and prevent women from undertaking certain income generating activities. The gender reproductive roles of women affect negatively the socio-economic status of women since these gender role activities affect the educational and occupational activities of women. The study concluded that, specifically, gender reproductive roles of women account for the feminisation of poverty. For poverty reduction strategies to yield meaningful results, serious coordinated efforts should be made towards realigning the gendered roles of men and women.
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DEDICATION

In memory of my dad, Fabian Sabogu Darison, who sowed in tears but could not reap with joy.
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ACRONYMS

ADB- Asian Development Bank
AfDB- African Development Bank
AFRC - Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AIDS- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AU- African Union
CPP - Convention People’s Party
DAI- Development Alternatives International
DSW- Department of Social Welfare
GDP- Gross Domestic Product
GLSS- Ghana Living Standards Survey
GNP- Gross National Product
GoG – Government of Ghana
GPRS- Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GSGD- Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
GSS- Ghana Statistical Service
HIV- Human Immune Virus
HPI- Human Poverty Index
IDG- International Development Goals
IDIs- In-depth Interviews
ILO- International Labour Organization
IULA- International Union of Local Authorities
MDG – Millennium Development Goals
MESW- Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment, Ghana
MOWAC- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MSE- Medium and Small-Scale Enterprise
MTDP- Medium Term Development Plan
NAO- National Audit Office
NDC - National Democratic Congress
NHIS- National Health Insurance Scheme
NLC - National Liberation Council
NPP - New Patriotic Party
NRC - National Redemption Council
NSPS- National Social Protection strategy
OVC- Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PA- Participatory Approach
PAMSCAD- Programme of Action to Mitigate Social Consequences of Adjustment
PHC- Population and Housing Census
PNDC - Provisional National Defence Council
PNP - People’s National Party
PP - Progress Party
SAP- Structural Adjustment Programme
SES- Socioeconomic Status
SMC - Supreme Military Council
SPSS- Statistical Package for Social Scientist
SSA- Sub-Saharan Africa

UN – United Nations

UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF- United Nations Child Fund

USAID- United States Agency for International Development
1.0 Introduction to the Study

The increased focus on gender and development debate has been phenomenal in development circles over the last few decades. The global realization that failure to pay closer attention to the differentiated positions of women and men in society (in terms of roles, resource allocation, rights, and opportunities) in formulating policies and designing projects can have adverse impact on development outcomes. This understanding underpinned the broad unanimity around the Beijing Platform for Action and was ratified by 189 governments and leaders of key international institutions at the 4th UN International Conference on Women in 1995 held in Beijing (United Nations, 2007). The importance of gender equality as one of the preconditions for poverty reduction was further acknowledged as the world leaders assent to a set of time-bound and measurable goals and targets, called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to halve poverty and hunger, ensure universal primary schooling, reduce child and maternal mortality and infectious diseases, improve environmental sustainability and achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. At the World Summit in 2005, Governments of Africa and other regions and international development organizations, reaffirmed their commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment as essential to development, peace and security (United Nations, 2007).

The Millennium Development Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (MDG.3) is recognized not only as a goal in itself
but also as an essential step for achieving all other goals. Paragraph 58 of the World Summit Outcome Document of 2005 articulates the resolution of world leaders to eliminate pervasive gender discriminations in primary and secondary education, property and housing rights, access to reproductive health, access to labour markets, sustainable employment and labour protection and representation in government decision-making bodies as well as elimination of all forms of violence against women and the girl child. Evidence suggests that gender equality and empowerment of women are pivotal for achieving other MDGs. – universal primary education (MDG.2); lower under-five mortality (MDG4); improved maternal health (MDG5) and lower likelihood of contracting HIV/AIDS (MDG.6) (UN Millennium Project, 2005).

Over the last three decades gender issues and women’s empowerment have attained greater public prominence and attention on global, regional, and national level development agendas resulting in modest and uneven achievements in most regions in general, and in Sub Sahara Africa (SSA) in particular. For instance, there are now more girls in primary and secondary schools compared to the situation three decades ago (United Nations, 2009). Advancement has also been made in policy and legal reforms and institutional arrangements at both regional and national levels (United Nations, 2009).

The African Union (AU), on July 11 2003, espoused the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa; an auxiliary protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, which was adopted in 1981. The Protocol fills a major fissure in the regional human rights system and requires the protection of the rights of women in reproductive health, violence against woman
elimination of all forms of harmful traditional practices including early marriage and female genital mutilation, and equal right to education and training (Amnesty International, 2005). Protection of women's economic and social rights, calls for women's equal access to employment and equal pay for jobs of equal value, the right to inherit property, the right to equal share of matrimonial property at the time of divorce, ensure women's equal access to and control over productive resources and guarantee their property rights, promote and support the occupations and economic activities of women within the informal sector, establish system of protection and social insurance for women working in the informal sector and take necessary measures to recognize the economic value of women's work (Amnesty International, 2005).

While these developments and attainments are important, there is a growing realization that gender equality and empowerment of women has not been fully integrated into policy formulation and project design (United Nations, 2009). Consequently, considerable gaps between men and women in education attainment, economic opportunities, voices and decision-making and wellbeing are persistent in many parts of Africa (United Nations, 2009; UNESCO, 2008). This has transcended in uneven progress in the fight against poverty. An important achievement in recent years has been the recognition by governments that there is a gender dimension to poverty. That is, men and women experience poverty differently, become poor through different processes and face different vulnerabilities and risks (Development Alternative International-DAI, 2005).
1.1 Problem Statement

In the Millennium Declaration 2000, the world 189 member countries unanimously agreed to help poor countries of the world to achieve a better life by the end of year 2015. In this Millennium Declaration, it was decided by the world leaders to design a framework for progress comprising eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The first MDG proposes the elimination of severe poverty globally, and has been formulated as the goal of ‘halving the proportion of people with an income level below $1 a day between 1990 and 2015’. This has brought global poverty monitoring to the forefront of the international policy arena.

Poverty reduction is now a global agenda. Implementation of policies and programmes both at the international and national levels towards fighting poverty has resulted in significant reductions in income poverty levels in the world over. Existing global poverty assessments base on the 2005 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) indicates 805.9 million people live under $1 a day as at the year 2008 representing 14.6% of the World’s population. This shows a significant drop from 41.6% representing 1545.3 million as at 1981. Sub-Saharan Africa experienced a drop from 40.4% (160.8 million) to 37.3% (302.8 million) within the same period (World Bank Report, 2006).

However, these achievements in the fight against poverty are at aggregate levels. At the global level, international agencies assert that about 60-70% of the world’s poor are females, and that there is a greater tendency for poverty among women to deepen despite the fact that global poverty seems to be declining (UNDP, 1995; UN, 1996; AfDB, 2000).
During the 1980s and 1990s, structural adjustment was in vogue in developing countries, which supposedly was to lead to economic stabilization and growth with a consequent positive impact on poverty reduction. The short-run social costs of the adjustment were too harsh to endure. Undoubtedly, the call for putting a "human face" on adjustment by some non-governmental organizations and some United Nations agencies was heeded to when towards the close of the 1990s consensus was reached between the donor community, the United Nations and the developing countries on the International Development Goals (IDG) which have the principal objective of reducing by half the percentage of persons living in severe poverty by 2015 (Sowa, 2002).

Ghana was among the first countries to attempt to put a “human face” to structural adjustment. In 1987, the Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Consequences of Adjustment (PAMSCAD) was introduced. Since then, a number of programmes and policies targeted at poverty reduction have been introduced; some with a limited mandate targeted at a specific vulnerable group (Sowa, 2002).

Consequently, Ghana had a reduction in the national poverty prevalence rates since then. The number of persons living in severe poverty fell from about 36.5% in 1991/92 to about 18.2% in 2005/2006 and reduced the proportion of the population below the upper poverty line from its high level of 51.7% in 1991/92 to 28.5% in 2005/06 (GSS, 2007). However, what happen at the national level did not replicate in all regions and among all vulnerable groups. Distributional issues come in when dealing with different localities and socio-economic groups as well as gender. Specifically, the situation is not palatable on gender basis. The reduction in poverty has not
affected men and women equally. In Ghana, poverty among women has increased from around 25.7% in 1960 to over 33% in 2003 (Wrigley-Asante, 2008). Poverty seems to increasingly feminize: majority of female-headed households (61 per cent of urban and 53 per cent of rural) fall into the poorest quintile of the population, which is an indication of the feminization of poverty. In particular, they are less literate, face heavier time burdens and are less likely to utilize productive resources (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2006; GSS 2005a; 2005b; CEDAW, 2005; GoG, 2003 and Brown, 1994 as cited in Amuzu et al., 2010).

Further disaggregation of poverty data at the national level shows extreme poverty in the Savannah regions of Ghana. It appears these regions have not been touched by any of the poverty reduction policies and programmes at all. Particularly in the Upper West region, poverty increased from 83.9% in 1998/9 to 87.9% in 2005/6. Extreme poverty also increased from 68.3% to 79.0% within the same period (GSS, 2007). According to Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy I (2003), females represent 50.5 per cent of the total population in Ghana, and evidence suggests that regions with incidence of minimum drop (or gaining increases) in poverty levels (Central, Eastern, Northern, Upper East and Upper West) also tend to have female population in the range of 50-52 per cent. Incidentally, these regions also tend to have greater population concentrations in the rural areas where poverty is endemic (GSS, 2005a; 2012).

This further suggests that, in terms of gender dimension, poverty in Ghana including the Nadowli District may have a woman face. The connection of gender and poverty is obviously characterized by the expression
"feminization of poverty." It corresponds to the fact that women, compared to men, have a higher incidence of poverty; women's poverty is more severe than men's and over time the incidence of poverty among women is increasing compared to men:

"...Gender inequalities in the distribution of income, access to productive inputs such as credit, command over property or control over earned income, as well as gender biases in labour markets and social exclusion that women experience in a variety of economic and political institutions form the basis for the greater vulnerability of women to chronic poverty... (Cagatay, 1998, p.8)"

The dynamics of economic, social, cultural, political and environmental forces create situations which widens the gulf between the rich and poor, the powerful and the powerless, haves and the have-nots, the strong and the weak and in this case men and women.

To deal with the poverty situation especially in northern Ghana, successive governments since independence (1957) have attempted variety of anti-poverty social protection programmes, however, with less visible impact (Botchway 2001:51). Besides, there are a good number of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in northern Ghana particularly in Nadowli implementing programmes/projects especially to alleviate and empower women (Department of Social Welfare, 2005). With these varied poverty reduction programmes/projects (from both governments and NGOs), why is poverty in the Upper West Region especially among women in Nadowli still
on the increase? Varied reasons ranging from the conception of such programmes through to the design and implementation are held for this. For instance, Agyepong and AgyeiMensah (2008:158) and Batterbury and Fernando (2006:1856) are of the view that most of these interventions come about as a fulfilment of campaign promises by politicians and they always tend to lack commitment from the side of these politicians on one hand and ownership from that of communities/beneficiaries on the other hand. Also, Mansuri and Rao (2004: 23, 24 & 30) and Crook (2003:85) pointed local elites capture and role of external agents and the state among factors why most development programmes fail as community initiatives are usually designed by a central authority that sets the basic parameters and the mechanisms for disbursing funds and also the preference of the poor, the supposed beneficiaries of such programmes not being adequately considered in project selection. Also Aryeetey and Goldstein (2000:302) mentioned general lack of participation in social policies/programmes as some of the causes of programme failures.

A hypothesis on the high incidence and severity of poverty among women, and consequently the failure of most programmes to salvage them out of poverty in the district hinges on the gendered roles associated with women. Significant attention has not been given to the linkages between poverty and gender roles in household arrangements. That is, what and how men and women spend their time on daily bases. The socially constructed roles of men and women are different in society. Considering the significance and the characteristics of the non-market unpaid work (reproductive activities), income generating activities (productive activities) and the time spent
dynamics of these activities; gender roles have significant influence on poverty feminization. This study therefore seeks to examine how gendered roles in household arrangements accounts for poverty feminization.

1.2 Research Questions and Objectives

1.2.1 Main Research Question

In view of the above problem, the research will try to answer among others the following questions:

Main Research Question

How do gender roles influence poverty feminization in Nadowli?

Specific Research Questions

1. What is the gender roles status quo in Nadowli?
2. What accounts for gender differences in poverty levels in Nadowli?
3. How do gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women in Nadowli?
4. How can gender roles be realigned to engender poverty reduction among women?

1.2.2 Research Objectives

Main Objective

The study seeks to examine how gender roles influence poverty feminization in Nadowli in the Upper West Region of Ghana.
Specific Objectives

1. To examine the gender roles status quo in Nadowli.

2. To identify the factors that account for gender differences in poverty levels in Nadowli.

3. To examine how gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women in Nadowli.

4. To examine how gender roles could be realigned to engender poverty reduction among women.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Poverty reduction among women in the Upper West Region obviously will have positive impact on balanced rural development. This study is significant in that it evaluated the hidden factors that appear to be keeping women in poverty. This is because the various strategies adopted to tackle women poverty alleviation in the past did not appear to yield much positive outcome in the district. It is therefore expected that at the end of the study, the report would be a valuable document that would help interested stakeholders and government agencies to reappraise their strategies as well as guide future policy makers towards a more practical and effective approach to women poverty reduction efforts.

The study is also significant in that it would stimulate further research into the concept of gender roles and women poverty reduction and how development agencies could be re-positioned or repackaged to fight poverty among the women population that reside in Nadowli.
The result of the study would also serve as a source of information or reference materials for local, national and international agencies and those who would want women of Nadowli, and Ghana at large to move out of their present poverty situation.

1.4 Delimitation of the Study

This study primarily focused on the influence of gender roles on poverty feminization. Geographically, the study was situated at Nadowli District in the Upper West Region and was limited to Nadowli, the District capital.

The study focused mainly on the following key issues: the nature and status quo of gender roles within Nadowli, it also focused on the factors that account for gender differences in poverty levels in Nadowli; it further explored how gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women in Nadowli; and finally the research tried to examine how gender roles could be realigned to engender poverty reduction among women.

1.5 Operationalization of Terms

Gender

According to the American Psychological Association (2011), gender refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex. Gender concerns how a person’s biology is culturally valued and interpreted into locally accepted ideas of what it is to be a woman or man (Reeves and Baden, 2000). Behaviour that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviours that are
viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity. Thus gender in this study refers to a set of characteristics that are considered to distinguish between men and women through processes of social and cultural constructions.

**Gender Roles**

Gender roles are learned behavioural norms and practices in a given society or community, or other special group, that condition which activities, tasks and responsibilities are deemed appropriate for men and women.

**Productive Roles**

Refer to activities carried out by men and women to produce goods and services either for sale, exchange, or to meet the subsistence needs of the family. They reflect any economic activity in the formal (public and or private) and informal sectors of the economy that people earn income from.

**Reproductive roles**

Reproductive roles relates to issues of procreation or rearing responsibilities and domestic roles required to reproduce and maintain the human capital. They include childbearing, cooking, fetching water, collecting of fire wood, cleaning of house, washing of dishes and cloths and caring for children, the aged and the sick.

**Community Management Roles**

Community management roles consist of those activities undertaken by men and women to provide for and maintain the scarce resources of collective consumption. Examples include building communal markets, schools and clinics on a voluntary, unpaid basis.
Community Politics Role

These are constituency-based political activities undertaken by men and women at community, local, national and sometimes international levels. These political activities are undertaken on behalf of customary structures, party politics or lobby or advocacy groups.

Femininity and Feminization

Femininity refers to a set of attributes, behaviours and roles which are common or intense among women. Femininity is made up of both socially defined and biologically created factors. An action or a process of becoming more feminine is feminization.

Poverty

Poverty is a lack of resources, capabilities or freedoms (Medeiros and Costa, 2008). Poverty in this context is considered as income deprivation or inadequacy of income to meet basic needs using poverty lines as thresholds.

Poverty Feminization

Poverty feminization describes a situation in which women represent disproportionate percentages of the poor. In other words, it describes the phenomenon where poverty has a “woman face”.

1.6 Organization of Study

Chapter one gives a brief background to the study, the research problem, research questions, objectives, and rationale for carrying the study.
Chapter two focuses on the conceptual and theoretical framework and relevant literature that gives an overview of issues that pave the way for a clearer understanding of the research problem and identifies the knowledge gap this study seeks to fill.

Chapter three describes and justifies the research methodology used to provide answers to the research questions. It highlighted the choice and the appropriateness of the research methods used to collect data from respondents. It discussed how the sample size was arrived at and the sampling techniques used. It further described how data was collected and analysed.

Chapter four presents and discusses the findings of the research. It juxtaposes the findings against previous research works; bringing out areas of similarity and differences and draws conclusions from the information recorded in the literature review. The conclusions established the views of the respondents on how gender roles influenced poverty feminization.

The last chapter (chapter five) summarises the main findings of the study, raised questions and ideas for further research. It also made some recommendations to address issues of poverty feminization.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Literature review is an evaluative report of studies found in the literature related to your selected area. It gives a theoretical basis for the research and determines the nature of the research (Boote and Beile, 2005). Literature review "justifies the importance of the study and creates distinctions between past studies and the proposed study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 81). Creswell (2003) further explains that review of literature introduces results of other studies that are closely related to the study being reported, relates a study to a larger ongoing discourse around an area of research thereby filling gaps and extending findings of earlier research, provides a benchmark for comparing the results of a study to other findings as well as establishes the importance of a study. In referring to Creswell (2003), Mattern (2010) deduces that literature review is not a rehash of what others have done or said but a critical review in support of arguments a writer makes. This chapter reviews existing literature on the specific study areas of gender roles and poverty feminization from a global, regional and national perspective. The study looks at the broader view of different opinions related to the topic of gender roles and poverty feminization. It also discusses the theories and concepts that underpin gender roles and poverty feminization.
2.1 Society and Gender Roles

Gender is a network of beliefs, personality traits, attitudes, feelings, values, behaviours and activities differentiating men and women through a process of social construction that has a number of distinctive features (Beneria and Roldan, 1987). Gender identity determines how individuals are perceived, and how they are expected to think and act as women and men, because of the way society is organised. To enhance efficiency and aid continued existence, every known society divides and specializes labour tasks to some extent and these divisions of labour has knowingly or unknowingly been done along sex lines where men carry out tasks that take them outside the home and women are largely restricted to homecare, childbearing and childrearing (Leavitt, 1971). Gender roles are the set of social and behavioural norms that are usually regarded suitable for a man or a woman in an interpersonal relationship. According to Anselmi and Law (1998), gender roles are socially and culturally defined prescriptions and beliefs concerning the behaviour and emotions of men and women.

Gender roles (or gender division of labour) varies from one society and culture to another, and within each culture, it also changes with external circumstances and over time and context. Gender roles are learned through socialization processes as parents, extended relations, teachers and all other persons they interact with in society, consciously or unconsciously, defined and prescribed roles for the different sexes. These roles are affected by age, class, race, ethnicity, religion and can change by the geographical, economic and political environment. Gender-based division of labour, in a given socio-economic setting, establishes the specific activities that men and women
essentially do. Men and women play different roles, and are often faced with varied cultural, institutional, physical and economic restraints (Kwapong 2009; March et al, 1999).

Moser (1993) as cited in Mtshali (1999); Kwapong (2009); and March, Smyth and Mukhopadhyay, (1999) have categorised gender roles as reproductive, productive and community roles (community management roles and community politics). Both men and women play multiple roles in society. However, the gendered roles of women mainly fall under reproductive and community managing roles, while men’s roles are categorized as either productive or community politics (Kwapong, 2009). In a society, gender plus other factors such as religion and ethnicity have strong influence in determining the control and access to resources. These factors hinder or promote the development of a society.

2.1.1 Reproductive Roles

Reproductive roles are the activities needed to ensure the reproduction and maintenance of society’s labour force (Mtshali, 1999). Reproductive activities are unpaid for and do not reflect in a country’s GDP or GNP. Reproductive activities are often undertaken by women. As pointed out by March et al. (1999) and Mtshali (1999) a woman’s reproductive role encompasses childbearing and rearing responsibilities and related domestic tasks such as cooking, fetching water and fuel wood, food storage, food processing and preparation, washing and ironing clothes, assisting in building, maintaining and cleaning the house and caring for patients. A key role played by man in reproductive roles is the production of sperm. Women work longer
hours than men do at reproductive activities which are non-market unpaid for activities, thus, putting women at a disadvantaged position and more vulnerable to poverty (Moghadam, 2005).

2.1.2 Productive Roles

Productive roles comprise work done by both women and men in order to produce goods and services, either for sale, exchange, or to meet the subsistence needs of the family. According to March et al. (1999) and Mtshali (1999), productive work refers to work performed by both men and women for payment in cash or kind. Productive activities comprise of both commercial production with an exchange value, as well as subsistence and home production with an actual use value or a potential exchange value. These roles include work in both the formal and informal sectors such as a household enterprise that contribute to the household and community economies. Women capacity to participate in productive activities is circumscribed by cultural, legal, and labour-market constraints making women to earn less than men in productive activities (Moghadam, 2005). These “preconditions” are exacerbated by the neoliberal policy environment and unequal distribution of resources. These have made poverty to be more chronic among women and more transient among men (Moghadam, 2005).

2.1.3 Community Management Roles

Maramba and Bamberger (2001) and Kwapong (2009) state that community management roles comprise participation in construction, management and maintenance of water, energy, schools, health facilities, roads and footpaths, and natural resource management as well as activities that
are predominantly undertaken by women at the communal level in addition to their reproductive roles which includes organizing traditional events such as marriage, naming ceremony, puberty rites and funerals. Women only organize the events while the men make the decisions (Kwapong, 2009). These roles are voluntary and unpaid for. Community political roles encompass activities that include decision making, policy implementation and organizing at the formal political level (Kwapong, 2009). Community political activities are paid for in cash, status or power. Women engage in community management roles which are not financially rewarded whereas men dominate the community political roles which are rewarded in cash, status or power. These dynamics put women in a disadvantage position which have implications for feminization of poverty (Kwapong, 2009).

2.2 Women and Gender Roles

2.2.1 Women and Reproductive Roles

In the world over, both men and women perform reproductive gender roles. Research has shown that within the domestic sphere, women work for the family not only to ensure its reproduction, but also its maintenance and survival (Mies, 1985 as cited in Mollel and Mtenga, 2000b). Lijongwa (1981), cited in Mollel and Mtenga, (2000b) reported that women especially those of sub-Saharan Africa perform all the housework. These findings are supported by those of Due and Mudenda (1982), cited in Mollel and Mtenga, (2000b) who found out that females contribute 82% of domestic labour while males contribute only 18% in a study of 142 rural and urban families in Zambia. Mollel and Mtenga (2000b) also confirmed that females of all ages did all the...
domestic work except fuel wood collection which was done by males of all ages in Tchenzema, Tanzania. These roles tend to influence the time the individual has to engage in other activities (that is, productive and community political roles) which has direct influence on the persons' socio-economic standing and the level of poverty in society.

Female subordination is a global phenomenon. Cross-cultural studies consistently show that, although women are moving into occupations outside the home, men are much less likely to increase their share of the domestic workload (Conway-Turner and Cherin, 1998). Thus there is greater tendency for women to be time poor and labour burdened.

Bernstein (1993) study in Besho, a Japanese farming community, discovered that women are the busiest members of the household, hardly having time for rest and relaxation. This revelation is supported by Guyer (1995), who notes that women in traditional African communities perform the greatest proportion of food production, fetching water, cooking and caring for the children. Waring (1988) study buttresses this with experiences of a young woman in Zimbabwe who starts her day at 4:00 am, she does not have time to rest until she puts her baby to bed at 9:00 pm.

Zooming on Ghanaian women, Amuzu et al. (2010) observe that inadequate time as a result of disproportionate household care responsibilities (burdens of food preparation, fetching water, caring for dependents, etc) remains a significant constraint to women. In the Ghana Living Standard Survey (GSS, 2008), women reported spending an average of 6.3 hours per day on household activities, compared with 4.2 hours for men. This was even wider for rural areas; 6.6 hours for women and 3.9 hours for men. Archer
(2005) points out that it is common in rural northern sections of Ghana for women to travel up to five miles a day for water collection, sometimes twice a day during the dry season. On the average, women and girls in Ghana spend 4.5 hours per week drawing and carrying water, and women and girls in Northern Ghana spend a much higher average of 43.5 hours per week collecting and carrying water (Archer, 2005).

It is however sad as indicated by Guo (2007) that women’s reproductive roles are unpaid for and are often considered supportive irrespective of the labour burden and the time spent on these roles. The performance of these reproductive roles often limits their time and ability to take up full time productive and community political roles. Where they do, they engage in productive activities that usually do not earn them much. For example, brick making (male occupation) in Zimbabwe earned 7 times as much more as beer brewing (female occupation) regardless of comparable investment (Scott, 1995). By this, women are more vulnerable to both consumption and capability poverty since they do not earn incomes from these reproductive roles or activities that consume greater proportion of their time and are unable to engage in full time productive activities. In other words, it will be a good conjecture to say that women’s reproductive roles contribute to the feminization of poverty in Ghana.

2.2.2 Women and Productive Roles

One major feature of the African economy is the presence of a large segment of people in the informal sector/economy. It employs 72% of the non-agricultural employment in sub-Saharan Africa and 48 per cent in North Africa (Chen, Martha, Jhabvala, Renana, Lund and Frances, 2002). Over 80 per cent
of new jobs created in Africa are in the informal economy (Chen et al, 2002).

One major explanation for the greater proportion of informal employment is the inability of the formal sector (both public and private) to absorb the growing labour force (ILO, 2004).

According to Marston and Barrett (2006), nearly 50 percent of women worldwide are in the labour force. At the global level women’s productive roles extend to the formal sector of work though not prominent. According to the UNDP cited in Takyiwaa (1998), women are two-thirds less likely than men to get waged employment, while only 3 out of 10 women in the labour force in Sub-Saharan Africa are paid employees. In 1990, about 5 per cent of the female labour force worked in industry, 20 per cent in services, 23 per cent in sales, and only 6 per cent in professional, technical, administrative or managerial positions.

As at 2009 in Asia-Pacific, 18.2 percent of females were employed in industry while 33.6 percent were in service sector as compared to 26.2 percent of males in industry and 35.0 percent in the service sector. In the same year in Central Asia, females constituted 15.0 percent in industry and 34.7 percent in the service sector as against males forming 24.6 percent in industry and 41.9 percent in the service sector. These evidences only suggest one thing; women constitute a smaller section of employees of the formal sector as against men (ILO, 2010).

This distressing situation does not end there. It is interesting to note that only one-fifth of all wages accrue to women and their earnings make up only two-thirds of men’s. This occurs because women typically occupy low paying jobs or positions; and even in these jobs, women usually receive less
pay than men for comparable labour in the formal sector of employment. For instance, in Brazil, women’s wages are 61 percent of that of men and in the United Kingdom they represent only 79 percent of men’s wages (Marston and Barrett, 2006). As at 2003, women occupied 25.3 percent of managerial positions, while their male counterparts occupied 74.7 percent of such positions in the public sector in the Republic of South Africa. Meanwhile, approximately 51 percent of the population is female in South Africa and so it could therefore be argued that women are underrepresented in top managerial positions in the public sector (Mello and Phago, 2007).

In Ghana, empirical studies have not been conclusive on women’s role in the formal workplace environment. However, Dejene (2008) reveals that the formal economic sector employs a small segment of the population (about 5 percent of females and 19 percent of males of the economically active population as at 1997. The situation has been impressive since. According to Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2008), male employment in public service stands at 28.3 percent while that of females is 29.2 percent and male employment in private formal is 19.3 percent whereas that of female is 17.8 percent. This great improvement however has not permeated all hierarchies and echelons of the sector. Amu (2005) reveals that women are least concentrated in the administrative and managerial category of workers (0.2 percent). This gives credence to the fact that women are less likely to be in managerial or professional positions. This means that despite the fact that women seem to be dominant in public service sector as indicated by the GSS (2008), they receive relatively lower salaries as they tend to occupy the lower ladder of the service. In relation to the private formal sector employment, as
indicated by the GSS (2008), women are less visible in that sector as compared to men. This sector however, pays better salaries and women are few in that sector, this makes them lose better incomes that will have accrued to them if they were dominant in that sector.

Available data across the globe indicate that women’s productive gender roles especially in developing countries are very much concentrated in the informal sector of the economy. It is indicated that 80 percent of Peruvian women working outside of agriculture are concentrated in the informal sector, while in Zambia 75 percent of women are employed in the sector, 43 percent of South Korean women and 79 percent of Indonesian women work in the informal economy (Carr, 2000; Carr and Chen, 2004 as cited in Marston and Barrett, 2006). This is an indication that women actually dominate the informal economy across the world and this has ramifications for their earnings.

In fact, 84 percent of Sub-Saharan Africa women are informally employed, as compared to 63 percent of men (Beneria, cited in DAI, 2005). By this study, Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest share of women employed informally, compared to the rest of the developing countries and North Africa, having 60 and 43 percent respectively.

In the Ghanaian situation, the informal sector provides employment for 80 percent of males and 95 percent of females. Women account for 50.1 percent of the total labour-force and are highly concentrated in trade (27.4 percent) and manufacturing (13.9 percent) (Dejene, 2008; Amuzu et al., 2010). According to the GSS (2008), 47.3 percent of males in Ghana are in the informal sector while females constitute 49.2 percent which supports the claim
of Dejene (2008) that females dominate the informal economy of Ghana. The fact that the informal sector is Ghana's largest employer means that policy makers cannot afford to ignore the sector in an attempt to promote women's wellbeing.

There are wage differentials in the informal sector of employment where on average women earned 76 percent less than what men earned as at 2002 (Dejene (2008) and households whose members worked in the informal sector were likely to be poor (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000). Newman and Canagarajah (2000), cited in Amuzu et al. (2010) reveals that rural women were more likely than their male counterparts to participate in non-farm activities, notable among them trading, and that engagement in these activities was associated with higher poverty rates.

Women are self-employed traders and producers, casual workers, or sub-contract workers. Unlike men, very few women own a business that hires others to work for them. Women often choose income generating activities that would allow them space to manage from home. A review of African Medium and Small-Scale Enterprises (MSEs) revealed that 45 percent of the female headed micro and small enterprises were home-based as compared to only 19 percent of the male-headed micro and small enterprises (USAID 1995, cited in DAI 2005). Women prefer home-based businesses because of the advantage of allowing them space to combine both their businesses and their care responsibilities (reproductive roles). However, such businesses have limited direct interaction with customers as opposed to those income generating activities that are based in traditional markets or commercial districts.
These are indications that women are more likely to be income poor than men based on their productive roles. With low incomes they will certainly not be able to have access to good healthcare and education, potable water among others. This will invariably metamorphose into low standard of living. There is therefore strong correlation between women’s performance in productive roles and feminization of poverty.

2.2.2.1 Women in Agriculture

Women contribute significantly to the agricultural sector, accounting for almost two-thirds of the labour force in developing countries. In many instances women are responsible for their family’s food security and their country’s agricultural productivity. In Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China and India, women’s involvement in the sector ranges from 60 to 98 percent. Globally the proportion of agricultural workers has declined; however, the proportion of economically active women working in the sector remains at nearly 50 percent (Marston and Barrett, 2006). Women farmers typically hold small-scale farms and are concentrated in subsistence agriculture and the processing of agricultural goods. Men tend to own most of the medium and large-scale commercial farms and are typically responsible for cash crops and marketing. In developing countries resource allocation especially land is bias against women. This makes women vulnerable to poverty since the kinds of economic activities they engage in do not have a higher income yielding capacity and lack government’s support (Marston and Barrett, 2006).

According to Archer (2005), Ghana’s economy is mainly agrarian and employs more than 50 percent of the labour force. Per his study, there has
been increasing number of women in agriculture in rural Africa since the middle of the 20th century because men have moved to urban areas. In the agricultural sector, women produce about 70 percent of food crops, and are important stakeholders in agro-forestry, fishery and post-harvest activities, comprising 95 percent of agro-processing and 85 percent in food distribution (Dejene, 2008).

Due to the lack of better conditions and attention to the sector, poverty in Ghana is extremely high among food crop farmers, a sector predominated by women, which is worrying (Sarpong, 2006). The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs-MOWAC (Ghana) (2012) affirms this by contending that this worrying phenomenon is attributable to women’s limited access to critical resources such as land, labour, credit, education and market. A households’ survey in 2001 in two districts of Ghana (Savelugu and Nanton) confirms that men individually owned land in 72.3 percent of farm households, whereas women individually owned land in only 47.7 percent (Doss, Grown and Deere, 2008). This shows the gender disparities in land ownership and access which limits women’s ability to produce on a large scale.

2.2.3 Women and Community Management/Political Roles

Women and men both perform community management and community political roles. The kinds of community management and community political roles that one engages in have a relationship on the person’s socio-economic status. Thus, the dynamics in the community management and community political roles place men and women at different positions (Kwapong, 2009).
It is not a secret that decision making at the community level rests with the male members. For instance, a study conducted at Bole in the Northern region of Ghana discovered that women's participation in community decision making is as low as 5 percent and that this is attributable to the patriarchal nature of the society. This means that women are marginalized or socially excluded as they are not part of decision making on issues that affect them (Apusigah 2004; Kwapong 2009; Bukari 2009). For instance, most community-level decision-making about land in Ghana is the exclusive preserve of chiefs or family heads who exercise that role on behalf of the community, clan or family. Thus, in both matrilineal and patrilineal cultures, it is the men in their families who preside over the allocation of family resources (Sarpong, 2006).

Despite the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals calling for greater political participation of women in politics, women continue to be in the minority in national parliaments, with an average of 13 percent worldwide as at 1999. This is a great disparity considering the fact that women comprise the majority of the electorate in almost all countries (Seeley, Grellier and Barnett, 2004). Not even the 13 countries with the highest percentages of women in politics had up to 50 percent of parliamentarians being women. Rwanda, with the highest level of women in politics had 48.8 percent of women in parliament, followed by Sweden with 45 percent and Denmark with 38 percent (Ballington, 2004). This suggests that women concerns might not be adequately captured in national developmental programmes.
According to Tsikata (2001), men and women, in principle, are free to take up any position of power in Ghana, though, in practice that is not the case. For instance, in 1994, women made up about 3% of elected members of Assemblies and in 1998, this proportion rose to 5 percent (Ofei-Aboagye, 2000). Similarly, in an examination of women’s political participation in local level politics in Ghana, Odame (2010) reports that results from six districts in the Greater Accra Region for the period 2002 to 2008, yielded an average representation of females in the District Assemblies at 19.2 percent, which is below the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) minimum female representation of 40 percent.

At the national level women’s participation in parliament is not significantly different from what pertains at the local level. Available statistics suggest that women’s numbers in the legislature has not increased in any significant way although the numbers of women contestants have witnessed a steady increase (Allah-Mensah, 2005) (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.1: Women’s Representation in Ghana’s Parliament from 1960 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seats</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (% of total)</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Modified from Allah-Mensah (2005)

From table 2.1, it is clear that women’s representation in the highest decision making body of the country has not been encouraging and has not moved above 9 percent on the average. This trend is disappointing. Since the
emergence of affirmative action, Ghana has not taken pragmatic measures to ensure drastic increase in women’s representation in parliament. The implication of this is that women are not able to participate effectively in taking decisions that affect their lives which have ramification for their development.

The picture does not look any better in terms of ministerial portfolios occupied by women. The analysis modified from Ayee (2008) is quite disappointing even though women form a larger proportion of Ghana’s population.

Table 2.2: Women’s Representation in Ministerial Positions in Ghana from 1957 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Regime</th>
<th>Party/military government</th>
<th>Number of women holding ministerial positions</th>
<th>Total number of ministers</th>
<th>Percentage of ministers being women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1957-1966</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-1969</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>NLC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-1972</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1975</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>NRC</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1978</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>SMC₁</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-1979</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>SMC₂</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June-Sept 1979</td>
<td>Military AFRC</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-1981</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>PNP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1993</td>
<td>Military</td>
<td>PNDC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-2001</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>NDC₁</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2009</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>14.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 as at January</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>NDC₂</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Modified from Ayee (2008)
It is clear from Table 2.4 that the women representation in the national governing body is gradually increasing with the highest as 21.21% in 2012. Albeit the trend is increasing at a decreasing rate, it is a bit of a plus. However, more need to be done especially with regards to the fact that women represent 51.2% of the population (GSS, 2012).

Women's low participation in decision making at the various levels of the modern political system is due to constraints of time (the needed to manage domestic responsibilities); finances for campaigning; widely-held perception that political activity is "dirty" and not for decent women; deep rooted perceptions of women as inferior to men; women not being voted for because politics is often viewed as belonging to an arena which is best managed by men; husbands and families are reluctant to have their women in the public eye; women's lack of public arena skills; and intimidation by male opponents have been a hindrance and continues to hinder their participation in politics and public life (Apusigah, 2004; Odame, 2010; Dolphyne, 1991; Ofei-Aboagye, 2000; Tsikata, 2001). In any case, women are unable to influence policies and decisions that affect their own lives which have implications for their wellbeing.

2.3 Gender Roles and Women Socio-economic Status

Men and women tend to have different socio-economic profiles within an economy in terms of the positions they occupy, the activities they engage in and their overall economic status. Socioeconomic status (SES) is usually determined by a combination of such factors as education, income, and occupation. Conceptually, SES is often regarded as the social position, class or
status of a person or group. When viewed from a sociological background, honour, power, and control are highlighted. SES affects overall human functioning, including development across the life span, physical and mental health. Differences in socioeconomic standing, including inequalities in the distribution of wealth, income as well as resources accessibility are bias towards women. Socio-economic disadvantage can be indicated in several ways including low income levels, poor levels of educational attainment, employment in relatively unskilled occupations, unemployment and less represented in decision making process (Moghadam, 2005). These make women more vulnerable than men to lower socioeconomic status, hence poverty.

2.4 The Concept of Poverty

Poverty is sanctified with a rich terminology, in all traditions and throughout history. The term poverty defies a precise definition because of its multidimensional and dynamic properties. It is like an elephant, it is more easily recognized than defined. However, exploring the nature of poverty must begin with a definition of poverty in order to provide a focus by which one can determine the limits of understanding (Anyanwu, 1997). Several different approaches to understanding poverty exist. To facilitate the understanding of the concept, Ruggeri, Saith and Stewart (2003) single out approaches which are a reflection of a wider debate on the understanding of the complexity and multidimensionality of the term.
2.4.1 Monetary Approach

The monetary approach is the most commonly and widely used approach to identify and measure monetary poverty (Ruggeri, et al., 2003). With this approach, poverty is identified with a shortfall in consumption or income. That is, an individual is considered to be living in absolute poverty if the person is unable to obtain the minimum necessities to maintain a physical existence (Ravallion, 1992).

The most important component of basic needs poverty line is the food expenditure necessary to obtain some recommended food energy intake and a modest allowance for non-food goods (Ravallion, 1992). The monetary approach measures well-being by income or expenditure. This facilitates national and international comparisons to be made.

Monetary approach analyses play an important role in national development strategies and the allocation of development funds from international organizations (Notten, 2009) because the approach has strength to generalise and standardise results to analyse poverty trends (Lu, 2012). It focuses on improving the economic situation of the poor, so their income can be raised above the poverty line (Lu, 2012). Policy makers may interpret this as reason to emphasise economic growth and optimal distribution of monetary income (Ruggeri, et al., 2003).

However, it results in a bias towards those lacking private income in the identification of the poor for targeting purposes (Ruggeri, Saith, & Stewart, 2003) and has an implicit policy bias in favour of private income generation rather than public goods provision (Laderchi, 1997; Saith, 2005). This can produce a superficial and misleading understanding of the nature,
causes and cures of poverty (Lu, 2012). It can lead to an equally narrow adoption of targeting, monitoring and evaluation criteria, thus reproducing the approach’s many blind spots into operational phases of interventions (Saith, 2004).

2.4.2 Capacities Approach

The capacities approach, pioneered by Amartya Sen in 1980, the Nobel Prize winner, rejects monetary income as the sole measure of well-being. The capability approach defines poverty as the absence of function or failure to achieve ‘basic capabilities’ which include the ‘ability to satisfy certain crucially important functions up to certain minimally adequate levels’ (Sen, 1993).

According to Sen (1993), development is a process of expansion of freedom and poverty is deprivation of capabilities - capability to functions, capability to freedom of choice, capability to agency role and capability to self-esteem.

The approach conveys an ethical critique of mainstream development by rejecting the dominant belief that income is an adequate measure of human well-being (Sen, 1992). Instead, human diversity is said to influence how a person can convert the characteristics of a commodity into a functioning (Lu, 2012). The strength of this concept lies in its multidisciplinary character and its focus on the plural or multidimensional aspects of well-being (Robeyns, 2005).

The capabilities approach is reflected in the Human Poverty Index (HPI), which is a composite index of multiple dimensions of poverty and well-
being. The implied policy-making focus is on the causes and environmental context that affect poverty. Associated anti-poverty measures therefore target not only incomes, but also other dimensions such as education and health care (Philipp, 1999).

The capability approach is however challenged with no definitive list of relevant capabilities (Nussbaum, 2000), and selection of the relevant ‘functionings’ is difficult as is measurement of ‘functionings’ at the individual level.

The capability approach suggests poverty reduction policy on investments in extending and exercising basic capabilities through provision of monetary income and improved allocation of social goods to achieve education, health and other goals (Lu, 2012). This highlights the importance of income in the war against poverty.

2.4.3 Social Exclusion Approach

Social exclusion (Lenoir, 1974) approach refers to the poor as those people unprotected by state welfare and considered to be social misfits. According to the European Foundation, social exclusion is defined as ‘the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live’ (Haan, 2001, pp. 25-26). The social exclusion approach to poverty focuses on the multidimensionality of deprivation and the relations and processes that cause deprivation (Haan, 2001). Pointed out by Atkinson, the three main characteristics of social exclusion are: relativity, agency and dynamics (Atkinson, 1998). That is, the approach looks at relational aspects,
emphasizing social relationships, relative conditions and dynamic processes, rather than absolute deprivation and static states (Lu, 2012).

The approach shifts from ‘income’ or the monetary dimension, to embrace social, political and cultural dimensions (Lu, 2012). The major conceptual weaknesses of social exclusion are its vague and diffuse definition (Farrington, 2004; Haan, 2001; Li & Pinel, 2004), its broad framework and societal specificity (Ruggerii, et al., 2003), its relative nature, and its focus on dynamic processes and relational roots and aspects (Sen, 2000). This means it is susceptible to many interpretations and is difficult to use for quantifications and comparisons (Lu, 2012).

According to Lu (2012), economic growth may never eliminate social exclusion. Rather, redistribution policies are a priority choice to remove imbalances and improve the overall situation of those deprived. Groups rather than individuals are targeted by social exclusion policies, such as eliminating discrimination and affirmative action (Ruggeri, et al., 2003). Policies can also target the causes, processes and results of exclusion. Such measures are interpreted to foster inclusion in markets and social processes, with particular emphasis on the formal labour market greater participation, and promoting community and social capital (Ruggeri, et al., 2003).

2.4.4 Participatory Approach (PA)

The participatory approach was developed to reflect the perspectives of the poor in understanding the multidimensional nature of poverty based on their own analysis of their reality. The approach criticizes the other three methods as being externally imposed and failing to take into account the views
of poor people (Chambers, 1994a, 1994b; 1995). The participatory approach involves the views and perspectives of poor people themselves in defining poverty (Chambers, 1994a, 1994b; 1995; 2002). The aim of the participatory approach is to get people to take part in decisions about what it means to be poor and the magnitude of poverty.

The major advantage of PA is its departure from externally imposed standards of poverty; the poor prioritize the dimensions that affect them and then offer solutions (Qizilbash, 2004). The poor's involvement in policy and program design and implementation is said to empower them (Qizilbash, 2003), and build more inclusive and transformational practice (Cornwall, 2003).

The approach has shortfalls due to its subjectivity, relativity and representativeness, and lack of generalizability and comparability of findings across regions and countries (Lu, 2012). There is also respondent, investigator and seasonal biases as well as sampling bias (Norton, Bird, Brock, Kakande, & Turk, 2001).

These different approaches and concepts have revealed the complexity of poverty and helped to build a greater consensus that it is a phenomenon with many dimensions and many causes, which manifests itself in different ways. In other words, it is a multidimensional and heterogeneous phenomenon, which includes material, non-material, subjective and cultural necessities. As pointed out by the World Bank, poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is
absolute poverty earn meagre incomes which result in zero marginal propensities to save and a short life span.

The absolute poverty concept promulgated by Ravallion attracted considerable reproaches. Most featured among these is the difficulty in ascertaining the minimum requirements of these basic needs for survival. Adeyeye (2000) criticizes this concept of poverty as limiting, in the sense that it cannot form the basis for interpersonal, inter-temporal, international and even spatial comparisons. Despite the criticisms, the notion of absolute poverty however remains relevant, especially in areas prone to famine and other natural and man-made disasters. The concept of absolute poverty is also relevant because it gives direction to the type of poverty that policy makers and international development agencies are striving to eliminate.

2.6.2 Relative Poverty

Relative poverty concerns living conditions and resources in the society in relations to others. Relative poverty concerns the unequal distribution of resources, social equity and exclusion. The strength of this concept of poverty is that it is quite dynamic in that as the average standards of the relevant community increases, the relative poverty line will increase as well. It does away with the problem of restricted comparisons, especially interpersonal and international comparisons. It acknowledges the presence of poverty in advanced industrial society where the resources commanded by the relative poor persons in these countries may be larger than that commanded by the richest persons in many developing countries. This concept makes it possible to extend the scope of material needs beyond those of the lowest level
losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom (World Bank, 2006). Besides, these approaches have demonstrated that feminization of poverty can take several forms, and is more of a process rather than a state.

2.5 Who are the Poor?

A poor person, according to Abdulai and CroleRees (2001, cited in Omarioghae 2008), refers to persons who are unable to provide sufficiently for their essential needs of food, clothing and shelter. A poor person is also anyone who is unable to meet his or her socioeconomic obligations, lacks gainful employment, skills, assets and self-esteem, and has limited access to social and economic infrastructures such as education, health, portable water and sanitation and as a result has limited chance of advancing his or her welfare to the limit of his or her capabilities (Abdulai and CroleRees, 2001).

2.6 Absolute and Relative Poverty

2.6.1 Absolute Poverty

Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is a common measure of poverty. Poverty lines are drawn on the basis of goods that satisfy a person for his basic needs (UNEP/GRID-Arendal, 2008). Absolute poverty describes the conditions in which the basic needs required for physiological survival cannot be met. That is, the inability to provide for physical subsistence to the extent of being incapable of protecting human dignity (Chen & Ravallion 2007). It implies limited access to food, clothing and shelter, portable water, health services, basic education, public transportation and employment. People in
of human needs because persons or households in a given community may be large enough to secure higher order material needs. Prominent among such higher order material needs include health care, education, taking a vacation and other social amenities (Schwartzman, 1998).

As opined by Adeyeye (2000), the major flaw of this concept is the seemingly absence of a scientific basis for determining how far below the average family’s resources should fall in order to become relatively poor. This results in the introduction of subjectivity in the analysis of the severity of poverty in relative terms by the investigator.

2.7 Measurement of Poverty

2.7.1 Headcount Index (Incidence of Poverty)

This is a common and widely used measure of poverty. This method measures the proportion of the population that is poor from the total population (Haughton and Khandker, 2009). With this measure, incidence of poverty can be measured in a simple way by dividing the number of the poor over the total population. The advantage of this measure is that, it is easy to construct and understand. However, it is not able to tell the intensity and depth of poverty, and hence does not change if people below the poverty line become poorer (Haughton and Khandker, 2009; Siddiqui 2006).

2.7.2 Poverty Gap Index (Intensity of Poverty)

Poverty Gap Index measures the extent to which individuals fall below the poverty line (the poverty gaps) as a proportion of the poverty line. The sum of these poverty gaps gives the minimum cost of eliminating poverty, if
transfers were perfectly targeted. This measure computes the mean distance below the poverty threshold. The mean is taken from the whole of the population and non-poor are counted as having zero poverty gaps (Haughton and Khandker, 2009). This measure of poverty does not however, tell the differences in severity of poverty. In other words, the measure does not reflect changes in inequality among the poor (Haughton and Khandker, 2009; Siddiqui 2006).

2.7.3 Poverty Severity Index (Inequality of Poverty)

This measure averages the squares of the poverty gaps relative to the poverty line. As one of the Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) class of poverty measures, it allows one to vary the amount of weight that one puts on the income (or expenditure) level of the poorest members in society. This computation is well in order to measure the severity of poverty and gives more weight to very poor and take into account the inequality among the poor (Haughton and Khandker, 2009; Siddiqui 2006).

2.8 The Nature and Scope of Poverty in Ghana

The Ghana living standards surveys showed significant decline in poverty at the national level from a poverty incidence of 52% in 1992 to 39.5% in 1999 (GSS, 2000) and further to 28.5% in 2006. Those described as extremely poor also declined from 26.8% to 18.2% (GSS, 2008). The indicators of depth and severity of poverty both declined by 25%. Disaggregation of the data by administrative regions and agro-ecologic localities, however, revealed significant differences between regions.
poverty levels and the progress made in poverty reduction during this period. See table 2.3.

### Table 2.3: Poverty Trends by Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Accra</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volta</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashanti</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brong Ahafo</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper East</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper West</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>87.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From table 2.3, Greater Accra has seen a significant reduction in poverty from 25.8% in 1998/98 to 11.8 in 2005/05. The three northern regions are more endemic in poverty levels with the Upper West been the highest. As a matter of fact the region has rather experienced an increase in poverty from 83.9% in 1999/99 to 87.9% in 2005/06. With 51.4% of the population being women in the Upper West Region (GSS, 2010), the likelihood of women being worst affected by the above statistics is very high. The distribution of poverty in Ghana shows extreme inequality between the north and south. For instance, the 1999 survey shows that while the three northern regions together
had a population share of about 18%, they accounted for 43.5% of the total poor and 59.2% to the severity of the poverty index (GSS, 2000).

Poverty is unequally distributed in terms of economic activity. There is greater concentration of the poor in agriculture, particularly food crop farming. With a population share of 43% in 2006, food crop farmers had a poverty incidence of 59%; the average income of the poor in this group was 40% below the poverty line; and the group contributed 58% and 67% to poverty incidence and poverty gap indices, respectively (GSS, 2008; Aryeeetey and McKay, 2004). Similarly, 29 per cent of those in micro and small enterprises in the informal sector live below the poverty line (GoG and UNDP, 2007).

2.9 Feminization of poverty

The term “feminization of poverty” is an idea that dates back to the 1970s. It was popularized at the start of the 1990s, not least in research by United Nation agencies (Medeiros and Costa, 2008). Medeiros and Costa (2008) explains feminization of poverty as a change in poverty levels that is biased against women or female-headed households.

Feminization of poverty is a relative concept based on a comparison of women and men, including households headed by them in terms of poverty. It emphasises the difference between women and men at each moment with regards to poverty. Once a relative concept, feminization does not necessarily imply an absolute worsening in poverty among women or female headed-households. If poverty is reduced sharply among men and only slightly among women, there would still be a feminization of poverty (Medeiros and Costa, 2008).
There is great disparity between the rich and the poor in the world (Chen & Ravallion, 2010). In the world of the poor, poverty is experienced differently—women are poorer than men. Women majority are living on $1 a day or less (United Nations, 2009). The International Labour Organization (ILO) recognizes that, of the 550 million working poor in the world, an estimated 330 million, or 60 percent, are women (Tran-Nguyen, 2004 as cited in Marston and Barrett, 2006). This distressing situation led to the coining of the phrase "feminization of poverty," in 1978 by Diana Pearce which describes the disproportionate number of poor people who are women (Martin, 2008 cited in Mubasher 2009; Chant, 2008).

Most times the monetary approach is used in assessing the incidence of poverty which tends to shield the situation of women poverty. While these household income or expenditure based measures provide comparative analysis of incidences of poverty between male headed and female headed households, they do not show the level of poverty experienced by women and men within the households (Klassen, 2005; Cagatay 1998; Quisumbing et al, 1995). The gender dimension of poverty emerged more clearly through approaches of social indictors and those that capture the intra-household processes underlying resource allocation. Women are poorer in most societies from a human poverty or capabilities perspective (DAI, 2005; Cagatay, 1998).

There are fundamentally known gender inequalities in access to and control over productive assets such as land, labour and credits, earned income as well as gender biases in the labour market that enhanced vulnerability of women to poverty. Women’s high illiteracy rate, lack of decision making power over their fertility and early marriage of girls limit their chances of
coming out of poverty, hence the widening of the poverty gap in favour of men (Moghadam, 2005).

Chen (2004) and others argue that poverty is also related to the type of employment in which people are engaged, and the majority of the poor are in informal employment. This informal sector is more of an employment source for women than men (UN, 2000). Admittedly, there is a strong correlation between gender, informal employment and poverty which has not been adequately explored (Chen, 2004).

2.10 Ghana’s Policy Focus and Strategy for Poverty Reduction

Ghana has embarked on a series of economic reform programmes since 1983 to enable the poor and more vulnerable sections of society achieve sustainable livelihoods. Statements of Economic Policy and Budget of the Government have often set poverty reduction as the overarching objective of national economic policy. Several economic policies have been implemented which aimed at stabilizing the economy and turning its fortunes towards a growth path and with the expectation of eliminating poverty and enhancing standards of living in the country (Sowa, 2002). Notably among them include the 1991 Human Development Strategy for Ghana; the National Development Policy Framework in 1994 - a twenty five year development perspective and Vision 2020; the First step in 1995 – a five year policy statement later developed into the first Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) for 1996-2000 (GoG and UNDP, 1997). This was followed by the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy I and II (GPRS I, II) from 2003 to 2009, and now the
Apart from the general economic policies of Government, which are usually in consonance with the Structural Adjustment Programme of the IMF and the World Bank, there were also other programmes, which were aimed directly at poverty alleviation. By their nature, most of the projects initiated by the World Bank in Ghana are geared towards tackling poverty of one form or the other. Projects such as the Community Water and Sanitation Project, Health and Population Project, Basic Education Sector Project, Agricultural Sector Investment Project, Village Infrastructure Project and among others were all targeted at poverty reduction (Sowa, 2002).

In northern Ghana, both international donors and NGOs have been extremely active particularly over the past 20 years with social development projects which have helped to alleviate poverty (World Development Report, 2006). Donors have constructed feeder roads, built and supported the running of schools and health clinics. Donor support has also been crucial for the proliferation of development and advocacy NGOs in northern Ghana. Indeed, donor support has been a crucial factor in the recent improvements in education outcomes in northern Ghana (World Development Report, 2006).

Both international and local NGOs have been tremendously active in northern Ghana organizing community-based initiatives to demand rights and to plan for improved social services and manage assets. NGOs have also played a strong role in supplying services, especially in health and water and sanitation, and this has arguably contributed to the recent improvement in the
standards of living of the people (World Development Report, 2006). Despite the interventions via the programmes and policies of government and NGOs, poverty among women still persist among women particularly in the Nadowli District in the Upper West Region.

2.11 Contemporary Ways of Fighting Poverty in Ghana: The Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP)

Noting that uncoordinated delivery and poor targeting of most of the existing poverty interventions have resulted in limited coverage and impact, the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) was produced by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment in 2007 to specifically target and better the conditions of the extreme poor through the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP).

LEAP supports households living in extreme poverty by providing conditional cash transfers to extremely poor households (with elderly persons, orphans and vulnerable children, and persons with severe disabilities) who have no alternative means of meeting their subsistence needs and have limited productive capacity (GoG, 2007). The programme is intended to empower and help targeted populations provide for their basic needs, poise them to access existing government interventions, provide a “spring board” to help them to “Leap” out of the malaise of extreme poverty, and ultimately empower them to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country (GoG, 2007).

The programme started with 21 districts which benefited from DSW/UNICEF support to caregivers of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) for NHIS premiums. As at 2010, LEAP was benefiting about 27,818
household beneficiaries in 83 districts (see Table 2.2 below). The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare (MESW), which manages the programme, aims to reach 165,000 households within five years (Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment, Ghana, 2012).

### Table 2.4: LEAP Coverage Statistics as at September 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of Districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greater Accra</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashanti</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volta</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brong Ahafo</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper East</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper West</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>83</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Department of Social Welfare, 2010*

The programme employs complex targeting methods, involving the selection of deprived districts and then a mix of community-based selection and proxy means testing. The programme is meant to be time-bound in the sense that beneficiaries are expected to ‘graduate’ from the programme within three years, although the criteria and procedures have not yet been worked out (GoG, 2007; UNICEF, 2009).
The transfers for OVC are supposed to be conditional, whereas those to the elderly and disabled are unconditional. Officially, the transfers for OVC require the enrolment and retention of school-age children in school, birth registration, attendance at postnatal clinics, full vaccination of children up to the age of five, no trafficking of children and no involvement in the 'worst forms of child labour' (UNICEF, 2009). Beneficiary forums are held on payment days as a way of raising awareness of beneficiaries’ duties and responsibilities.

The programme faces a number of challenges. First, a more transparent and rigorous targeting methodology is required. Second, a robust monitoring and evaluation system is needed. This is crucial for generating the evidence to convince politicians of the cost-effectiveness of the programme and secure the budgetary commitments for scale-up. Third, only limited progress has been made to date in implementing the declared intention of linking beneficiaries to complementary services, although MESW has been negotiating with the Ministry of Health for free enrolment of LEAP beneficiaries in the NHIS. The existing ‘single register’ of LEAP beneficiaries provides the potential to develop an integrated database for a range of social protection programmes, which could facilitate referral to complementary programmes. Fourth, LEAP’s scale-up will require substantial investments in capacity building, as well as improved interagency coordination (UNICEF, 2009).

2.12 Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

Conceptual framework is a network, or “a plane,” of interlinked concepts that together provide a comprehensive understanding of a
phenomenon or phenomena (Jabareen, 2009). A conceptual framework is not merely a collection of concepts but, rather, a construct in which each concept plays an integral role. According to Miles and Huberman (1994 p. 440), a conceptual framework "lays out the key factors, constructs, or variables, and presumes relationships among them".

For the purpose of this study, a simple framework was developed as a guide to investigate the influence of gender roles as an implicit cause of poverty feminization. In this framework, a proper comprehension of the performance of gender roles in household arrangements will bring new insights into the understanding of poverty feminization.

![Diagram of Feminization of Poverty]

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of Feminization of Poverty**  
Source: Author's Construct, 2013

From figure 2.1, the active participation of women in reproductive roles and community management roles places women in a disadvantaged situation in leaping out of poverty. Women spend more time on reproductive
activities and community management roles, while men spend more time on productive activities (Antonopoulos 2008; Antonopoulos and Memis 2009).

The consequences of gender-based inequalities in terms of time usage extend beyond deprivation of income or low payment issues. These factors not only compel women to receive less pay than men but may also have serious impacts on the power relations within the households and or social community (Kabeer, 2001).

Employment patterns show inequalities among women and men in the paid (productive) sphere. Evidence suggests that majority of women who are engage in productive activities (paid work) are part-time workers. Women are less likely to be salaried or wage workers than men (ILO 2007). These dynamics give poverty a 'women face'.

2.13 Gender Role Theories

Theoretical frameworks are explanations about a phenomenon (Camp, 2001). Marriam (2001) stated that a theoretical framework provides the researcher the lens to view the world. It gives a philosophical basis on which the research takes place, and forms the link between the theoretical aspects and the practical components of the investigation undertaken.

Various theories have been used to contextualise the understanding of gendered roles and their influence on socioeconomic status of men and women. Some of the psychological theories of gender role and gender identity development are social role theory, gender schema theory and object-relations theory which are used to explain the place of this research in theory.
2.13.1 Social Role Theory

Social role theory was developed by Alice H. Eagly (Eagly, 1987) to facilitate better understanding of social functioning and behaviour. The theory is built on the premise that men and women behave differently based on societal expectations which emerge in the home, the workforce, and other social situations. In other words, the theory suggests that the gender division of labour and societal expectations explain or produce gender roles, authoritative roles, roles that are specific to situations, role switching, and stereotypes.

Eagly (1987) distinguishes between communal and agentic components of gender-stereotyped attributes. The communal role is associated with attributes such as nurturance and emotional expressiveness, usually linked with household activities, and thus, with women. The agentic role is characterized by attributes such as assertiveness and independence, commonly associated with public activities, and thus, with men.

The theory helps to understand that gender roles are complex and can be influenced by the social situations people find themselves in. When cultural sharing groups create expectations and form beliefs based on sustained stereotypes, gender roles strongly influence behaviour (Eagly, 1987) and socioeconomic status. Specifically, people might have reservations about the ability of women in certain positions, such as management or headship roles because individuals often assume that leadership demands features of an assertive, agentic personality. Hence, leadership role is believed to be associated with the male personality (Peters et al., 2004).
The theory also infers that gender stereotypes are both prescriptive and descriptive (Rudman and Glick, 2001), delineating how males and females should behave. Consequently, persons who disobey these gender stereotypes are often negatively perceived (Heilman et al., 2004). For instance, women who exhibit agentic qualities are usually considered less attractive (Rudman, 1998). Similarly, competence in women (an agentic characteristic), raises the possibility of them being perceived as cold (Wiley and Eskilson, 1985).

2.13.2 Gender schema theory

Gender schema theory (Bem, 1981; 1993), proposed by Sandra L. Bem, explains the process of gender construction and maintenance through cognitive organization and interpretation. Bem (1981) defines a schema as a mental system of associations that categorizes and guides perceptions. According to the gender schema theory, children acquire gender meanings, expectations, and stereotypes from their cultural sharing group (Bem, 1981). The theory posited that through gender-schematic processing, an individual naturally organizes attributes and conducts into masculine and feminine groups. Thus, individuals manage information and control their behaviour with regards to the cultural meanings of femininity and masculinity (Bem, 1981). This learned information is internalized as an unchallenged core belief, known as a gender schema, which is utilized to organize and interpret experiences. Consequently, experiences and gender schemas interact to produce gendered perceptions of men and women (Bem, 1981).

Children modify their behaviour based on these expectations and perceptions in order to cohere with their culturally specific gender norms. An
example is children choosing to play with toys that are sex-stereotyped based on expectations for girls and boys (Martin, Eisenbud and Rose, 1995). The theory postulates that these developmental experiences influence identity construction as a child and as an adult. This theory provides relevant information about the cultural influence associated with gender role beliefs such that women are restricted to homes and home maintenance activities while men are engaged in income generating activities.

2.13.3 Object-relations theory

Associated with Melanie Klein (Glen, 2010), object-relations theorists concentrate on the influence of socialization on gender development. Chodorow (1989) states that, the initial tie between mother and child affects boys and girls in different ways. While boys must separate from their mothers to form their identities as males, girls do not have to endure this separation to define their identities as females. The devalued role of women is a product of the painful process men undergo to separate themselves from the female role (Chodorow, 1989). Chodorow (1989) emphasizes the role of women as primary caregivers in the development of sex differences.

The resultant effects of socially constructed roles differentiating masculinity and femininity are mainly associated with Gender Based Violence (GBV). According to the UN (1993), violence against women should be understood within the context of women’s and girl’s, subordinate status to men and boys in society. Women and girls subordination influences (lowers) their socio-economic status making them more vulnerable to poverty. Guedes
(2004) argues that societal norms, social structures and gender roles influence women’s vulnerability to violence or subordination.

2.14 Summary

The chapter discussed the concept of gender roles. Here, the different types of roles were discussed from the world’s perspective down to the Ghanaian situation. It further discussed the concept of poverty; what it is, how it is measured, its spatial dimension, the nature and scope of poverty in Ghana and the feminisation of poverty thesis. The LEAP example of reducing poverty through social protection strategies was also looked at. The chapter then concluded with the conceptual and theoretical basis of the study.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an elaboration on the processes and methods employed in investigating the problem, selecting instruments for analysing the problem and how conclusions were arrived at. In effect, it is a guide for understanding how the research was carried out. It starts with a discussion of research methodology with emphasis on the qualitative case study design and proceeds with the rationale for the choice of case study design with details of how this design is appropriately positioned to help achieve the objectives of this research. Subsequently, it discusses the specific data collection methods and the sampling techniques applied in the study, the data analysis procedures as well as the ethical considerations of the study.

3.1 Research Design and Methodology

Social research applies primarily to research within sociology and social psychology, but also within other disciplines such as social policy, human geography, political science, social anthropology and education. Sources of data for social research include authoritative origins, tradition, common-sense, and media myths (Neuman, 2006). Thus, social science issues are investigated using diverse methodologies, and selection of methodology depends on a range of factors such as the area of exploration, the scope and purpose of research, and the availability of descriptive data (Robson, 2002).

According to Burns and Grove (2003), methodology includes the design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, and the data collection and
analysis techniques in a study. Methodology in research is the ways of obtaining, organising and analysing data (Polit and Hungler, 2004).

Research methodologies are categorised in various ways. A common distinguishing feature however, concerns qualitative and quantitative models. These are observational methods used to describe human behaviours that display different strengths and weaknesses (Maxwell, 2005). Each method employs specific data collection techniques (Cozby, 2007), which impact the research outcomes. Yin (1989) identifies three factors for researchers in deciding upon an appropriate model:

1. Type of research questions investigated;
2. Ability of the researcher to control behavioural events; and
3. Focus on current as opposed to historical phenomenon.

A research design is a plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions (Kerlinger, 1975). Research design is dependent on the purpose of the study.

Qualitative research methods are used as the tool for addressing the objectives of this study. The practice of qualitative research and the application of its diverse techniques do not privilege any particular methodological approach. Case study approach was however adopted as an appropriate research tool to investigate the influence of gender roles on feminisation of poverty in Nadowli.
3.2. Justification of Choice of Research Design

3.2.1 Qualitative

Qualitative research embraces and thrives on its interpretative diversity resulting from the different backgrounds and worldviews that the various researchers and social actors possess. Silverman (2005) suggests that qualitative methods are suitably placed to help answer questions that require in-depth explanations and description. The study adopts the qualitative approach since it seeks to offer detailed description and also find out how gender roles influence feminisation of poverty from participants' perspective.

Besides, the thesis recognises that in studying a phenomenon that is greatly influenced by what happens in society, it is important to make room for the use of multiple methods that would capture different shades of perspectives and also serves as a point for triangulating data collected. Qualitative research approach presented the opportunity for the use of multiple methods and different kinds of questions (Maxwell, 2008). Apart from the dynamic nature of the field of gender roles that can be addressed by multivariate methods, there is the aspect that required flexible design; a design flexible enough to allow for stepping back on the stages of the research in order to make meaning. Maxwell (2008) and Yin (1994) describe qualitative research methods as an appropriate design to address issues of this nature. They stated that qualitative research design is so flexible that it allows for a non-sequential roll-out of research, thereby creating a condition for reshaping and refocusing of the stages of the research in order to make meaning of research results.
3.2.2 Case Study

The choice of a qualitative case study for the topic ‘gender roles and feminisation of poverty’ is significantly influenced by the method’s ability to strongly construct and establish the validity and reliability of evidence for phenomena under study, based on the reliance on multiple sources of data for evidence (Yin, 2003). Though it has traditionally been misconceived that case studies are best suited for exploratory research, Yin (2003) indicates that the method can also be used appropriately for descriptive and explanatory investigations. This study is descriptive, explanatory, cross-sectional and non-interventional.

In addition, the use of qualitative case study design for addressing the objectives of this study is influenced by its strength in obtaining explanations and providing descriptions of phenomena under study within a given context (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006). Examining the concerns and challenges of the gender roles status quo in Nadowli as well as the factors that account for gender differences in poverty levels offers the opportunity for the use of case study approach.

Examining how gender roles influence socio-economic status of women also serve as a basis for the selection of case study approach for addressing the objectives of this study. As indicated by Hancock and Algozzine (2006), the approach offers an understanding of a phenomenon under study from the perspective of the respondent through the use of interviews whilst offering opportunities of triangulation from the use of other sources such as observations and other documentary sources. Patton (1999) indicates that no single method is adequate enough to solve the problems of
rival explanations. The use of the multiple methods also allows for the preservation of the significance of context, which is a very necessary component in the case study approach. It makes possible for necessary information regarding a phenomenon under investigation to be obtained with each method compensating for the weakness of the others.

Methods used in undertaking case study designs are pragmatically driven rather than being driven by specific paradigms (Rosenberg & Yates, 2007). This helps avoid any kind of dogmatism in methods used for researching phenomena that might be inherent in the adoption of particular paradigms. This is particularly important as case study research seeks to retain the context of the case and the associated complexity therein. The importance of retaining context complexity typically leads to the utilization of mixed methods in the collection of data. Research methods are thus adopted and used for their ability to contribute meaningful information to the investigation process.

The case study is a preferred method when investigating present-day activities where relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated. There is the opportunity to interact with social actors involved with the phenomena under investigation. This makes it possible for the “operational links needing to be traced over time” (Yin, 2003: p.6) to be done. In this study, operational links in the chain of connections involved in gender reproductive roles and poverty feminization are traced.

The adequacy of information required for addressing the questions and objectives in the study also points to the ability of case study design to address the relevant issues investigated. In this study, the overarching research
question is how do gender roles influence poverty feminization? Adequacy of required information is mainly influenced by clear definitions of the “case” and the terminologies therein (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

3.3 Data Sources

Data collection is the precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to the research sub-problems, using methods such as interviews, participant observation, focus group discussion, narratives and case histories (Burns and Grove, 2003). The data set for this study was collected from both secondary and primary sources.

3.3.1 Primary Data

Primary data set was collected from Nadowli, the study area, which is the capital of the Nadowli District within the month of May, 2014.

Primary data is a data set collected for the purpose of addressing a research question in a specific research. Primary data is described as the one that lies closest to the source of the ultimate truth underlying a phenomenon. In collecting primary data, procedures and methods that are designed to fit the general design of the research and form part and parcel of the research activities are used. Primary data is normally documented (achieved), or added up to stock of data for use by other researchers. Archived primary data when used in a research is usually referred to as secondary data. Therefore, when data is used for the purpose in which it was collected, it is primary data, but when it is used in a research, which was not the intended purpose for its collection, then it is secondary data (Hox and Boeije, 2005; Leedy, 1997).
3.3.2 Secondary Data

Both published and unpublished documented materials were consulted for information related to the subject matter of the research. Textbooks, magazines, journals, articles, reports, periodicals, weekly and daily papers were the main secondary sources referred to for data, to review literature on the research topic. This ensured a broad understanding and conceptualisation of gender roles and the feminization of poverty thesis.

3.4 Study Population

Research population is the aggregate or the totality of all objects, subjects of members of a group conforming to a set of specifications (Polit and Hungler, 1999). That is, the group to which inferences are made based on a sample drawn from the population. In this study, the population consisted of men and women in the economically active class who reside in Nadowli irrespective of the tribe, educational status and socio-economic status.

3.5 Sampling and Sampling Techniques

Strydom and Venter (1996) describe sampling as the process of taking a portion of a population as a representative of that population. In this study, sampling was done base on, the men and women who reside in Nadowli irrespective of the tribe, educational and socio-economic statuses.

The process of sampling was necessary due to large size of the population of the study area and the consequent impracticality and prohibitive cost of testing each member of the population (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The National Audit Office (NAO) (2000) in their commentary captioned 'A
Practical Guide to Sampling stated that "sampling provides a means of gaining information about the population without the need to examine the population in its entirety".

3.5.1 Sample Size

A sample is a representative subset of the population from which generalizations are made about the population. As a result of the inability of the researcher to reach the entire units of the population of the study area, it was necessary to use a sample population derived from the main population. A general rule of the thumb is to always use the largest sample possible. The larger the sample the more representative it is going to be, smaller samples produce less accurate results because they are likely to be less representative of the population (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 1998). In this study, a sample size of 100 respondents was selected using the Taro Yamane’s formula for the determination of the sample size (Yamane, 1973).

\[ n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \]

Where \( n \) = Sample size (Population)

\( N \) = Total population

\( I \) = statistical constant

\( e \) = margin of error at 10%

Thus

\[ n = \frac{3334}{1+3334(0.1)^2} \]

\[ = \frac{94388}{1+33.34} \]
3.5.2 Sample Population Distribution

Nadowli was put into 4 zones. Zone A consisted of 3 sections. Zone B and C consisted of 2 sections each while zone D was made up of 1 section. Table 3.2 illustrates the distributions.

Table 3.1: Sample Population Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Zone A</th>
<th>Zone B</th>
<th>Zone C</th>
<th>Zone D</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From table 3.1, a total of 50 respondents (20 men and 30 women) from Zone A were selected, 20 each from Zone B and C and 10 from Zone D. The distribution was influenced by the number of sections that constitute a zone.

3.5.3 Sampling Technique

Sampling techniques are the procedures through which samples are gotten. Sampling techniques are mostly categorized under two main groups; probability and non-probability techniques. Probability sampling provides equal chance to each and every unit of the population to be selected (Twumasi, 2001). This is mostly used when the research seeks to establish statistically significant conclusions. Examples of types of probability sampling commonly used are; simple random sampling, stratified sampling, systematic sampling and cluster sampling (Twumasi, 2001).
Non-probability sampling on the other hand does not provide equal chances to each and every unit of the population to be selected (Twumasi, 2001) and it is mostly used when probabilistic sampling is not necessary or when the research is limited to particular participants or when in-depth knowledge regarding a particular program, participants or delivery method is required. The methods mostly used are: accidental sampling, purposive sampling and quota sampling (Twumasi, 2001).

The study made use of a non-probability sampling technique. Specifically, the researcher employed quota sampling technique to select respondents to elicit their views on gender roles and poverty feminization. The essence of quota sampling is to ensure close to equal representation of all the different segments of the population. The basic requirement of quota sampling is that, there should be enough cases in each cluster or segment of the population to allow for the application of a quota value (Twumasi, 2001).

Respondents were first categorised or defined on gender basis, that is, men and women. After structuring the population into homogeneous groups, a quota of 40 males and 60 females were selected for the interviews and administering of questionnaires. As each category fills or reaches its quota, additional respondents that would have fallen into these categories were rejected. The 2 to 3 ratio for men and women respectively was informed by the nature of the topic ‘gender roles and feminization of poverty’.

3.6: Data Collection Methods and Instruments for the Study

The main method of collecting the primary data was the survey. The questionnaire and the interview schedules as well as field observations were
used to elicit information from respondents on gender roles and feminization of poverty. All literate respondents were given self-administered questionnaires and were assisted to fill them while the illiterate respondents were interviewed face to face.

3.6.1 In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews (IDIs) were also used to solicit responses from the targeted population. In-depth interviewing as a method of data collection is a means of obtaining knowledge from an individual in an interactive manner (Miller & Crabtree, 2004). An interview process is one of a partnership, which is both a communicative and a conversational journey which ensues between the interviewer and the interviewee. Silverman (2005: p. 111) states that “perhaps we all live in what might be called an interview society in which interviews seem central to making sense of our lives”. This description of interviews denotes the importance of our everyday human interactions and its importance in the creation of knowledge about the environment, people, places and events for our daily use.

Though usually considered as a weakness of the interview method of data collection, the homogenous nature of the gathered data from the sole perspective of the interviewee was one of the reasons for selecting this method. This way, overlapping and concurrence of issues within the various interviews help give credence to the characteristics of the phenomena under investigation. Besides, individuals may hold different perceptions about gender roles due to difference in socio-economic characteristics and this difference needs to be recognised. This method offers the opportunity to delve...
deeply into issues such as challenges of the gender roles status quo, factors that account for gender differences in poverty levels and how gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women.

It was also advantageous to use interviews because of its flexible nature that allows the researcher to explore greater depth of meaning than can be obtained with other techniques. The researcher's interpersonal skills were used to facilitate cooperation and elicit more information. The interview technique also allows collection of data from participants who were unable or unlikely to complete questionnaires, such as those whose reading, writing and ability to express themselves is marginal.

In this study, the researcher first introduces himself and what the interview is all about. Participants were showed a supporting letter from the University for Development Studies. The letter served to validate the awareness of the study and stress confidentiality. Interviewing research participants was done in a quite environment, free from disturbances, and where they felt safe. All interviews for this study were conducted in May 2013 at Nadowli. Interviews in the research were conducted in English and Dagaare, the language of the people of Nadowli. The researcher's fluency in Dagaare as a native speaker was usually a good starting point to get talking with prospective respondents to develop a good conversational relationship before the commencement of interviews. Where the participant was comfortable with the English language, it was used.

3.6.2 Observation

Field observation in research is a technique of gathering data through direct contact with an object - usually another human being (Potter, 1996, p.
Observation is an important source of primary data in community studies providing supplementary information and clarifications on participant interviews (Polkinghorne, 2005). Observational data range from facial expression, clothing, vocal tones and gestures of interviewees to the general physical characteristics of the environment within which interviewees live. Relevant observed data are those that throw light on the meaning of a participant’s oral comments contributing to understanding and clarification of issues under study.

Field observations were used to help shed more light on the gender roles status quo and how roles are performed. This was done by documenting what and how respondents were doing at the time of the visits and conversations. During interviews the researcher noted the non-verbal expressions of the interviewees as they provide responses. Field visit observation notes were used for the purposes of illustrating issues relating to the phenomena under investigation: gender roles and poverty feminization.

3.6.3 Documentary analysis

Documentary analysis is a method of data collection in qualitative research where written documents such as textbooks, articles, notes, minutes of meetings and archives are interpreted to gather data for a research. According to Petty, Thomas and Stew (2012), a document for analysis may have been created as part of the research or already in existence. Documentary analysis involves a lot of reading, coding, identifying themes relevant to research questions and interpreting with the singular aim of making meaning out of documents to support research. Further, analysis of documents is paying
This thesis is grounded in the qualitative social research tradition as such relied heavily on documentary analysis of secondary data. Policy and research documents on poverty and gender issues were analysed. Reports of the Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS), the Millennium Development Goals particularly Goal 1 were also analysed. Journals, Books and other publications relevant to poverty, poverty feminization and gender roles provided up to date data and understanding of the concepts.

3.6.4 Research Instruments

An instrument is any tool that is used in data collection. Babbie, (2001) defines a research instrument as a tool that is used for collecting data needed to find solutions to the problem under investigation. The instruments used for collecting the primary data for the study were questionnaire and in-depth interview checklist.

3.6.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a written instrument that contains a number of questions or statements called items that attempts to collect information on a particular topic. The questionnaire is the preferred data collection method for survey-based studies, an efficient means for providing a matrix of data for analysis (Roberts, 1999). Questionnaires can be administered through a variety of delivery systems: face-to-face, telephone, mail, or electronically through website or e-mail.
The objective of the questionnaire was to elicit the data relevant to the research questions, which support the study objectives, thus it was necessary to articulate questions to achieve data flow relevant to the research questions. Authors of questionnaires consider a number of aspects to develop a viable questionnaire, beginning with the questionnaire’s relevance to the research (Rea & Parker, 2005; Punch, 2003). The questionnaire and its supporting documentation are directly or indirectly related to the study objectives; the concerns and challenges of the gender roles status quo; the factors that account for gender differences in poverty levels; how gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women; and ways through which women reproductive roles can be reduced. Next, the clarity of the questions is addressed, with the wording of the questionnaire simple and straightforward (Oppenheim, 1992).

The focus of this study’s questionnaire was to elicit information on how gender roles influence poverty among women. The face-to-face semi-structured questionnaire technique to collect data was employed. Thus, questions were written in an unambiguous style to facilitate reading, understanding, and completion of the questionnaire. Where a respondent was an illiterate or could not read or write, the questionnaire was not used rather such a respondent was interviewed.

**Questionnaire Structure**

Outcomes from a questionnaire can be significantly affected by the order of questions or statements (Rea and Parker, 2005). In this questionnaire, therefore, introductory questions were used to encourage participant
continuation and completion of the survey. The questions were arranged according to sections and each section dealt with a key research issue.

**Questionnaire Procedures**

Questionnaires were sent to the field and administered to the selected literate respondents to collect data for this study: women and men within the study area who could read and write and were willing to take part in the process. To explain the study, all participants were showed a supporting letter from the University for Development Studies. The letter served to validate the awareness of the study and stress confidentiality, thus enhancing the response rate for the questionnaire. Participants were requested to express their views in writing (or tick when necessary) to questions or statements on each issue.

**3.6.4.2 In-depth interview Guide/Checklist**

An interview guide is a list of topics and sub-topics within an area of inquiry about which a researcher wishes to gather information. It provides a framework for the interviewer to develop questions, sequence those questions and make decisions about which information to pursue in greater depth. The interview guide that was used in the study was compiled under the following headings: demographic characteristics of respondents, gender roles status quo, gender differences in poverty levels and gender roles and socio-economic status of women.

Table 3.2 shows a summary of the sample categories and the corresponding interviews conducted and questionnaires administered.
Table 3.2: Distribution of Conducted Interviews and Administered Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3.3 shows the study sample categories and the corresponding number of respondents interviewed and administered with questionnaires. In all, 100 participants were engaged in the research, comprising of 40 men and 60 women. 27 of them were administered with questionnaires across the four zones (16 men and 11 women) as against 73 interviews conducted across the four zones (24 men and 49 women).

3.7 Conduct of Field Work

3.7.1 Training of Field Personnel

To facilitate data collection, I trained and worked with three research assistants throughout the period of fieldwork. The training period lasted about three to four hours. As part of their schedule of work, they assisted respondents filled questionnaires, interviewed respondents and collected filled questionnaires from respondents.

3.7.2 Pre-test of Instruments

The research instruments were pre-tested to ensure validity and reliability of research instruments. They were tested at Gbegru, a suburb of...
Wa, using 10 volunteers. 6 volunteers were interviewed 4 questionnaires were administered to these volunteers face to face. Their responses led to a revision of some questions to make them clearer and more relevant.

3.7.3 The Fieldwork

At the end of the period of the fieldwork, data had been collected from 60 women and 40 men from Nadowli (the study area) which is the capital of the Nadowli District.

3.8 Analysis

Data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organising data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher (Burns and Grove, 2003). Data analysis is a challenging and creative process characterised by an intimate relationship of the researcher with the participants and the data generated (De Vos, 2002). In the process of analysis, relationships or differences supporting or conflicting with original or new hypothesis should be subjected to statistical tests of significance to determine with what validity data can be said to indicate any conclusions (Kothari, 1986, cited in Yin, 1993). The process of data analysis involves structuring and bringing logical order to the volume of data collected. The essence is to put the data in contextual form to enable the researcher answer the research questions as well as address the research objectives.

Data collected from interviews was first transcribed from Dagaare into English. Data that was recorded in English were organised and transcribed to show responses to questions in a sequential manner. Transcribed data was cleaned through an editing process. During this process, attention was paid to
emerging themes. Transcribed data was printed out for further editing together with questionnaire responses. At this stage, themes that were identified through the process were confirmed and noted at the margins of the pages they were found. Initial themes were organised into five main headings; 'gender roles status quo', 'gender differences in poverty', 'gender roles and women socio-economic status' and 'realigning gender roles to engender poverty reduction among women'. Identification of themes before coding provided an opportunity to identify the central themes before they were coded, providing grounds for triangulating the themes after coding.

Transcribed data and audio were loaded onto TAMS Analyzer (TA) for coding. While the loaded transcribed documents were read again and coded, in some other instance codes were assigned onto the analytical tool based on initial categorization that was done before documents were loaded. Preliminary search produced results that were categorized into themes. Data in this form was reduced to a manageable level. However, constant playback of coded portions of interview records as well as transcribed notes ensured that original expressions from respondents were not lost in the process of the analysis.

The Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS) was used to generate the themes on the demographic characteristics of respondents. The SPSS was chosen because of its clarity in expressing quantitative relationships between demographic variables in the forms of graph, frequencies, percentiles and cross-tabulation.
3.9 Ethical Considerations

The social sciences in general and educational researchers in particular have become more and more conscious of ethical propriety and the need for universally acceptable codes of ethical conduct in recent years. Ethical principles are essential in order to ensure that conclusions drawn from research are valid and that the integrity of the methodology used in arriving at these conclusions is beyond reproach (Gallagher, 2005).

Fieser and Dowden, (2004) in their Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, offer the following definition: they assert that ‘The field of ethics, also called moral philosophy, involves systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behaviour’.

Ethics are a set of moral principle which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents (Strydom, 1996).

Following this, the thesis applied research ethical codes, guidelines and standards of the University for Development Studies. The research operated within generally accepted research ethics pertaining to: informed consent of research participants; privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of research participants; and protection of research participants from harm (issues of risk and harm) espoused by Powell (2011). Thus the study did not expose respondents to any harm be it physical, emotional or psychological. The researcher explained to the respondent what the research was all about, and how it would benefit them and other people.
This study requires that participants expose issues that they may consider extremely private. Recognising that such revelations may have far reaching implications for the participants, the principles of voluntary participation and informed consent was implemented during identification of interviewees and their recruitment to the study (Babble and Mouton, 2001). Gender roles and poverty issues can be quite contentious among the members of a household. Where relationships between men and women may already have been strained, consequences of the research could have led to acrimony and perhaps further strain to the relationships. To ensure no harm to the participants the study adhered to the principles of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.10 Profile and Choice of Study Area

This section provides an overview and the rationale for the choice of the study area- Nadowli. It brings out the demographic and the geo-physical characteristics of the area since these factors play a critical role in determining the economic activities of the people.

Nadowli under the decentralized administrative structure in Ghana is the District capital of the Nadowli District which is centrally located in the Upper West Region of Ghana. It lies between latitude $11^\circ 30'$ and $10^\circ 20'$ north and longitude $3^\circ 10'$ and $2^\circ 10'$ west. Figure 3.1 shows the map of the study area.
Population

The population of Nadowli as at 2010 stood at 3334 representing 3.53% of the district population of 94,388. The sex composition of the town favours females just like the national statistics. Females form more than one half of the population (54.1%). The proportion of females in Nadowli is 2.1 percentage points lower than the District average (GSS, 2012). In terms of infrastructure, the community as the district capital has a police station, a district hospital and other District administrative offices. A major trunk road passes through the town connecting Nadowli to Jirapa and Wa. The people speak Dagaare and are generally Christians.

Topography and Drainage

The topography of the area is low lying and undulating at altitudes ranging between 150m-300m above sea level though some parts average
geology and soils

There are three main types of rocks in Nadowli and the district at large. These are Birimian, granite and basement complex. These rocks hold a considerable quantity of water, which is a good potential for the drilling of boreholes and the sinking of wells. Current studies have revealed large mineral deposits, which is a potential for mining activities (MoFA, 2013).

The soil types that dominate area are laterite, sandy and sandy loam (savanna ochrosols). They are generally poor in organic matter and nutrients as a result of the absence of serious vegetative cover due to bush burning, overgrazing, over cultivation and protracted erosion and are heavily leached (MoFA, 2013).

Vegetation and Climate

The District in general lies within the tropical continental or guinea savannah woodland characterized by shrubs and grassland with scattered medium sized trees. Some economic trees found in the district are kapok, shear, baobab, mango and dawadawa, which are tolerant to both fire and drought. These trees are a major source of income to households particularly women who play important roles in the provision of household needs and these economic trees provide a potential for the establishment of processing industries to increase employment opportunities for the people (MoFA, 2013).
The district lies within the tropical continental zone and annual rainfall is confined to 6 months starting from May to September and unevenly distributed. Mean annual rainfall is about 110mm with its peak around August. From October to March there is little or no rain and this long dry season is made harsh by the dry northeastern Harmattan winds. This unfavourable climatic condition promotes only rain fed agriculture (MoFA, 2013).

**Seasons**

The district lies in the guinea savannah zone and has one main rainy season for agricultural production from May to September. The rest of the year is dry and can only be used for dry season gardening. However the low development of irrigable agriculture has limited agricultural productivity to the wet season hence during the dry season farmers are dormant and have no major farming activities to undertake (MoFA, 2013).

**Environmental Situation**

Traditional belief systems and human activities in the District tend to regard the land as a reservoir of unlimited resources. Human activities particularly annual routine bush burning, indiscriminate tree felling for fuel wood, charcoal and other purposes and poor animal husbandry practices have led to decreasing vegetation cover and increasing soil erosion and depletion of soil fertility. Road construction, sand and gravel winning as well as inappropriate farming practices such as slash and burn increases land degradation in Nadowli. Farming along, and in watercourses has also resulted
in the silting of water bodies like dams and ponds and destruction of vegetation protecting the water bodies (MoFA, 2013).

According to Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), 2013, the existence of farmer groups in agro-forestry in the District, however, is an effort to maintain a sustainable environment. Individuals have also adopted the habit of planting trees around their buildings. Developing economic trees plantations e.g. Cashew, Mangoes has also gained popularity over the years.

**Economic Activities**

The economy of Nadowli depicts a typical rural economy dominated by agriculture particularly farming. Food crop production is subsistence with low output levels. The main activities are food and cash crop production as well as animal rearing. The commerce and industrial sectors are least developed. Nadowli, however, houses the industrial sector of the district which is characterized by small-scale activities and the use of labour intensive production technologies. These include basketry, cloth/smock weaving, blacksmithing, pito brewing, pottery and shea butter extraction.

Poverty in Ghana is largely a rural phenomenon, with rural poverty running three times as high as urban poverty. Poverty rates are increasing in deprived areas of the country especially in areas where there are extreme poverty (Fielmuo and Bandie, 2012). According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2007), the contribution of rural savannah to total poverty in Ghana has consistently been increasing. From 33% in 1991/1992 to 37% in 1998/1999 and has increased further to about 50% in 2005/2006. Nadowli, which is centrally located in the Upper West Region, grapples with poverty
issues just like many other communities in the region. Situated in an area prone to low and delayed rainfall patterns and with an economy driven by agriculture the poverty situation is serious especially among the women. The situation is not better despite the interventions of government and many other NGOs such as World Vision International, Centre for the Development of people (CEDEP) and Catholic Relief Services ( CRS). This influences the selection of the study area.

3.11 Summary

This chapter described the study design and the methods utilised in obtaining the results of this study. Specifically, this study adopted the qualitative case study methodology. The chapter justified the use of the qualitative methods and qualitative case design, in that they work particularly well in addressing the objectives of this study. The multiple methods as well as the ability to look at phenomena at various scales of analysis were cited as some of the reasons for the choice of the qualitative case study approach. The chapter discussed details of the sampling procedure and how interviews, questionnaires and field observations were used in the study to gather data for the study. Data analysis techniques utilised were also described showing how themes presented in the results of this work were obtained. The chapter also looked at ethical considerations of the study and concluded with the profile and rationale for the choice of the study area.
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the research as well as their analysis and interpretation. This chapter seeks to present an empirical exploration of the question of how gender roles influence poverty feminization. It seeks to address the objectives of the study which are to:

1. Examine the gender roles status quo in Nadowli.
2. Identify the factors that account for gender differences in poverty levels in Nadowli.
3. Examine how gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women in Nadowli.
4. Examine how gender roles could be realigned to engender poverty reduction among women.

Where necessary, aids such as tables and graphs are used to add more meaning to the data presented. The findings presented in tables and figures are further explained to equip the reader with a clear picture and understanding of the phenomenon under analysis. The findings from the study are organised into key themes: General Characteristics of the respondents, the nature and status quo of gender roles in Nadowli, gender differences in poverty levels, and gender roles and women socio-economic status. Under each theme, subthemes are provided with quotations used to help contextualize the findings.
4.1 General Characteristics of the respondents

4.1.1 Age

Respondents were requested to indicate their age. It was felt that age could add up to the understanding of gender roles influence on women poverty. Besides, it was a significant factor in determining the kind of roles that can be performed as an adult or a child. Table 4.1 shows the age distribution of respondents. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 64 with a mean age of 34. Majority of the respondents (45%) were between the ages of 18-29. 27% were between the ages of 30 and 39, with 13% in the 40-49 categories. In the 50-59 age categories, there were 9% respondents, with 6% respondents in the 60+ age group. The youngest was aged 18 while the oldest was 64.

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, May 2013
4.1.2 Educational Status

Respondents were requested to indicate their highest level of education. This variable was requested because it has the possibility of influencing people's attitudes and beliefs on gender roles and women poverty. In other words, education has an influence on culture and it helps people to be aware of their rights, roles and responsibilities. For example, it emerged from the responses that majority of the women who saw nothing wrong with men taking up women roles especially in the kitchen had education beyond the basic level. This confirmed the findings of Baxter and Kane (1995) who states that education is a powerful tool for predicting gender-role attitudes, and men and women who are educated tend to have egalitarian attitudes through their exposure to egalitarian ideas.

The results revealed that 28% of the respondents never went to school, whilst 27% had basic education. 25% had secondary/vocational education. The remaining 20% had tertiary education.

Out of the 28% respondents who had no education, 25% of them are men and the remaining 75% are women. Similarly, out of the 20% respondents who had tertiary education, 55% of them are men whilst 45% are women. Education is a key that unlocks many doors, thus, the lack of it could actually be detrimental to a person's growth and wellbeing. On one hand it leads to lack of financial independency and decreases one's chances of getting a job. On the other hand, it influences attitudes and perceptions on gender roles. Figure 4.1 further illustrates the phenomenon.
One possible reason why males dominate the tertiary education level is that most women after secondary education get married and do not continue due to failure or lack of support. On the other hand, it is not surprising to have majority of women with no education and lower education levels (75% and 77.8% respectively) because of the poverty situation and the perceptions about girls’ education. Many women, especially in rural areas, go to school and after acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills leave school to get married.

4.1.3 Occupation of Respondents

This sets out to get information on the livelihood of the respondents. Figure 4.2 illustrates what pertains in Nadowli with regards to occupational distribution.
From figure 4.2, 58% of the respondents in the area of study are employed by the informal sector which is dominated by farming, petty trading, pito brewing and shea butter extraction while 20% of them are in the formal sector. Teachers were the majority in this sector. 17% and 5% are unemployed and students respectively. This shows that many households obtain their livelihoods from the informal sector. This is not surprising because only 20% of the respondents attain tertiary education. Wiggins (2003) in his categorization of the poor and the vulnerable of the rural areas, includes those who lack formal education and skills that offer a chance to secure non-farm jobs. Despite his use of the term formal education, in Ghana, it is difficult for those with primary education and those who fail secondary examination to use their education as a qualification for employment in the formal sector. Primary education in Ghana is elementary and cannot give any opportunity with regard to formal employment. These factors are thus possible
people with lower levels of education are found to be women and are employed by the informal sector.

According to Dejene (2008), many women in Africa are found in the informal sector engaged in food processing, basket making, cloth dying, soap making, farming, petty trading, among others because of their lack of marketable skills other than what they have learned at home and the easy entry into these occupations. Women in the informal sector often choose income generating activities that would allow them space to manage from home. A review of African MSEs revealed that 45% of the female headed micro and small enterprises were home-based. These home-based businesses have the advantage of allowing women to combine both their businesses and their care responsibilities (USAID, 1995). For the ILO (2004), the large share of informal employment is the inability of the formal sector (public and private sectors) to expand and absorb the growing labour force.

4.2 Nature and Status Quo of Gender Roles in Nadowli

The gender role arrangement was intentionally and purposefully constructed by the early social setups to assist the people agree and understand the precise and distinctive activities each gender bounds to. According to the people interviewed in the study, men and women have specific gender roles to perform. Both at home and outside the home, men and women consciously or unconsciously divide roles and activities among themselves.

Within families, women perform roles including cleaning the home or compound, fetching water, collecting firewood, cooking, washing-clothes and bowls, nursing kids and shopping for domestic use. Men, at the family level,
provide food and money for the upkeep of the home. They also are responsible for taking crucial decisions on issues concerning the family. Outside the home or at the community level, they both have their roles to perform to ensure societal growth and cohesion. Women undertake activities including cleaning around water sources, communal labour activities and organizing events such as funeral activities. Men are responsible for taking decisions and performing communal activities that are energy demanding. It emerged from the study that men take major decisions both at home and at the community level. Women may be invited to the decision making process or consulted depending on the nature or kind of the decision that is to be made (Source: Field Work, May 2013).

From the interviews, it is clear that the gender role activities of men are productive and mostly take them outside the home while the activities of women are reproductive in nature which mostly limit them to the home. These were consistent with the findings of March et al. (1999) and Mtshali (1999). In other words, women perform the overwhelming portion of household tasks, particularly after they have married or have had children.

From the study, certain gender activities or roles, traditionally, are considered inappropriate to be performed by opposite genders. Traditionally, the social culture sees it as inappropriate and disgraceful for a husband to sweep, cook, collect firewood or wash dishes. These views were underscored by a 41 year old farmer: “....cook! Am I a woman to be cooking? Our tradition allocated cooking to women”. Likewise, it was reported that it is inappropriate for the woman to weed or till the land when the husband is there.
Community members tease and mock at men whose wives engaged in such activities.

From the findings, 'the belief that it is disgraceful for men to carry out domestic or a household activity' is not peculiar to men alone; women are extensively associated with this belief too. Some women refuse assistance from their spouses in managing their domestic or domiciliary affairs since they would regard that as meddling in their private affairs, they possibly will feel reproached of being lazy and irresponsible. The case of a 43 year old woman is particularly illustrative in this regard:

"I'm a housewife and I do everything – the cooking, cleaning, shopping, childcare. I brew pito on weekly basis but he brings home the majority of the cash for the survival of the family. I would not watch or allow him to wash bowls or sweep the compound. That is my work and would not allow him to interfere and that keeps everything running smoothly" (Interview, May 2013).

As the literature suggests, since social customs habitually ascertain our expectations for the character traits and behaviours that both men and women take on and exhibit (Eagly, 1987), inability to adapt to these socially agreed gendered roles may bring about being recognized and assessed negatively (Mahalik, 2000). Consequently, despite the fact that men and women take on and exhibit both masculine and feminine features, society still anticipate men to be masculine and women to be feminine (McCreary, 1994).

However, men and women offer help to each other in their gendered roles when possible. In other words, gender roles are not strictly the preserve of men or women. It however emerged from the study that the rate at which
this happens favours men than women. For example, it was indicated by both men and women interviewed that women help men in farm activities but very few men offer help to women with their roles at home.

The low extension of help from men to women was attributed to the economic situation. Whereas a section of women sees it as wicked and unfair on the part of men, it was apparent from the responses of men that they have to spend a greater part of their time outside working to bring something home for the family to depend on. These were the views of a 32 year old man:

As a man you need to feed, clothed and shelter your family....you have to work had to achieve this. What time do you have to help the woman at home with her responsibilities? (Interview, May 2013)

The existence of a new social structure was alluded to by a section of respondents. As espoused by respondents, this is a “new or modern” social structure that perceives women and men of society as equals in terms of rights, status and responsibilities. This structure allows men and women to perform any activities even when they are considered by tradition to be for the opposite gender. One woman said:

Today, both husbands and wives work to generate income for the family and both experience equal social statuses and financial independence. What is wrong with my husband preparing the meal or helping me in the kitchen? As a matter of fact he baths the kids and helps me in the kitchen. The role of homemaker becomes our responsibility. I think adjustments and understanding are the recommended ways that may assist a peaceful running family. Holding on to the stone era ideas and lifestyles might aid only to aggravate the situation (Interview, May 2013).
This suggests that gender roles are dynamic and changes with respect to time and context. Men and women may be performing roles that are deemed fit for the opposite gender. This could be attributed to the impact of education because it tends to be respondents who attained tertiary and secondary education who saw nothing wrong with the emerging social structure. As noted earlier by Baxter and Kane (1995), people who are educated tend to have egalitarian attitudes due to their contact with egalitarian ideas. In terms of age it was found that, the older generations (50+) perceived the ‘new social structure’ as a force that in future will disintegrate society.

4.2.1 Concerns of the Gender Roles Status quo

Responses were varied with regards to the current gender roles status quo. 60% of the women interviewed indicated that the current gender division of labour was unequally divided between men and women. Accounts of the study suggested that whereas men perform one activity at a time, women engage in multiple roles at a time. Men engaged in productive or community management roles or activities which are done one at a time and are rewarded:

My farm work is my farm work. When I wake up, I go to the farm if that is what I plan to do. It is my wife who has to sweep and do other things before coming to the farm (Interview, May 2013).

According to accounts of study participants, men perform just a small fraction of reproductive activities. It is the women who perform so many reproductive roles. Family and community responsibilities take a lot of women’s time and energy, though they are not rewarded financially.
We would not be poor if the services women render in the house were paid for... even if it is one cedi a day (Interview, May 2013).

Interestingly, the study accounts indicate that society will be in chaos if there is a swap of roles between men and women. Even women who bemoan the tedious nature of housework and other reproductive activities did not agree or wish for gender roles swapping. As to why they would not, respondents revealed that the physiological features of men and women are different hence men cannot do most of the activities of women likewise women. A 43 year old woman explained that “women are physiologically weak and feeble and cannot for instance hold the hoe to till the land meaningfully”. It was also apparent from the responses that the social culture will not permit men and women to swap roles for any reason. “Tradition forbids it” and “it will provoke the wrath of the gods” echoed by a 62 year old widow.

4.3 Gender Differences in Poverty

4.3.1 Meaning of Poverty

First of all, the understanding of poverty from respondents’ perspective was investigated and a wide range of meanings were given to poverty. Responses on the meaning of poverty per the understanding of respondents were; lack of income, lack of employment, lack of education, lack of good health, lack of children and supportive kinsmen and inability to satisfy basic needs of food, shelter and clothing (see table 4.2).
The above responses confirm that poverty means different things to different people as illustrated by the World Bank:

"Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom" (World Bank, 2006).

From table 4.2, though 58% (29% + 29%) of the respondents consented that poverty is lack of income and lack of food, shelter and clothing, one would realise that poverty is not just a material issue as confirmed by the responses to the other indicators of poverty - lack of employment, lack of education, lack of good health, lack of children and supportive kinsmen and inability to satisfy basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. However, it suggests that income
generation is very important in addressing poverty. This is exemplified by the following quote:

Money is not everything but with money a lot of “lacks” or problems can be turned around- your kids will go to school, they will access good health care, eat well and dress well (Interview, May 2013).

Out of the 100 respondents, 56% of them (both men and women) believe they were not poor per their understanding of poverty while 44% of the respondents asserted that they were poor since in their view they are in one or more of the above descriptions. This is what a woman has to say:

Look at me and where I stay; death came for my husband and I have no one taking care of me. I can’t work either. Am I not poor? I am poor (Interview, May 2013).

4.3.2 Factors Responsible for Gender Differences in Poverty

In line with objective 2, the factors that account for gender differences in poverty were investigated. From the study findings, majority of the respondents, 89 of them believed that women were poorer compared to men. Almost half of the women (48%) believed that they were poor as against 33% of the men. The study findings indicated varying responses with respect to why there is a gender difference in poverty or why women are poorer than men. To facilitate the analysis of the findings, these responses were put into three broad categories based on the emerging trends from the respondents. The three categories are interwoven and intertwined and are defined in terms of nature of women reproductive roles, decision making, and illiteracy.
4.3.2.1 Nature of Women Reproductive Work

Housework constitutes a large portion of reproductive work. Though it engages every member of society, it dominates the work-life of women (Glen, 1984). The question of whether reproductive roles influence poverty in the study area generally generated a lot of emotional outpouring during the data collection process. In general, respondents alluded to the nature of women reproductive roles as the responsible factor making women poorer. Specifically, participants felt that the time consuming nature of women reproductive roles; the fact that they are unpaid for; and the inability of women to undertake certain income generating activities during periods of pregnancy women poorer. Study participants alluded that men perform less reproductive duties hence, have relative freedom to do income generating activities which gave them the advantage to be better off.

It was apparent from the interviews that the multiple responsibilities or roles of women make them time constraint and are unable to engage in meaningful income generating activities. A middle aged dressmaker echoed:

Women spend a greater number of hours doing household and caregiving duties, which decreases the number of hours they can work to earn income. Yet there are as many men who consider their income their own, even if married with children and a home-making wife. Where you are able to do a small business, it doesn’t receive the necessary care and dedication of time that it deserves to grow (Interview, May 2013).

It is natural for men to work outside the home; however, women could do it if only they could combine it with various household duties. Juggling both productive work and responsibilities at home reduce their income generating abilities. These views were underscored by a respondent:
I have to get up as early as 4:00am to start my day's activities. I have to sweep, cook, wash, fetch water, collect firewood, shop etc. These are all unpaid for, undervalued and unrewarded. It is even thankless. In performing all these activities what time will you get to do an income generating activity? I could have used the time I used for the housework to go and do “by-day” for someone for money; but who will do my housework for me if I go? Even when I get a little time, I am already tired that I cannot do any meaningful work for money. Housework and business cannot go together (Interview, May 2013).

It also emerged from accounts of the interview that women spend more time providing unpaid caregiving than men. Participants clarified that women relatively care for children and the aged or disabled family members than men. A 24 year old mother lamented; “motherhood drains women’s efforts and time”. Combining caregiving with paid work or business can be distressful; women are more likely to take time out of the workforce to care for family. A participant expressed his opinion on the theme of caregiving as follows:

When my mother was old and could not even move my wife had to regulate her buying and selling activities to always be around to take care of her. She could not go to Techiman for her wares or go to further communities to sell again; and that affected the business greatly. I was there, but she was the best person to take care of her at that situation (Interview, May 2013).

The lack of adequate necessary infrastructure at home such as water facilities was also alluded to as compounding the woes of women with regard to the performance of reproductive roles. Specifically, participants drew linkages between firewood collection, fetching water and how they contribute to impoverish women.

From the study findings as indicated by table 4.3, 50% (38% + 12%) of women interviewees did indicate the use of firewood as a source of fuel for
domestic use and 78.3% as indicated in table 4.4 has no water within the house for domestic activities.

Table 4.3: Source of Fuel for Domestic Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firewood alone</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPG alone</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal alone</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewood and Charcoal</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPG and Charcoal</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, May 2013

Table 4.4: Distance to Water Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within the House</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 100m Range</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 100m and 500m</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 500m</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, May 2013

From table 4.4, women have to trek several metres and spent several hours to draw water for domestic use. The following two quotes further illustrate this:

The situation is particularly serious when you have a relatively large household size dominated by men like my case...the source of water is not close and you have to fetch water for their use (Interview, May 2013).
It is not just easy for us women. Have you seen that tree? (It was about 400 metres away) ... that is where I go to fetch water every time. We are 13 in the house - 4 women and 9 men. You can imagine what we are going through in fetching water alone. Now, I am a "danda head"... I did not go to school. What meaningful business can I combine with these kinds of activities? (Interview, May 2013)

Not only did respondents bemoan the effects of these activities on their health, they also indicate that overall, they are deprived of sufficient dedicated time and energy to engage in fulltime income generating activities.

The findings also revealed a contrary and an interesting view with regards to relationship between reproductive roles and poverty feminization. The view stressed that reproductive roles and poverty are not related, though respondents with this view were quick to indicate that house work particularly was tedious and time consuming. They argued that the ability to perform household activities well is what makes a woman a "woman". A woman who is able to do this well is respected, and that is enough reward. A woman emphasised:

Respect and dignity of a woman are very important than money. A woman is respected and dignified when she is able to keep her environment clean, her utensils neat, feed her husband etc. That is the job of a woman.....and doing this job cannot make a woman poor (Interview, May 2013).

This view as alluded to by respondents emphasize that it is rather the economic situation that pushes women to combine house work with other income generating activities because "the housework is a full time job of a woman". During lean seasons for instance, households depend significantly on the ingenuity of women to bring food to the house. Thus "we have to do all these chores with shea butter extraction, dawadawa processing and charcoal
burning and so on just to salvage the situation”. It was indicated that the objective is not to grow and expand the enterprise but to help the man fulfil his obligations at that moment.

Largely from the above illustrations, it is apparent that the desire of women to move above the poverty line is hampered by performance of reproductive activities. Performance of these activities is tiring and energy consuming and results in lack of dedicated time to engage in fulltime income generating activity.

4.3.2.2 Decision Making

This category includes women who during the study attested to having suffered disengagement of businesses and squashed dreams of engaging in certain income generating activities. Their husbands did not give their approval. It was reported that the man is the head of the family traditionally and religiously, thus, respect and honour is accorded him in that regard by seeking his consent and approval of any intention the woman wants to take. In other words, as captured in the words of a 28 year old woman “a woman must obey the man since it is the man who pays the dowry and not the woman”. Women who take independent decisions without consulting the husband are considered disrespectful. From the study, their attitudes breed tensions in families. They are nicknamed “pog gandaa” meaning ‘strong woman’. The quotes below are illustrative in this regard:

I do not own land or anything. I have to seek permission from my husband if I want to use land to farm or do anything. If he disagrees I cannot do anything.—(Interview, May 2013). If you are “pog gandaa”, men tend to “put their eye on you” (Interview, May 2013).
Because of the cultural constraints, women do not make independent decisions on the household income and even on income generating activities they want to execute (Dejene, 2008). This is also consistent with the findings of Heilman et al. (2004) and Rudman and Glick (2001) who explained that persons who disregard gender stereotypes are often seen as negative and non-conforming beings because gender stereotypes do not only prescribe but also describe how males and females should behave.

An interview with a farmer, 44, pointed out that the work activities of women in the house are very necessary. They keep the family running smoothly. Besides, “an individual man alone cannot do meaningful farming”. The contributions of women in household farming are enormous and cannot be overlooked. Because of these men do not want women to take independent decisions that would warrant them to do certain activities they cannot combine with their valuable family activities or assist in farming activities.

Although respondents gave the sense that women lack intra-household decision making power, it emerged from the interviews that women are increasingly taking independent decisions without necessarily seeking permission from husbands. This was however peculiar to the younger generation and households that the man is unable to provide for the upkeep. Study participants argued that the economic situation had degenerated so badly in families that any remedial measures by women were generally welcome even where that meant unilaterally deciding to do anything. This was especially so, given that the man could not do anything to salvage the situation. But these views also underscore the notion that women lack intra-household decision making power. Therefore, they cannot engage in
productive activities that will bring them out of poverty without the consent of the men they stay with.

4.3.2.3 Illiteracy and Lack of skills

Analysis of data concerning the educational status of respondents indicated that, out of the 28% respondents who had no education, 25% of them are men and the remaining 75% are women. Similarly, out of the 20% respondents who had tertiary education, 55% of them are men whilst 45% are women. This suggests that women are lagging behind men in terms of education and the necessary employable skills. Where people have very few tangible resources such as land or income, intangible resources such as skills are especially important in shaping their lives (March et al. 1999). Women have deficits in terms of both tangible and intangible resources. These limit the opportunities of women in accessing formal sector employment. As a result they are mostly found in the informal sector where conditions are not the best hence unable to leap out of poverty. Interestingly, gendered roles of women were found to be inhibiting women progress in education especially when they are not carefully combined. Accounts from teachers who are stakeholders in education illustrated this.

The above described factors working concurrently caught women in a web of poverty. Once caught it is extremely difficult to escape. The vicious cycle of poverty continues.
4.4 Gender Roles and Socio-Economic Status of Women

The socioeconomic status of a person largely is determined by the quality of education and training the person has acquired, income status of the person and the occupation or job the person is found doing. Education and training is particularly paramount because they influence one's job or occupation. Based on this (the demands of objective 3), the relationship between gender roles at the home and community levels (reproductive and community roles) and the socioeconomic status of women was investigated.

4.4.1 Dynamics that shape good education

Education directly benefits its recipients and improves society by increasing productivity, raising rates of innovation and invention, and enabling the adaptation of new technologies. The power of education and especially at the basic level in laying the foundation for Human Resource Development (HRD) and economic progress has been amply demonstrated by western economies. Children are like seeds. When sown and nurtured properly, they grow and blossom into vibrant and intelligent individuals capable of rising above poverty and its associated problems. If the nurturing process is inadequate, the result can be feeble, apathetic and mentally mediocre individuals, thus adversely affecting the human resource base of the country (UNICEF Ghana, 2000). Good education is archived through careful coordinated efforts of all stakeholders involved, the government, parents, teacher and the learner or student.

Accounts of respondents in interviews confirmed that good education and training hinges on good school environment, quality teachers and
availability of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs). Other respondents were nonetheless more forthright that sound mind on the part of learners is very necessary for good education. The role and ability of the child is enhanced for learning when he or she is physically, emotionally and psychologically stable and well-conditioned. Such a child stands the chance of achieving higher academic standards. A teacher and mother surmised:

I know what goes into quality education.....apart from the school environment and teachers, the child should eat and be mentally and emotionally stable and ready to learn.....if you burden or coerce young children it could obstruct their learning abilities (Interview, May 2013).

4.4.2 Gender Reproductive Roles and Women Education

A recurrent reason in the interviews with respect to the inverse relationship between gender roles and educational attainment of women revolved around house work. 82% of the women interviewees said that women house work activities have adverse impact on the level of educational attainment when pupils (girls) at the basic level combine these activities with schooling. For example, some judged the effects in terms of lateness to school, absenteeism and drop out. One participant stated:

Because of the nature of house activities I used to perform, I use to sleep late in the night.....and that affected the time I have to wake up sweep and go to school. I used to be late every time. It was embarrassing....I gave up finally (Interview, May 2013).

In addition, some respondents stated that reproductive activities, depending on when they are performed, results in poor concentration in academic activities. For example, a retired educationist argued that, most children who are found of sleeping in class or lack concentration are found of...
sleeping late at night or doing one work or the other before going to school.

She stated:

A good number of my pupils were victims. I visited a good number of parents in this community whose wards were victims. You would be amazed to hear the time children would wake up and the kind of work they would do before going to school. Parents who listen to my counsel had the situation for their children reversed (Interview, May 2013).

Ultimately, these activities culminate in failure or drop out of girls from school. They are unable to acquire the needed education and employable skills needed by the job market. Majority of them end up in the informal sector where conditions are not the best.

4.4.3 Reproductive Roles and Women Occupational Activities

The study highlighted that majority of the respondents are in the informal sector constituting 58% (figure 4.2). It emerged from the interviews that most women choose home-based income generating activities such as pito brewing (a local beer), petty trading, hairdressing and dressmaking. As noted by one of the pito brewers, "home-based 'yaaku' (business) offers me the opportunity to take care of my children, cook for them and do other activities in the home".

There are however, negative repercussions in combining income generating activities with home management. The question of how home activities affect women occupational activities drew a lot of concern. In response to a question as to how her domestic roles affect her occupation, one participant who is a hairdresser responded:
I chose to put this container here for my business so that I can still manage my home. Because of that I can't compare my business with someone who is at the market square doing the same business. How many people come here? Sales are not encouraging (Interview, May 2013).

When ask how she is coping with the trend she responded: “until my kids are grown to help me I have no choice”. These findings are consistent with that of USAID (1995) who argues that such businesses have limited direct interaction with customers as opposed to those income generating activities that are based in traditional markets or commercial districts.

Quite apart from that, women interviewed bemoan that where business activities are not home-based, they have to close early to enable them get home in time to take care of domestic activities. However, respondents were quick to add that this is done when one is not engage in ‘nansaare tuma’ (formal job).

These views were echoed by a male respondent who alluded to the overriding influence of reproductive roles in the crippling of women in the informal sector:

the house work is a full time work and a burden for women....women are very good than men when it comes to entrepreneurship....but all these small business holdings of women are not growing but ‘dying’ because they don’t have time and commitment for them (Interview, May 2013).

It also emerged from the interviews that the formal sector employment is better than the informal sector because incomes in the formal sector are guaranteed. A teacher indicated:
Combining housework and economic activity is stressful and energy sapping...but when you are in the formal sector you know the income is guaranteed and is a form of compensation unlike the informal sector (Interview, May 2013).

4.4.4 Women and leisure

Generally, leisure is considered a normal good, and it should constitute a fraction of one's 24-hour day (Glen, 1984). The question of women enjoying leisure in Nadowli drew a lot of concern. According to accounts of study participants, it does for men than for women comparatively. This was evident through the observations made by the researcher. Women interacted with during the data collection period were never found idle but engaged in one form of housework activity or the other. There was 100% attestation to this. Indeed, women have less free time for themselves to invest outside the frame of their homes just as men use the free time they enjoy to make use of them beyond the environment of their homes.

Gender roles, from the findings of the study, affects the education of women particularly girls at the basic level of schooling. This affects attaining higher educational level and acquisition of employable skills. Reproductive roles also affect the occupational activities of women both in the formal and informal sectors in terms of time constraints and labour burden hence, their incomes. Ultimately, these operate together to affect the socio-economic status of women negatively.
4.5 Connecting the Dots on Gender Roles and Poverty Feminization in Nadowli

Figure 4 gives a general representation of issues identified in this research and indicates the various connections which ultimately influence poverty feminisation. The feminisation of poverty in Nadowli is influenced by factors that are traced to gender reproductive roles.

![Diagram showing the connection between women's reproductive roles, key outcomes, and ultimate result.

Figure 4.3: Connecting the Dots on Gender Roles and Poverty Feminization

Source: Author's Construct from Field Survey, 2013

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As strongly underscored by views in this research, the performance of gender reproductive roles or activities significantly influence poverty feminization. Performance of these activities limits the role of poverty reduction strategies as they limit the ability of women to maximise output from productive activities and resources. There is often lack of concentration and dedication when productive activities and reproductive activities are combined or performed concurrently because of the significance and characteristics of these activities.

As indicated by the results of the study, performance of reproductive roles constraint women of time and sap them of their energy (labour burden) which could have been channelled into doing income generating activities. Where they squeeze out time and go into income generating activities, the responsibility of cooking, nursing children, fetching water, collecting firewood and the like take away the concentration and dedication productive or income generating activities require for increased productivity and incomes. Besides, these responsibilities forces women to undertake business activities in less business-friendly environment. These result in low productivity and low incomes, and ultimately, not only push but keep women in poverty.

Sound academic work and learning are disrupted through the performance of gender reproductive work. This affects mostly young girls in their educational activities which are necessary for career development. This is especially necessary for people or groups who have no tangible resources like land. As women fail to acquire education and skills, they are made unemployable especially in the formal sector.
4.6 Coping strategies

In view of the nature and challenges of reproductive roles reported above, this section examines strategies that women generally employed in order to cope with the status quo (that is, combination of reproductive roles and the other roles). The period indicated by respondents as the time when women are really stressed is the rainy season (from May to October) where they have to combine farming, other income generating activities and house work. This is because farming is a major economic activity of the area. The recurrent coping strategies in the interviews with respondents with respect to combining gender roles are assistance from relatives and family members and hiring of labour services.

4.6.1 Assistance from relations

The most significant group of relations in this regard is children, though women also sourced help from friends and other family members. In response to a question on the execution of combine roles, a participant had this to say:

My children (referring to two girls) help me. They sweep, wash, fetch water, and prepare meals. I really appreciate what they are doing because they help a lot (Interview, May 2013).

It was clear from the interviews that the help for women in domestic work was dominated by girls. A woman echoed that “girls ought to be close to their mothers so as to learn from them” and similarly, “the boys are to get close to their fathers and also learn from them”. This observation is found to be consistent with Bem (1981) who explains that children acquire gender meanings, expectations, and stereotypes from their cultural sharing group.
Children are important source of help for house work. It was reported that children are given chores that are not dangerous to their health or above their ability; and a child who is at least 6 years can start the performance of such activities as washing of dishes. Women who had no children especially female children would make attempts to get one from extended family relatives.

4.6.2 Hiring of labour services

As indicated by the results of the interviews, labour services are hired to facilitate the performance of the combine roles of productive, reproductive and community roles. It emerged from the responses that hired labour was into the productive activities; nonetheless, it facilitates the performance of the reproductive activities as the productive activities were taken care of. The two quotes below illustrate this:

I have a guy who sells my provision store... that enables me to run my home activities because I cannot be at home and at the store at the same time (Interview, May 2013).

I do seek the services of two women during weekends to perform laundry activities for me for a fee (Interview, May 2013).

4.7 Summary

The results of the study presented in this chapter starting with the general characteristics of the respondents gives a fair idea of the kind of people the researcher interacted with during the study period. It then followed with the nature of the gender roles status quo in Nadowli and described the concerns and challenges of these roles. The chapter then delves into the gender
differences in poverty and the perceived reasons why women are poorer. This was followed with the influence of gender roles on the socio-economic status of women in Nadowli and proceeds to describe coping strategies that are adopted by women.
SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This final part of the thesis is presented in two sessions. The first section deals with the summary of the major findings of the study, and the second deals with conclusions and recommendations. This is in line with objective 4 of the study which among other things would suggest or recommend ways through which women reproductive roles can be realigned to engender poverty reduction.

5.1 Summary of Major Findings

This section summarises the key findings of the study as regards; the nature and status quo of gender roles in Nadowli; the factors responsible for gender differences in poverty; and how gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women.

5.1.1 Nature and Status quo of Gender Roles

From the analysis it was found that men and women have specific gender roles to perform both at the household level and at the community level. The gender role activities of men are productive in nature and are mostly performed outside the home while the gender role activities of women are reproductive in nature which mostly limit women to the home. Traditionally, certain gender role activities are considered inappropriate and disgraceful to be performed by
opposite genders. The impact of education has however, led to the existence of a 'new social structure' which sees nothing wrong with men and women performing opposite roles.

5.1.2 Factors Responsible for Gender Differences in Poverty

The major factors responsible for the gender difference in poverty included the following:

a. **The nature of Women Reproductive Work**

   The results of the study revealed that housework constitutes a large portion of reproductive work and dominates the work-life of women. Reproductive activities are time consuming, unpaid for and limit the inability of women to undertake certain income generating activities.

b. **Decision Making**

   The study also revealed that women could not take independent decisions with respect to engaging in income generating activities to improve upon the economic status. The household roles of women are considered important for the smooth running of the family, therefore decisions on activities that will not allow women to effectively combine household activities and any engagement is not welcome. From the study, women who could take unilateral decisions in marital homes were of that kind that the man is unable to provide for the upkeep of the family.

c. **Illiteracy and Lack of skills**

   It was found that women are lagging behind men in terms of education and the necessary employable skills. These limit the opportunities of
women in accessing formal sector employment. As a result they are mostly found in the informal sector where conditions are not the best hence unable to leap out of poverty.

5.1.3 Gender Roles and Socio-Economic Status of Women

Gender reproductive roles, from the findings of the study, affects the education of women particularly girls at the basic level of schooling. This affects attaining higher educational level and acquisition of employable skills. Reproductive roles also affect the occupational activities of women especially in the informal sector in terms of time constraints and labour burden. Ultimately, these affect their incomes, and together affect the socio-economic status of women negatively.

On the whole, the research established new insights into the causes of poverty among women, which might serve as basis for further research. Reducing poverty among women is found to be a catalyst for rapid economic growth and national development therefore proper analysis of the reproductive roles of women will make efforts of poverty reduction on target. It is expected that if all stakeholders interested in social and economic welfare participate, poverty reduction particularly among women could be much faster.

5.2 Conclusions

This study has assessed the influence of gender roles in household arrangements on poverty feminization. It was revealed that gender roles or division of labour in household arrangements influence poverty feminization. Specifically, the reproductive roles of women contribute to the feminisation of
poverty. Reducing poverty among women is found to be a catalyst for rapid economic growth and national development, therefore proper analysis of the dynamics of gendered roles of men and women will make efforts of poverty reduction on target.

5.3 Recommendations

The focus of this section is to make policy recommendations that would help realign gender roles to engender poverty reduction. The possible policy intervention areas that could help realign gender roles include the following:

From the study, women’s ability to be more actively engage in economic activities is affected by time constraints and heavy labour burden associated with gender reproductive roles. In this regard, making infrastructure like water and energy facilities physically and economically accessible and improved technology will reduce the labour burden and the time women spent on reproductive activities. Emphasis is on the fact that women would have time and energy to channel into productive activities to increase productivity and income and leap out of poverty.

In addition, the physical and economic accessibility of these facilities will improve their income generating or productive activities. Among the major economic activities of women in Nadowli are pito brewing, hairdressing and shea butter extraction. These activities need considerable amount of water and energy resources. Therefore, improvement in the social infrastructural facilities will also improve business activities, especially in the informal sector which is the employer of most women in Nadowli and the country as a whole.
Government is called upon through its departments and agencies particularly the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing and other stakeholders such as Pronet (an NGO) to invest in the provision of water facilities. It is not only their right to enjoy these facilities but a step in fighting poverty particularly among women. It must be noted that the Village Water Project as well as the Rural Technology Development project of the District Assembly at Nadowli is a step in the right direction though not enough to arrest the situation. This is what a woman had to say:

Having a source of water close to the home will save me time for other meaningful activities. Those whose homes are closer to the water sources do not suffer the way we do. It is not easy to trek this far to draw water (Interview, May 2013)

It also emerged from the study findings that, the reproductive activities that men perform are just a small fraction of the whole. It is the women who perform so many reproductive roles. It is advocated that assistance from men to women in the performance of reproductive activities would be heart-warming and give women more contact hours with their income generating activities. Education would be necessary in this regard considering the social culture of the people of Nadowli. Stakeholders, namely, the Ministry of Women and Social Protection, the Department of Social Welfare and civil society groups such as churches are called upon to conduct periodic educational programmes and gender seminars to educate people on what families stand to gain when men in households help the women with reproductive activities. NGOs such as Action Aid Ghana, Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP) and World Vision International which are already in the Nadowli District are entreated to extend their educative
activities to cover gender sensitization programmes. It would be an effective remedy of reducing women reproductive roles because it emerged from the study that there is already in existence a “new and modern” social structure which recognises men and women as equal partners of the society with equal rights, status and responsibility.

According to the gender schema theory (Bem, 1981; 1993), children acquire gender meanings, expectations, and stereotypes from their cultural sharing group. This learned information is internalized as an unchallenged core belief, known as a gender schema, which is utilized to organize and interpret experiences. From the interviews, help for women in domestic work was dominated by girls. This portrays the gender division of labour even among children. Thus children will grow up into adults learning how to perform roles across the gender divide and see nothing wrong with it if tasks are not divided among them at the early stages of life. This is a long term way of reducing gender reproductive roles among women; and can revolutionise the whole concept of gender roles division in the next generations. It is however, contingent on the men and women of today. However, this would be very possible if the emerging “new and modern” social structure is embraced. This way, women will have devoted time to engage in full time income generating activities like men. However, parents should first embrace this to make it possible. Education of parents as well as children is therefore necessary in this regard. Teachers are called upon to help in education in this regard. The Ministry of Women and Social Protection, the Department of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Education and the NGOs that are into education and sensitization programmes in the Nadowli District such as
African Youth Alliance (AYA) and Centre for the Development of people (CEDEP) are called to initiate policies in regard.

Women have the right and should not be ignored when it comes to decision making. In addition, they should be allowed to decide freely and be responsible for what they want to do and not want to do. The study reveals that women lack intra-household decision making power even when it comes to issues concerning them. In other words, men have more control on the decisions of women on what to do and what not to do. Decision making is the responsibility of men recognise by the social culture. Thus the Ministry of Women and Social Protection, the Department of Social Welfare and NGOs in the Nadowli District are again call upon to come in with education on the fact that the woman is no less a sound minded being and can take better decisions. Particularly women should be allowed to take their own decisions on the income generating activities they want to undertake.

The high labour burden and time constraints make women access help for reproductive work even from children. As noted by the findings of the study, children are important source of help for house work. However, the kind of housework children are made to perform affects their learning abilities. It is recommended that children should not be given housework activities that are more than their ability. This can affect their health. Besides, they should not be made to work late into the night when they are to go to school the next day or work early mornings before going to school. This will affect their concentration in class. Education is the key that unlocks opportunities; hence the process of education and training of the girl-child especially should not be interfered with. Stakeholders in the education of the child such as teachers,
and the NGOs in the District that are into education are called upon to sensitize parents during Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC) meetings to desist from such practices.
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Dear Sir/Madam,

INVITATION LETTER

I am conducting a survey on how gender roles influence poverty feminization in the Nadowli District as part of my MPhil degree at University for Development Studies in Tamale.

Your response will be greatly appreciated, and assist me in ensuring my research results are representative and meaningful. I hope this research will be of interest to you and the wider academic community.

I assure you that all responses will be confidential; and individual responses will not be identified. The data will be summarised and only the summarised data with no identifying features, will be reported in the thesis and any subsequent publications.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Sabogu Justice Paternus
MPhil Candidate
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Sex: [01] Male [02] Female
2. Age: [ ]
5. Household size: [01] 1-3 persons [02] 4-6 [03] 7-9 [04] 10-12 [05] 13 persons and above

SECTION 11: GENDER ROLES STATUS QUO- CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES

7. What are your roles/responsibilities at the home?
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8. Do you perform these roles? [01] Yes [02] No
9. Outside the home, what roles do you perform to the larger community?
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...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
10. How do you combine all these roles/activities?

11. Are you satisfied with the roles/activities you perform at home and to the larger community?  
   [01] Yes  [02] No

12. Explain your answer?

13. Is there anything wrong about current gender division of labour?  
   [01] Yes  [02] No

14. What joy do you derive in performing your roles at home and to the community?

15. In performing your roles both at home and to the community, what challenges do you face?

16. Would you like to advocate for swap of roles both at home and at the community levels?  
   [01] Yes  [02] No
17. Explain your answer above?

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18. Do your roles at home and to the community affect your occupation?
   [01] Yes  [02] No

19. If yes, in what ways do they affect it?

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20. Between a man and a woman, whose occupation would be greatly affected by the roles they perform at home and to the community?
   [01] Man  [02] Woman

21. Explain your answer above?

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SECTION 111: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN POVERTY LEVELS

22. What do you mean when you say somebody is poor?

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23. Would you say you are poor?  [01] Yes  [02] No
24. Explain?

25. Would you say that men and women are in different levels of poverty?
   [01] Yes [02] No [03] Indifferent

26. Explain your answer?

27. Would you say women are poorer than men? [01] Yes [02] No [03] Indifferent
   (If no SKIP to 34; if indifferent SKIP to 36)

28. If yes, what factors make women poorer than men?

29. Would you say that the roles women perform at home and at the community levels can be responsible for making them poorer? [01] Yes [02] No

30. Why/Explain?

31. What factors make men better-off?
32. Would you say that the roles men perform at home and at the community levels can make them better-off? [01] Yes [02] No

33. Why/Explain?

34. If no, what factors make men poorer than women?

35. What factors make women better-off?

SECTION IV: GENDER ROLES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN

36. Would you agree that women roles at the home and community levels can affect their educational attainment? [01] Yes [02] No (If no SKIP to 38)

37. If yes, how?

38. Would you say that women roles at the home and community levels can limit them to certain jobs? [01] Yes [02] No
39. If yes how?

40. Would you say women enjoy a lot of leisure than men? 
[01] Yes [02] No

41. Why?

42. Would you say gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women? [01] Yes [02] No

43. What suggestions will you give to government, NGOs etc concerning gender roles if they want to help?

Thank You
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE/CHECKLIST

Items

Section 1: Introduction

1. Sex
2. Age
3. Educational status
4. Marital Status
5. Household size
6. Occupation

Section 11: Gender Roles Status Quo- Concerns and Challenges

7. What are your roles/responsibilities at the home?
8. Do you perform these roles?
9. Outside the home, what roles do you perform to the larger community?
10. How do you combine all these roles/activities?
11. Are you satisfied with the roles/activities you perform at home and to the larger community? Explain your answer?
12. Is there anything wrong about current gender division of labour?
13. What joy do you derive in performing your roles at home and to the community?
14. In performing your roles both at home and to the community, what challenges do you face?
15. Would you like to advocate for swap of roles both at home and at the community levels?
16. Explain your answer above?
17. Do your roles at home and to the community affect your occupation? How?
18. Between a man and a woman, whose occupation would be greatly affected by the roles they perform at home and to the community?
19. Explain your answer above?
Section 111: Gender Differences in Poverty Levels

20. What do you mean when you say somebody is poor?
21. Would you say you are poor and why?
22. Would you say that men and women are in different levels of poverty?
23. Explain your answer?
24. Would you say women are poorer than men?
25. (If no SKIP to 34; if indifferent SKIP to 36)
26. If yes, what factors make women poorer than men?
27. Would you say that the roles women perform at home and at the community levels can be responsible for making them poorer?
   Why/Explain?
28. What factors make men better-off?
29. Would you say that the roles men perform at home and at the community levels can make them better-off?
30. Why/Explain?
31. If no, what factors make men poorer than women?
32. What factors make women better-off?

Section 11v: Gender Roles and Socio-Economic Status of Women

33. Would you agree that women roles at the home and community levels can affect their educational attainment?
34. Would you say that women roles at the home and community levels can limit them to certain jobs?
35. Would you say women enjoy a lot of leisure than men? Why?
36. Would you say gender roles influence the socio-economic status of women?
37. What suggestions will you give to towards gender roles division?

Thank You