

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**THE EFFECTS OF WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND ON FOOD
SECURITY IN THE ZABZUGU/TATALE DISTRICT, GHANA**

BY

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION

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

Candidate's signature..... *Mohammed* Date..... *11/08/11*

Name..... *MOHAMMED SUMAILA MASHOUD*

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Principal Supervisor's Signature..... *Ed* Date..... *11/08/11*

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ABSTRACT

Concerns over the food security situation in Ghana are reflected in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to reduce the number of food insecure by half by 2015. Given that land plays an important role in the livelihoods of the majority of Africans, food security cannot be achieved unless issues of access to land and the capacity to use land productively and in a sustainable manner are addressed. This study seeks to examine women's access to land and how it affects household food security in Zabzugu. Qualitative and quantitative methods were both used for the study. A number of different techniques were used for the data collection. These were questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussion and observation. The study findings revealed that Women's insecure access to land impacts negatively on food security and environmental sustainability.

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are made. There is the need for traditional leaders and household heads to strengthen dialogue between men and women on issues concerning land. The modes of land acquisition is a major obstacle and for women who intend to acquire land for production. Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other development partners in the district should launch advocacy programmes that target the removal of all forms of barriers that hinder the acquisition of land by women. Making the acquisition of land by women a topical issue is the first step towards easing and improving women's access to land.



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my darling wife; madam Lela and lovely children; Ayisha, Muslihat and Sahalat for their moral support and sacrifice. I also dedicate this work to my brothers; Sulemana, Alhassan and Abdul-Nasir for their unflinching support and prayers.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CIFS	Community Initiative-Driven for Food Security
DPU	Development Planning Unit
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDHS	Ghana Demographic Health Survey
GLSS	Ghana Living Standard Survey
GPRS	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
LAP	Land Administration Project
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MiDA	Millennium Development Authority
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NLP	National Land Policy
NREM	Natural Resources and Environmental Management
PHC	Population and Housing Census
TDC	Town Development Committee
UN	United Nations



UNDP United Nations Development Programme

WIAD Women in Agriculture and Development



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Women face various constraints around the world related to access to land and property. Cultural, economic, and social barriers are obstacles for women to own, inherit, and use land (UN, 1995). Nearly one third of the households in the whole world are headed by women. They are generally much poorer than those headed by men and predominate among low-income and informal settlements. To give women right of access to land and property would not only provide adequate shelter for all, but would also be one way of breaking the vicious cycle of poverty (Habitat II, 1996).

In most developing countries, land is not only the primary means for generating a livelihood but often the main vehicle for investing, accumulating wealth, and transferring it between generations. Thus, the ways in which access to land is regulated, property rights are defined, and ownership conflicts are resolved have broad implications beyond the sphere of agricultural production (Deininger and Binswanger, 1999).

Historically, land has been treated as a common property resource in many African societies. However in recent times, there is an increasing shift from common property ownership of land to individual ownership resulting from the process of modernization and commercialisation. While this change is taking place, it is observed that women farmers are being limited in having access to or ownership of land and other productive resources although they continue to do most of the farm work (Gittinger, 1990). Therefore, their contribution to national efforts and household food security and national food self-sufficiency goes unnoticed.

Food supply, which has a direct bearing on the availability and accessibility of productive land, has been a serious threat to food security throughout the world. Obtaining enough

food is an important concern for every nation in the world, and in some countries food shortage is an extremely serious problem. About 840 million people worldwide, or about 14 percent of the total population, do not have adequate food (Anderson, 2008).

A variety of historical and contemporary forces prevent African countries from attaining food security; a condition in which a population has physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food over a given period to meet their dietary needs and preference for an active life. Colonialists replaced the most fertile peasant farms with plantations designed to provide sugar, coffee, cocoa, tea, peanuts, rubber, cotton, and other commodities for export to their own countries. The rich farmlands of Ghana, for example, once the site of abundant yam production were transformed into cocoa plantations (Anderson, 2008).

Access to land and security of tenure are key considerations in Ghana as the majority of its population are engaged as food and cash crop farmers (Alhassan, 2006). According to the Population and Housing Census in 2000, 56.2% of the population is rural; the majority of whom solely depend on primary land activities for their sustenance. Three legal land regimes are recognized in Ghana comprising the customary, statutory, and common practice. However, around 80% of lands in Ghana are in the custody of customary authorities, hence they play the most significant influence in land ownership and use arrangements. Several articles of the 1992 constitution relate to land rights. Article 20 for example discusses the government's power of eminent domain - the right to compel others to give land to government, and places restriction on that right. Article 267 deals with stool lands and Article 266 deals with land ownership by non - citizens.

A Land Administration Programme (LAP) is currently underway to improve access to land, and ensure certainty of land rights. The objectives of the programme include strengthening customary land secretariats, strengthening public and private sector land



administration and management institutions, and pilot systematic land titling, and registration.

The literature on women and land tenure seems to emphasize the point that among many ethnic groups, African customary law made a provision for women to have land rights, although this might not be the case in the postcolonial period. Keller, Phiri and Milimo (1990) argue, for instance, that under the traditional systems in many Zambian ethnic groups, such as the matrilineal Bemba of the Northern Province, the Tonga of Southern Province and the Lozi of Western Province, both men and women had access to and considerable control over productive resources such as land.

In Ghana, women's immense role in agriculture has been acknowledged. But unlike the examples above the majority of these women have only secondary or derived rights; the right to own or use land results from the relationship of women with men (for example as wives) (Alhassan, 2006).

In the light of women's crucial role in food production and provision, any set of strategies for sustainable food security must address their limited access to productive resources. This limited access, and women's insufficient purchasing power, are products of a series of interrelated social, economic and cultural factors that force them into a subordinate role, to the detriment of their own development and that of society as a whole. It is against this background that this study is being undertaken to closely examine how women's access and right to land affects food security in the study area.

1.2 The Problem Statement

The availability, accessibility and utilization of land of a nation or any geographic unit determines how they may be economically employed (Acquaye, 1986). Most developing countries such as Ghana continue to depend on the agricultural sector for economic growth, poverty alleviation, food security, and environmental sustainability (Duncan, 2004). Unfortunately, female actors in the agricultural sector lack access to land. For instance in countries such as Ghana, Zambia, Uganda, Egypt, and Nigeria, the poor who are mostly women have limited access to productive lands (Kajoba, 2002).

Since the 1970s, there has been a great concern by governments in developing countries on the condition of women in agricultural policies and Rural Development Programmes (Endely, 1991). The concern by policy makers and governments is that these programmes have tended to discriminate against women in most developing countries, especially those in Africa, but favoured the men folk and yet women are the major food producers. It is argued that women are denied equal access to means of production such as land, credit, appropriate technology and extension services (Endely, 1991).

As an agriculture-driven economy, any expected increases in human welfare must first and foremost see to the improvement of agricultural production and productivity. This is a daunting task as population continues to increase and serious problems confront land accessibility and security of tenure. The impacts of insecure access to land have particularly been very devastating for vulnerable groups such as women, migrants, and landless youth. There are concerns that as these trends persist, these and other groups would find their land rights marginalized and this will worsen their poverty.

Rural women throughout the Northern Region of Ghana contribute greatly to agricultural production and are highly dependent on agricultural sources of income. Yet these women, who both contribute to and depend on agriculture, do not have secure rights to the most important agricultural asset, land. The situation is not different in Zabzugu in the Zabzugu/Tatale District of the Northern Region where women contribute greatly to the production of staple food commodities such as maize, tubers, rice, millet, meat and the like for consumption and for sale to get some income.



Despite the contribution of these women to food production, little is known about how women access land for production in the study area. The purpose of this research is therefore to examine women's access and right to land in Zabzugu where food insecurity is believed to be worsening gradually and continuing and to provide policy recommendations aimed at enhancing the position of rural women. The study will therefore answer the following critical questions:

- What factors affect women's access to land for production in Zabzugu?
- What type(s) of land holdings exist for men and women in Zabzugu?
- How does women's access to land contribute to food security in Zabzugu?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine women's access to land and how it affects food security in Zabzugu.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Identify and describe the factors that affect women's access to land for production in Zabzugu.
- ii. Identify and describe how men and women acquire land for productive purpose in the study area.

Determine women's contribution to household food security in

Zabzugu,



1.4 Relevance of the Study

In many countries and regions of sub-Saharan Africa, women's right and access to land and the incidence of exercising their rights have been eroding over time. Most women in Ghana, especially rural women whose livelihoods depend on available resource do not have access to land. Giving the role of women in the production of food towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, especially those on poverty alleviation and reduction of hunger (MDG One) and the dream of Ghana becoming a middle income country by 2015, the relevance of the study cannot be overemphasized.

The results of the study will contribute to baseline information about women's access and rights to land that exists in Zabzugu and to serve as a source of knowledge of women's contribution to the socio-economic development of rural communities. This will help increase the awareness among women in Zabzugu in particular and all women in the country in general on their rights and how they could access land for production. Although the study is only in Zabzugu, it is hoped that it will also inform women in other communities in the District and elsewhere of why they have less access, control and tenure of land, property, and settlement than men and how to overcome them.

The results of women's contribution to food supply and the reasons for food insecurity that affects households will help to unveil some of the constraints to food security in Zabzugu and will also add to the voices of civil society groups that advocate equal right and access to land for both men and women.

Finally, the results will be relevant to policy makers, Town Development Committees (TDCs), Project Planners, District Assembly and Donor Agencies to be able to identify basic issues on land tenure and agricultural production which tend to impinge, particularly on rural women's income and food supply. Also, the findings of this study



may raise issues of interest to researchers and development practitioners for further research.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

A study of this nature should have been conducted country-wide, especially that there are different beliefs and practices pertaining to land access and use in different parts of the country. However, certain factors have compelled the researcher to limit the study to only one community in a selected district in the country — Zabzugu in the Zabzugu/Tatale District. Prominent among the limitations are time and financial constraints, travelling difficulties and cooperation on the part of respondents.

Timing of the research work has also been a major problem, conducting the research while working posed a very big challenge. There were instances where the research had to be suspended to attend to certain phenomenal emergencies or schedules at work. This put an unprecedented burden on the researcher.

Inadequate financing was also a major limitation. The researcher had to sacrifice a lot to be able to meet some of the financial requirements of the study. The number of questionnaires had to be reduced due to limited financial resources.

Poor road network, especially the Zabzugu — Yendi road coupled with the only means of transport (Metro Mass) had made travelling to see my supervisor in Tamale very difficult. Lack of internet facility in Zabzugu had also constrained the researcher's ability to access information on the net as well as send my work to my supervisor in good time via the net. This has delayed the research work.

Finally, it was difficult collecting data because many of the respondents did not understand the rationale of the study and thought they were going to be exposed. The



women respondents for instance did not want to give out “vital information” for fear that it will be considered an exposure of their husbands to the public. If anything at all, their husbands should be the ones to answer questions of that kind.

1.6 Scope of Study

The study is confined to Zabzugu in the Zabzugu/Tatale District. In terms of subject matter, the study examined women’s access to land and how it affects food security in Zabzugu.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one presents a background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives and relevance of the study, limitation, and organisation of the study. Chapter two consists of the review of relevant literature based on theoretical and empirical evidence on women’s access to land and food security. Chapter three is the methodology employed for the study. Chapter four presents the results and discussions of the main findings. Chapter five consists of the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study and suggested areas for future research.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of relevant literature related to the study. The main purpose of any literature review is to find out what has already been done about the subject of study. So much literature on women's access to and use of land has been generated by many researchers. Given the volume of research on this topic, it is not practical to review every reference in detail, so efforts were concentrated on reviewing literature that have direct reference to the topic under study, especially, to explore the state of women's access to land and how it impacts on food security and poverty among women. The next four sections of this chapter look at the fundamental concepts of the study.

2.2 Fundamental concepts of the study

Any scientific research is based on the assumption that the explanation of social phenomena is not dependent on immediate data of consciousness (Patrice and Elise, 1998). It is therefore necessary to define the fundamental concepts of this study. The key concepts that are considered here are: woman, land, access to land and food security.

2.2.1 Definition of a woman

Two tendencies dominate the definition of woman in the context of this study. One is the naturalist tendency (biological definition) and the other relates to the socio-anthropological tendency which favors the role and social status of the woman as determinate of her definition. The biological definition (definition by sex) gives the "real" being of women. In this context, women are human beings of the female sex (the sex which gives birth). From this perspective, the key differential element of women compared to men lies in sex. This biological approach is more integrated to a more global and operational one than the socio - anthropological approach (Patrice and Elise, 1998)



The socio-anthropological approach definition of the woman puts an emphasis on her social role and status, on her social existence. Here, the woman is known as an actor in the same capacity as man. Thus, one thinks of the woman in a multidimensional view, by going beyond the classical opposition between the domestic and the political, and integrating the feminine dimension in the global understanding of society. The social status of women and the relationships between them and men cannot be thought of outside the question of power that determines the social dynamics. “Woman” must at once be naturalized and sociologized. To be a woman is to be both a biological being and a social actor. One does not happen without the other. The biological and the social are linked. They influence each other and, sometimes, determine each other.

In the frame of this study, the operational choice of woman takes into account the living place of the woman and her matrimonial status. The category of women considered are those who are married and live in their matrimonial homes. In the Ghanaian context, it is the women who are married who use the land most for their different productive activities. The rural woman, especially those in the study area are considered in this study.

2.2.2 Definition of land

Land can be understood as both a heritage and a resource (Patrice and Elise, 1998). Ollennu defines land as:

“The term “land” as understood in customary law has a wide application. It includes the land itself, i.e., the surface soil; it includes things on the soil which are enjoyed with it as being part of the land by nature, e.g., rivers, streams, lakes, lagoons, creeks, growing trees like palm trees and dawadawa trees, or as being artificially fixed to it like houses, buildings and any structures whatsoever; it also includes any estate, interest or right in, to, or over the land or over any of the other things which land



denotes, e.g., the right to collect snails or herbs, or to hunt on land” (Ollennu, 1985: 59).

Ollennu’s definition raises doubts about a precise definition of “land”, but it encompasses rights over a variety of things attached to soil. Laws, for instance, recognize a difference between ownership of a “land” and ownership of a farm. This is because ownership of a farm is not ownership of some type of “land,” or simply because different people may own different “land” interests in the same physical parcel of earth, each with different rights. This definition is silent about access to land.

In this study, land is conceptualized as a resource, as property. In present practice, the land in its different shapes (farming, forestry etc) is a resource highly solicited both by the state and by the populations. It is the object of many stakes: political, economic, social and cultural. For the State it is a political and economical stake. The State poses itself as the regular owner of the land. Land is the spatial expression of the States power, its sovereignty, and also a source of financial revenues. For the populations, the stake is not only political but also economic, social and cultural. Land is a factor of power and strength. The withholder, owner, or user of land has power in the society and controls the dynamics of production of social groups. Land is a vital resource. But, culturally and symbolically land is a sacred object that ensures the mediation of men and women to the sacred. It is an element of the social status in the sense that it determines the relationships of individuals to the different social networks to which they belong. Economically and socially, the land ensures life and means of subsistence. Its use is indispensable for survival.

2.2.3 Definition of Access to Land

Access to land and security of tenure are critical elements in alleviating rural poverty and moving toward a world where food security and the absence of hunger are a reality for all. At the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome, the governments of the world agreed upon a declaration to reduce hunger by one half in the year 2015 (Rosset, 2001), as a step to ensure food security.



In this study, access to land refers to the ability to use land and other natural resources, to control the resources and to transfer the rights of the land and take advantage of other opportunities. There are three main aspects to enhanced access to land: (i) strengthening land tenure security and land rights; (ii) increasing the amount of land that someone has access to; and (iii) improving the productivity of land. Alternatives to enhancing access to land for agriculture may include promotion of non-farm activities and urbanization (IFAD, 2008).

2.2.4 Definition of Food Security

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”. Food security is essentially built on three pillars: food availability, food access, and food utilization (Roberts, 2001). An individual must have access to sufficient food of the right dietary mix (quality) “at all times” to be food secure. Those who never have sufficient quality food are chronically food insecure. Those whose access to an adequate diet is conditioned by seasonality are food insecure and are generally called seasonally food insecure. Individuals who normally have enough to eat but become food insecure in the face of disasters triggered by economic, climatic, and civil shocks (war and conflict) are transiently food insecure. The “at all times” element of the food security definition makes risk and associated vulnerability an important element of the food security concept. The definition of food security is often applied at varying levels of aggregation, despite its articulation at the individual level. The importance of a pillar depends on the level of aggregation being addressed. At a global level, the important pillar is food availability. Does global agricultural activity produce sufficient food to feed all the world's inhabitants? The answer today is yes, but it may not be true in the future given the impact of a growing world population, emerging plant and animal pests and diseases, declining soil productivity and environmental quality, increasing use of land for fuel rather than food, and lack of attention to agricultural research and development, among other factors. Food security analyzed at the household level is conditioned by a



household's own food production and household members' ability to purchase food of the right quality and diversity in the market place.

Food security is not just a goal of sustainable agricultural development; it is a right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and amplified by Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Women also have the right to be equal partners in the agriculture sector, and to that end the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women protects women's equal access to land, credit, and income. The concept of food security in this study is defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences.

2.3 Historical Context

Researchers with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), based in Washington, DC, note that the marginal nature of women's land rights is a historical problem in Africa. Before colonial rule, land ownership and access took diverse forms but were largely vested in lineages, clans and families, with male leaders exercising day-to-day control. Members of a particular lineage or clan would seek rights to use land from those community or family leaders (Mary, 2008).

The land tenure systems identified prior to colonial rule include societies in which an individual obtains land rights by residence, without allocation through a hierarchy of estates, land holding under the control of lineages, societies in which Chiefs exercised direct control over allocation of land with a descending hierarchy of estates and feudal systems with landlords and tenants (Rawlings, 2009).



In his address at the African Presidential Roundtable, Germany, April 2009, the Former President of Ghana, Jerry John Rawlings stated that:

“societies in which an individual obtains land rights by residence, without allocation through a hierarchy of estates was the most prevalent type of land tenure in pre-colonial Africa where land was generally plentiful and the populations were sparse. Individual families within a given village usually acquired land by clearing virgin bush; by land transfer; and by inheritance. As long as individuals were socially acceptable in the community or village, they acquired a piece of land after consulting the village headman, who in turn had constant contact with the sub chief or chief. Once an individual had acquired a piece of land, the community protected his/her rights to its use as long as he continued to use it. When not in use, land reverted to the community. The individual did not own the land as such but enjoyed its usufruct. The Chief did not own the land either but held it in trust for his people. The Chief and his subjects participated in direct production of their own food for subsistence and the subsistence cultivation peasantry especially women, controlled the produce in their own granaries Thus, under this system of subsistence production and communal tenure, society was egalitarian and not sharply differentiated” (www.RealEstateAfrica.com, 2009).

Land holding under the control of lineages was a system in which access to agricultural land was exclusively reserved for use by the members who traced their heritage from a common ancestry. As a rule, transfer of land rights among them was between patrilineal or matrilineal relatives or friends. However, transformations in land tenure had begun to emerge even under this system in which access to land was based on lineage. Owing to the practice of long continuous cultivation of cassava gardens, the permanence of rights over plots of land held by individuals were inevitably strengthened (www.RealEstateAfrica.com, 2009).

Due to land shortage, especially in certain areas, commercialization of land as a saleable commodity was quite marked. Transfer of land to persons outside a lineage for a cash consideration began to take place and was quite common. On the whole, the rights of



individuals to sell land appeared to be strong enough to enable them to do so without obtaining the consent of their heads of lineage (Leonard, 2003).

Societies in which Chiefs exercised direct control over allocation of land with a descending hierarchy of estates was a form of land tenure associated with the emergence of centralized pre-colonial states or kingdoms. The King and the chiefly classes controlled land and assigned land rights to their subjects. In some areas land tenure evolved a political and land tenure system that could also be described as evolving towards a quasi or semi-feudal type (www.RealEstateAtilcal, 2009).

Feudal systems of land tenure and feudal relations of production emerged in many different parts of Africa. The ruler granted lands to the military commanders, the aristocracy; the nobility and the Church. Such lands could be leased, mortgaged or sold. Although those groups, which were granted land, were expected to perform military service and pay land tax to the state they in turn collected various taxes from the tenants such as land tax, education tax, cattle tax, agricultural and income tax (www.RealEstateAtilcal, 2009).

Most of the land tenure challenges facing Africa are legacies of the colonial period. The history of colonialism in Africa varied among the regions and in relation to colonizing policies (Amin, 1972). In some countries, settler colonialism has established land tenure systems which impact negatively on food security and sustainable development, leading to protracted armed liberation wars. In others, indirect rule led to the promotion of peasant farming for exports without land expropriation. This generated multiple exports which built differentiating indigenous elite alongside the peasantry (ECA, 2009). In the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cameroon, the plantation economies of the European merchant capitalists coexisted with peasantries in a bimodal agrarian context. The legacy of the colonial land policies is the major framework through which sustainable



livelihoods at the individual country level have been conditioned. The genesis of the land problem in Africa is a political economic structure established through conquest, mostly by Europeans seeking to extract resources from Africa. However, the diversity of the historical experiences of Africa's colonialism means that land tenure systems vary considerably, albeit with some commonalities. Land scarcity, denial of access to natural resources by landlords and the State through laws which exclude many, and privatization of land, have contributed to human distress and poverty (ECA, 2009).

In some situations, for example North Africa, it is access to arable land that is at stake, while in others like West Africa, it is the land administration and decision-making conflicts between the State and local communities and various interest groups (men, women, urbanites, civil servants, youths and poor households) that are problematic. In former settler colonies, the challenge of land redistribution and related land struggles predominate (Amanor, 2003).

2.4 Land Access and Gender Relations

Women play a pivotal role in both maintaining and using land and natural resources. Besides being managers and providers of food in the family, they are also carriers of local knowledge, skills for survival, and cultural memory. Most poor people, particularly women, do not own land, but rely on common property resources such as forests, lakes and rangelands, which are owned by the community or the state as vital means of survival. Women are often regarded as having stronger links with the environment than men, yet women do not control land and related natural resources such as forests (Shiva, 1988). In terms of land distribution, the major constraint relates to unequal access to land according to race, gender, class, and ethnic distinctions. Generally, there is a tendency for land to be unequally distributed, with the population pressure under which customary systems often operate, meaning that most groups of people in such systems will have limited access to land (ECA, 2009).



Allocation, occupation and use of communal lands are generally obtained through government selected bodies, which grant occupation according to customary law, where an adult married man is allocated land for use by himself and his family (Moyo, 1995). Thus, depending on the socio-cultural arrangement-matrilineal/patrilineal, women only have access to land and related natural resources through their spouse or male relatives. This puts women at a disadvantage, as they remain subordinate within male-centered structures (Moyo, 1995).

Women make up a larger proportion of the rural population and rural poor than men do. In Malawi, 52% of the population is women, 93% of whom are in rural areas. Sixty-five percent of Zimbabweans live in communal areas and, of these, 85% are women. More than half the population of Mozambique is made up of women (51.4%) and 80% of these live in rural areas. In Tanzania, 68% of the population lives in rural areas, with more than half of this group being women (Byers, 2000: 78). In Ghana 51% of the population are women, 60% of whom are in the rural areas (PHC, 2000). In any debate on land tenure and livelihoods, gender requires special treatment. Typically, gender relations are governed by the prevailing sociopolitical structures and religious value systems. In Africa, the predominance of patriarchal system relegates women and children to minority positions. As a result, gender relations influence access to and control over resources in the context of power relations, policy regimes and livelihood strategies.

Ghana, as many African countries, maintains a plural system of land tenure, comprising mainly of the customary land tenure systems and the formal land administration systems, which often overlap and contradict each other. Article 11 of the 1992 Constitution firmly enshrines legal pluralism within Ghana's legal system (Ollenu, 1966). Much of the difficulty of land access is as a result of the co-existence of different systems (customary law, statutory law, constitutional provision, and religious law) in the regulation of such access. This has presented special difficulties, particularly for the more vulnerable sections of society, including women and the rural and urban poor (Ranger, 2006)



Rural people, majority of whom are women, rarely have access to formal legal procedures due to the complexity and cost of procedures involved and the lack of which places them in a position of considerable insecurity with regard to their right.

Women generally have limited resources and very little access to relevant information on their rights under the law, and are therefore often incapable of taking steps to assert their rights, especially when such rights are threatened by powerful developers with the full backing of political authorities (GTZ, 2010).

Land reform and the forces of modernization have had a mixed effect on the status of women in Africa. Few agrarian reform or resettlement programmes have significant numbers of female beneficiaries or even pay attention to gender as a beneficiary category. In some cases, however, women have gained greater access to land through reform, particularly where the participation of rural women is a well defined state policy. In some countries, for example Zambia, agrarian reforms have replaced the feudal system, where women traditionally held a subordinate role in family production. There are also many instances where women's organizations in Thailand, China and Cuba have fought to gain access to land, which they farm collectively (FAO, 1995).

2.5 Land Access and Food Security

Access to land and land tenure relations are critical where communities depend on control of land to ensure their food security. The economies of most African countries largely depend on land-based activities, such as agriculture, mining and tourism. Agriculture has direct linkages to food security, while mining and tourism are indirectly linked to food security through their competing demands for land use and their potential to supply incomes for food consumption. The impact of land tenure on food security and



sustainable natural resource management is complex (ECA, 2009). Within the land utilization construct, land-use regulations determine what is to be produced (for example, cash crops for export versus food crops for local markets) and by whom. There is a subtle tendency to view large-sized farms as critical for exports and to regard small producers under customary tenure as producers for own consumption and for domestic markets (Moyo, 1999).

Agriculture in Africa can be classified as bimodal, thus divided into smallholder and large-scale or estate agriculture. The underdeveloped state of smallholder agriculture in most African countries has largely been shaped by economic policies which do not favour them but promote the larger farmers. Through policies which set prices and control marketing systems, regulating the flow of information and credit-making mechanisms oriented to large farmers, the State has constrained the manner in which small and medium farmers are linked to national and international markets (Reed, 2001).

In Zimbabwe, over 1.2 million smallholders in communal lands had access to only 50% of agricultural land while 13,335 large and medium commercial farms controlled 37.3% of the best agricultural land. The situation in South Africa was even more acute as smallholders held 13% of the land area, with about 67,000 commercial farmers owning 86% of the country's agricultural land (IFAD, 1999).

Development and grassroots organizations have played a critical role in supporting peasant economies through improving land tenure security and other general working conditions of communities. Groups such as small farmers associations, agricultural labour unions, women's and indigenous groups have been targeted for such assistance (Ghimire, 2001). Examples of these groups include the Cameroon Indigenous Knowledge Organization, which has been lobbying for special land legislation to protect the rights of forest peoples; the OASIS Development Group in Kenya, which is assisting in preventing the unjust eviction of the Doroboi people from forest lands being appropriated by a government project; and the Tamale Archdiocesan Agricultural Programme for Women in Ghana, has assisted women in securing access to arable land for the growing of cash tree crops and in negotiating long-term leases on this land (Ghimire, 2001).



In most of Africa, land-use regulations and planning frameworks, inherited from the colonial era, have been ideological tools for maintaining the unequal distribution of land and types of regulations governing land and inadequate security of tenure (Mary, 2008). Therefore the rationale governing land-use, it is important to go beyond the sated rationale and seek to uncover the true origins and value systems implicit in such regulations.

2.6 Women's Ownership and Tenure of Land

One of the most serious obstacles to increasing the agricultural productivity and income of rural women is their insecurity of land tenure (FAO, 1996). Security of land tenure is not limited to private ownership but can exist in a variety of forms, such as leases on public land or use rights to communal property. If tenure is secure, the holder can reasonably expect to use the land to its best advantage in accordance with their right, reap a timely and fair return and be able to enforce the right against non-holders (Rukuni, 1994; Moyo, 1995; Juma and Ojwang, 1996). In order for women farmers, who are responsible for 60-80% of the food production in developing countries, to use land more efficiently and thereby make a greater contribution to food security, they need access to land, management control of land-based resources, and the economic incentives that security of tenure provides (FAO, 2002).

Historically, women's access to land in most parts of the world was based on status within the family and involved the right of use, not ownership. In Africa (for instance Chibombo District in Central Zambia and in the Volta and Northern parts of Ghana), custom excludes women from ownership. Property is held in a man's name and passed patrilineally with the group (Kajoba, 2002). A widow's right to remain on the land she has farmed with her husband is not secure. Traditional or customary systems that might have protected a woman's access to land during her lifetime are breaking down under population, economic and environmental pressures (Juma and Ojwang, 1996).



In Tanzania, without land and secure tenure, a woman cannot access credit and membership of agricultural associations, particularly those responsible for processing and marketing. If tenure is secure, a woman can invest in, rather than exploit, the land's productive potential and is more likely to adopt environmentally sustainable farming practices (Juma and Ojwang, 1996). She can plan and quickly adjust resource allocation decisions under changing climate or economic conditions and rely on the productive results of her labour.

Control of the product is also an important consideration in examining women's land rights. Security of tenure is often the key to having control over major decisions, such as what crop to grow, what techniques to use, what to consume and what to sell. Given women's tendency to grow food, as opposed to cash crops, and to spend income on family food, security of tenure for women must be viewed as a key link in the chain from household food production to national food security (FAO, 1996). Food security according to FAO (1996) "goes beyond just access to, and availability of food, but is also in terms of resource distribution to produce food and the purchasing power to buy food where it is not produced. In the light of women's crucial role in food production and provision, any set of strategies for sustainable food security must address their limited access to productive resources. This limited access, and women's insufficient purchasing power, are products of a series of interrelated social, economic and cultural factors that force them into a subordinate role, to the detriment of their own development and that of society as a whole.

2.7 Women's contribution to food security

Women are crucial in the translation of the products of a vibrant agriculture sector into food and nutritional security for their households. Substantial evidence from the Upper East Region of Ghana indicates that when women have income, they (women) spend the largest proportion of their income (over 75%) on food for their families, followed by health expenditures and expenses of other household items and inputs. The foods the women tend to buy are not only items such as oil and salt. They may also purchase



supplementary millet and other staples, and buy vegetables when they themselves have not grown enough of these (IFAD, 1998). Women are generally responsible for food selection and preparation and for the care and feeding of children. This makes them key to land in an agrarian society, directly leads to a reduction in income and access to food (Moyo, 1999).

In rural areas, the availability and use of time by women is also a key factor in the availability of water for good hygiene, firewood collection, and frequent feeding of small children. In sub-Saharan Africa transportation of supplies for domestic use (fetching fuel wood and water) is largely done by women and girls on foot. In Ghana, Tanzania, and Zambia rural women use most of their energy on load-carrying activities involving transport of fuel wood, water, and grain for grinding. Fields dedicated to food crops are often farther from home than those related to cash crops. Because women must also perform domestic tasks, they spend considerable amount of time traveling between their home and the fields. These burdens, together with other domestic and reproductive roles, have increased the amount of time women work. This makes them work longer hours than men (FAO, 2006).

Changes in the availability of natural resources, due to the depletion of natural resources and/or impacts of climate change, can compromise food security by further constraining the time available to women. Women's needs for environmental resources is not only for crop production but also for fuel and water, and building these into good environmental management can release more time for women to use on income generation, child care, and leisure. Agriculture has an additional impact on food security through its impact on health. For example, poorly managed irrigation infrastructures may become a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and excessive use of groundwater for irrigation may compromise water sources needed by women to ensure good hygiene practices and clean food preparation, without which children suffer more frequently from diarrhoea and compromised growth. Poverty is a major driver of food insecurity, but the two are not always linked. According to Kennedy and Peters (1992), poorer households headed by



women have demonstrated that they often succeed in providing more nutritional food for their children than those headed by men. This demonstrates the importance of gender-based knowledge and roles with regard to food security.

2.8 Women and Land Policies in Africa

Land policy is a concept that focuses on land tenure or ownership and may also include aspects of law (Hermunen, 2004). Land policy formation in Africa has been pursued rigorously over the last few decades in response to the persistence of complex land problems, struggles for access to land for agriculture and livelihoods, and to meet varied political, economic, social and environmental objectives. Although the approaches and strategies pursued in the making of land policies in sub-Saharan Africa vary by country, region and historical experience (ECA, 2009), there are also some similarities. The main aim of any land policy, for example legislation is to protect the land rights of individuals through laws, define the rights and responsibilities of institutions, and adjudicate in cases of conflicts (Chauveau, 1997).

Land policies in West Africa have been developed to meet multifaceted objectives. As in several other cases, once land policies have been developed, they are supported by new land legislation, which in many West African countries, has been aimed at recognizing customary tenure (Chauveau, 1997).

In Ghana, the legal regime instituted by the state for land administration has undergone much change and evolution in the past few decades, principally aimed at improving the land administration processes so as to ensure equity for all sections of the population. It is generally acknowledged however, that this objective has not been fully achieved, particularly with respect to the more vulnerable sections of society, including the urban and rural poor and women in particular. Some land policy legislation in Ghana can be traced to the Lands Act of 1962, The Land Title Registration Law of 1986 and the Land Act of 1994 (Article 267 of the 1992 Constitution) (NLP, 1999).

Women in Ghana form 52% of the agricultural work force, account for 70% of production of subsistence crops and form about 90% of the labour force in the marketing of farm produce (Duncan, 2004). In spite of their critical role in food production and economic development, women generally have more limited access to resource than their male counterparts, especially with regard to access and control over land, education and credit, the overall effect of which is to restrict their ability to increase their productivity and enhance their livelihood. Promoting the land rights of women in Ghana is therefore critical to any effort that seeks to deal with constraints to economic development, which land reform sets out to achieve (GPRS I, 2003-2005).

2.9 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The study presents the situation and evolutionary perspectives of women's land issues. From this perspective, land can neither be studied by itself nor out of its social setting due to its reflection of social relationships, and the problems raised by the exploitation of land. These problems of land exploitation are political and are related to the structure and functioning dynamics of the societies and the interactions between them. The framework is presented below.

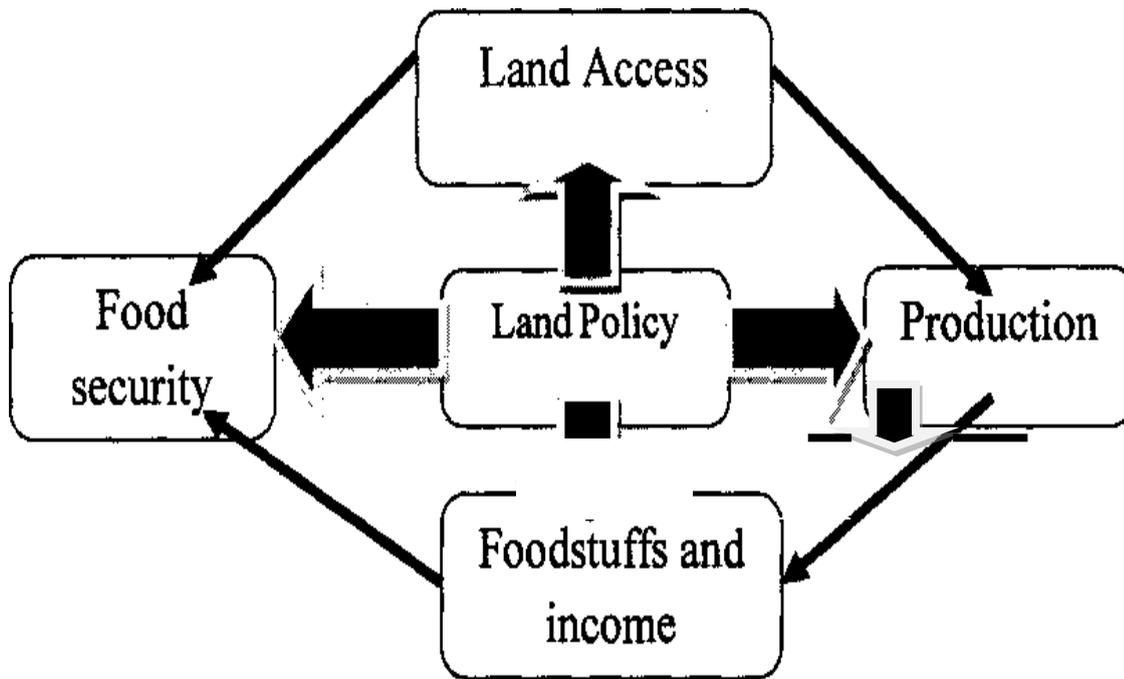
The land status of women is analyzed as an element of the social system, determined by its internal laws, but subject to the influence of external factors having a dialectical evolution in space and time (Florence, 1998). Also, as stated by Patrice and Elie, "the dialectical evolution is caused not only by contradictions resulting from the internal functioning of the social systems, but also by the constraints of the environment that impose cooperation, adjustment and adaptation processes" (1998: 6). It is in this view that the integration of gender analysis in relation to land is located in the course of the study.



2.9.1 Conceptual model

The literature review presents evidence of qualitative links between land access and food security. A conceptual model (figure 2.1) below has been developed to show how land access and use could be used to improve food security.

Figure 2.1: conceptual model of access to land and food security.



The most apparent link shown above suggests that land policy increases security of land access, enables more efficient and profitable agricultural production and hence greater access to food and ensures an overall food security in the study area. This study is based on this conceptual framework. The conventional links between land access, production, foodstuff and income and food security presented in the model are that increase in women's access to productive land with tenure security creates the opportunity for them to develop their land through production in order to create (foodstuff (Adopted from Maxwell and Wiebe, 1998). oods and ensure household food security for the people of the study area in particular and the country at large.

2.10 Conclusion

Some theorists of gender affirm that women are, in Africa particularly, denied direct access or have little access to land and that if at all this access is mediated through their husbands, or their male relatives. Such statement implies that they do not have rights in land or if they have, these are secondary to those of men. There are exceptions to these considerations. Some studies, for example Ondiege, (1996) indicate that there exist no obstructions, no discrimination in indigenous land tenure, against women's access and rights in land. Indeed, land belongs to the group and wherever it is abundant, every group member has access to it. Ownership over such land belongs to the ethnic group. Some other studies, for example Keller, Phiri and Milimo, (1990) demonstrate that there exist societies where rights in land are transmissible to women.

Although, substantial knowledge exists on the subject matter as explored in the discourse, a common and vivid observation however is the preoccupation of many contributors in examining only rights to land and its gender implications. Not much is done in relation to land insecurity and establishing it as an issue of justice and equality for social functioning. Right to land and land insecurity need to be looked at together with women's access to land and how it affects food security. The study therefore flags this as a gap and extends the scope of knowledge on women's access to land and how access to land sufficiently guarantee food security. In the literature on sustainable livelihoods and social justice and 'Functioning' Moser, (2007) noted how emerging tendencies and reforms such as 'Land Commodification' and the Land administration project in Ghana (LAP) are adversely shaping customary socio-economic orientation and institutions and influencing women's access and right to land. What is noted in the literature is the inadequacy of knowledge linking women's access to land and its implication on food security and livelihoods of women.



CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the methodology employed for this study. It discusses different methodologies that have been used in this kind of study and adopts a number of them for this study. It also presents the sources of and methods of data collection, methods of data analysis, description of the study area and scope and limitation of the study.

3.2 Research Design

The study combined qualitative and quantitative methods triangulating to cross-check the data to improve accuracy. While quantitative refers to counts and measure of things, qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things (Bruce, 2001). Qualitative research is a broad approach to the study of social phenomena and integrates deeply with everyday life. The study, although used both approaches, focused on the use of qualitative methods as they played an important role in deeply understanding the social and economic life in a process and in interactive relationships.

3.3 Sources of Data

The sources of data for this study include both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from the field through the use of research instruments such as household questionnaire, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observation. The adoption of several techniques of data collection in a study facilitates the collection of reliable information (Twumasi, 2001).

Secondary data were collected and reviewed from different sources at different levels. Most came from external sources such as the planning unit of the District Assembly, the gender desk officer of the district, Officer for Women in Agriculture and Development (WIAD) of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture as well as District Office of Natural

Resources and Environmental Management (NREM). Data were also collected from relevant journals, published books and articles including electronic sources.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Data Collection is an important aspect of any type of research. The methods used in collecting data for this study are quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The methods used relied on simple random, purposive and quota sampling procedures as they produce results that are easy to summarize, compare, and analyze.

3.4.1 Simple random sampling

Simple random sampling was used to select the households that answered the questionnaires. The selection was done in such a way that each unit of the household had equal chances of being selected using the lottery method.

3.4.2 Purposive sampling

The purposive sampling was used to select women respondents in the households because almost all the households are headed by men who are not the target population and also of the fact that they might not have adequate knowledge of the problem under investigation.

3.4.3 Quota sampling

With a sample size of seventy-two (72) respondents, quota sampling was used to sample 50 (69.4%) women and 22 (30.6%) men in the households who responded to the questionnaires. This is to ensure greater representation of women who are the target for this study.



3.5 Data collection techniques

The various data collection techniques used for this study include questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and observation. The combination of these techniques is to cross-check the accuracy and reliability of the data.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared in four related sections and administered to 72 households to obtain information on respondent's background (section A), factors that affect women's access to land (section B), how men and women acquire land (section C) and section D devoted to women's contribution to household food security in the study area. Open-ended questions are asked to allow respondents' flexibility in forming opinions though this was sometimes varied to closed-ended type of questions especially when responses become difficult and unnecessarily digressional. Due to low literacy rate, questionnaires were administered by the researcher and research assistants to respondents.

3.5.2 Interviews

Interview is a technique that was primarily used to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations for people's attitudes, preferences or behaviour. Answers to the questions posed during the interview were recorded by writing them down during the interview and by recording the responses using an audio recording facility on a mobile phone. This was undertaken on a personal one-to-one basis and in a group on the farm with women group harvesting maize. Key informants (people with relevant information on the research problem) such as "Magazia" (leader of women group), the "tidaana" (land priest), chairman of the farmer association and sectional heads were also interviewed. These were used to cross check information from questionnaires and focus group discussions



The study employed focus group discussions to collect information on the views of both men and women on how women's access to land affects food security and the difficulties they face in accessing fertile land for production in the study area. In order to make the interaction more effective, separate sessions were held for men and women with eight members in each group. In all three (3) women groups and two (2) men groups were met due to the emphasis on women. A check list was provided to guide the discussion.

3.5.4 Observation

All social science research begins and ends with empirical observations (Nachimias *et. al.*, 1996: 206). For this study, owing to the controversy and sensitivity associated with the land tenure issues, a community level observation was carried out to complement the information gathered. Observation helps to give an understanding of the respondents' attitude and behaviour, and households' living conditions such as assets which were not captured by the other methods used for the study.

3.6 Sampling Technique

Sampling refers to the use of definite procedures in the selection of a part of a population to represent the entire population. The study made use of both probability and non-probability sampling techniques to select the target population. Probability sampling was employed to give all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected at one level and at another level non-probability sampling was used to target specific individuals. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the sampling units (household) while purposive sampling was used to select respondents (male and female) in the households.



3.6.1 Sample Size

A sample size of 72 respondents from 72 households for the study was estimated using the following formula. $n = \frac{Z_{\alpha/2}^2 p (1-p)}{e^2}$ (Sarantakos, 1998).

Where $Z_{\alpha/2}$ are the 95% level of confidence and 0.05 margin of error (e). This value is read as 1.96 from the standard normal distribution table. P is the estimated proportion of the population (Sarantakos, 1998). Hence, $n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.95) (1 - 0.95)}{0.05^2} \equiv 72$

The sample size consisted of 50 women and 22 men respondents from the 72 households that were sampled.

3.7 Data analysis

The data collected were analyzed with both qualitative and quantitative methods. The results of qualitative data are presented using word description of the phenomenon through the interpretation of the data, identifying patterns and associations in the data collected and developing themes. The quantitative data were presented in tables and figures mainly in chapter four with the aid of Microsoft applications (Excel).

3.8 Study Area

This section of the study dealt with the research location, demographic characteristics and the economic activities of the study area.

3.8.1 Location and Size

The Zabzugu/Tatale District (Ghana) is situated on the eastern flank of the Northern Region. It shares boundaries with the Republic of Togo to the East; Yendi District to the



West; Nanumba and Nkwanta Districts to the South; and the Saboba/Chereponi district to the North. Zabzugu, the district capital, where the study was carried out is about 160 kilometres from Tamale, the Northern Regional capital. The district has a land area of 2,332 square kilometres with Zabzugu alone occupying one-twelfths (194.3 square kilometers) of the land area (www.ghanadistricts.gov, 2006).

3.8.2 Demographic Characteristics

The Population of the District is 100,662 (GDHS, 2009) comprising 49,181 (48.8%) males and 51,481 (51.2%) females with an estimated growth rate of 2.9%. The district has a population density of 40 persons per square kilometre. Households in the district are predominantly male-headed with an average household size of 7.7 people. The proportion of female-headed households is 4.2%. The smallest household comprised of one member and the largest household comprised of 30 members (PHC, 2000).

3.8.3 Economic Activities

From the data, 97% of the inhabitants of the district derive their livelihoods from agriculture as the main economic activity. Major crops cultivated are yam, maize, millet, groundnuts, soya beans and cassava. Although fishing is also an economic activity in the district, very few people are engaged in it. Other economic activities that are found in the district are dress making and light industrial works (for example blacksmithing). The strategic location of the district, linking the Northern Region to the Republic of Togo makes Zabzugu a vibrant commercial centre and a growth pole of the district that serves the peripheral communities. Some of the youth are also engaged in the making of the “Dagomba traditional smock” as a source of employment in the district.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings of the research using qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. These were in the forms of descriptive statistics, tables, charts, and plates. It highlights demographic characteristics of respondents in relation to how women's access to land affects food security in Zabzugu.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of respondents were analyzed because several studies, for example, Gyabah, (1993) have found sexual difference in the adoption of innovations a positive association between levels of education and environmental concerns (Buttel and Flin, 1976). Household heads, especially women are the major decision makers in household food supply and since age bestows experience, it influences household decision in the adoption of measures to ensure food security in a family.

The demographic characteristics which are presented here are based on the data collected from the sample of 72 households consisting of 50 women and 22 men from the households sampled in Zabzugu. Majority of the respondents were women because the population from which the sample was drawn is predominantly women who are also the target group for the study.



4.2.1 Age and sex distribution of respondents

The age and sex distribution of the seventy-two (72) respondents from the sample households who responded to the questionnaire administered during the research are presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Age and sex distribution of respondents

AGE CATEGORY	SEX				TOTAL	
	MALE		FEMALE		frequency	percent total sample
	frequency	percent male sample	frequency	percent female sample		
18-28	3	13.6	6	2.0	9	12.5
29-39	5	22.7	21	2.0	26	36.1
40-50	10	45.5	14	8.0	24	33.3
51+	4	18.2	9	8.0	13	18.1
TOTAL	22	100.0	50	100.0	72	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2010

The age and sex distribution of seventy-two (72) respondents as shown in Table 4.1 revealed that 30.6 percent (22) of the respondents were male, while 69.4 percent (50) of the respondents were female. They varied in age from 18 to over 51 years with the mean age of 40 years. Majority of the respondents 26 (36.1 percent) were within the ages of 29-39 years, while 24 (33.3 percent) of the respondents were within the ages 40-50 years. Also, 9 (12.5%) of the respondents were within the ages of 18-28 years, with 13 (18.1%) of the respondents within the age of 51+ years. Considering the fact that life expectancy in Ghana is 58.65 years for males and 60.35 years for females (UNDP, 2009), and the



working class for both male and female is 18 - 60 years, it means that majority (69.4%) of the respondents are still in their productive years.

4.2.2 Marital status of respondents

The analysis of marital status of respondents is necessary for this study because women are a major source of family labour and play crucial roles in household food security in the rural economies of Ghana. The marital status of respondents is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Marital status of respondents

MARITAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Single	1	1.4
Married	67	93.1
Divorced	1	1.4
Widowed	3	4.1
		100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2010

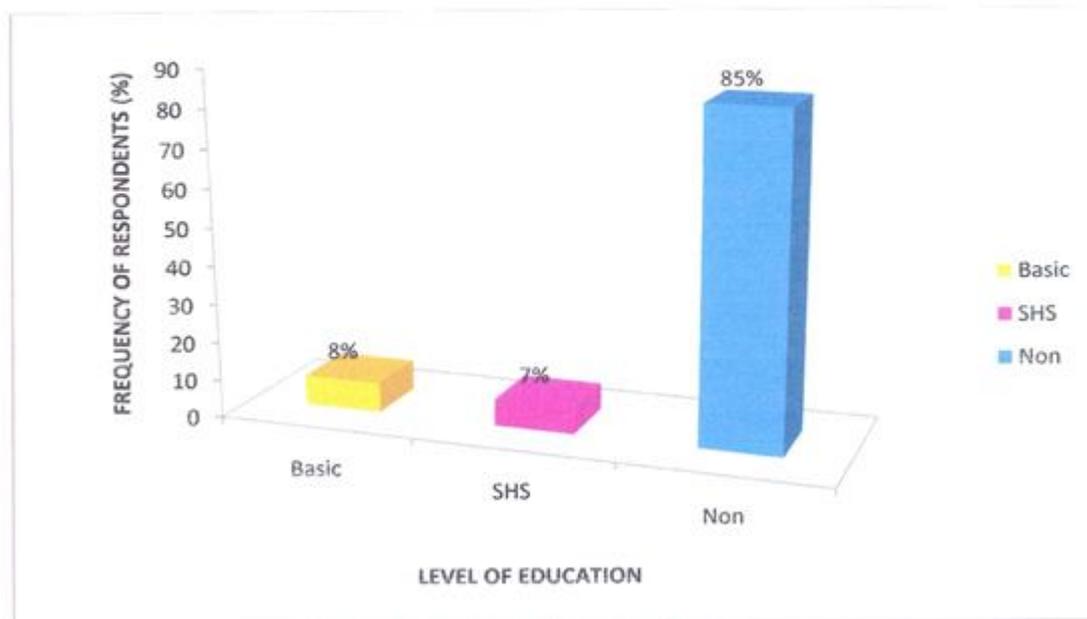
Majority (93.1%) of the respondents were married. The rest (6.9%) were made up of one single, one divorced and three widows. The widows were encountered in the households where the man died and the woman could not marry any more but had to live in the man's house and take care of her children.



About 86 percent (62) of the respondents are polygamous. This explains the important socio-economic functions of women, particularly the extra labour they provide in planting and harvesting and the domestic assistance they provide for the household.

4.2.3 Educational background of respondents

Figure 4.1 shows the educational background of respondents in the study area.



Source: Field Survey, 2010

In spite of the universal compulsory basic education provided by government since 1960, the profile of the educational status of respondents from the survey showed that majority 61 (85%) of the respondents had no education. Six (8%) had basic education and only five (7%) of the respondents had secondary education.

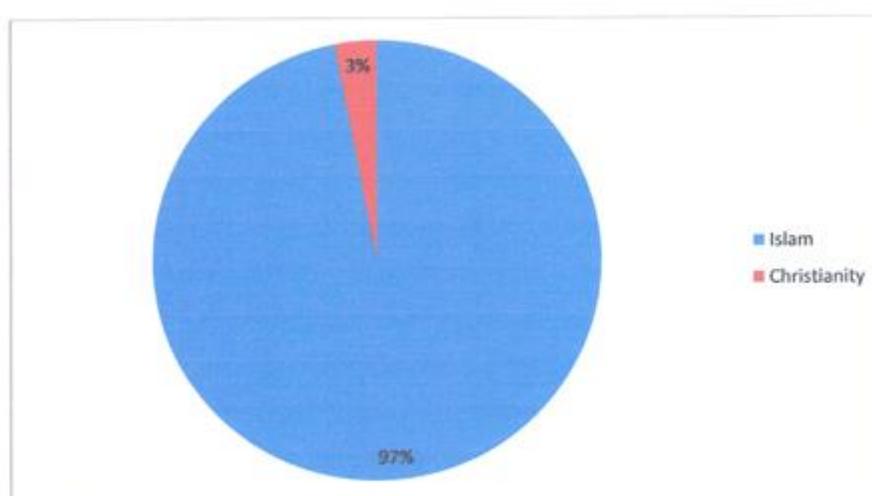


The high illiteracy rate as shown in Figure 4.1 could result in the general low level of awareness, especially on the part of the female respondents on their right to access land for production. This invariably accounted for the high level of women insecure access to productive land. Seventy-eight percent (56) of the respondents indicated that women had no equal access to productive land as their male counterpart because the duty of a woman is not to farm.

4.2.4 Religious distribution of respondents

Figure 4.2 Religious distributions of respondents

Figure 4.2 Religious distributions of respondents



Source: Field Survey, 2010

From Figure 4.2 above, two main religions were identified during the survey as being practiced by the respondents. These are Islam and Christian religions. Majority (97.2%) of the respondents practice Islam while the remaining 2.8 percent practice Christianity. The implication is that adherence to Islamic values and customs on land holdings or

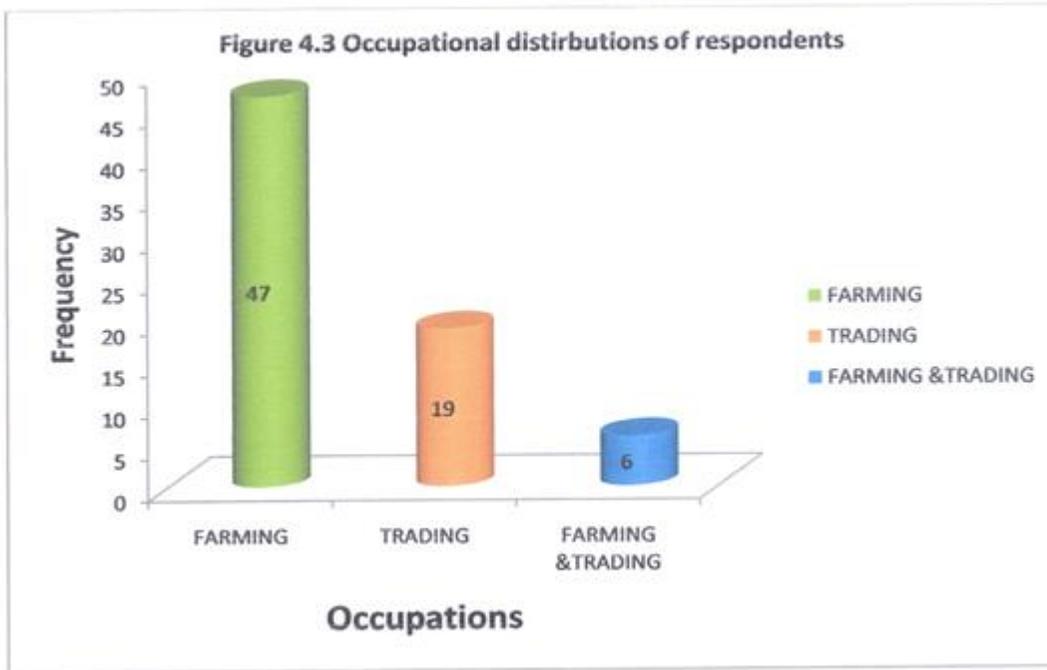


access for both men and women in the community may be greatly influenced by Islamic values.

4.2.5 Occupational distribution of respondents

In the households surveyed, the major occupations in which the respondents were employed are classified into three groups as shown in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Occupational distributions of respondents



Source: Field Survey, 2010

From the figure above, majority of the respondents 47 (65.3%) were farmers who depended mostly on crop production for subsistence and cash. 26.4 percent (19) of the respondents were engaged in trading while 8.3 percent of the respondents mostly women were engaged in both farming and trading.



4.3 Factors that affect women's access to land

Customary land tenure has frequently been cited as an important obstacle to development and a major challenge for women's access to land in Sub-Saharan Africa (IFAD, 2008).

All the responses (100%), from questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions revealed that women do not own land in Zabzugu. Culturally, land is not owned in Zabzugu but held in trust for the family by the family head. Women can only access land through their husbands or male relatives for productive purposes. This is similar to the findings on women access and right to land in Karnataka-India which revealed that women barely own land but could access it for productive purposes. Land is solely titled in the name of the male members of the society (Jenifer, 2000). The responses captured from the women themselves during the study on why they do not own land include the following:

- Women become arrogant and disrespectful to their husbands when they are more resourced; giving them land will enhance their chances of creating wealth and thereby making them less humble and submissive.
- Land in general these days is limited in supply and less fertile. Giving land to women would mean rendering the predominantly male headed household heads landless.
- Women used not to be in full time farming as they do today. They used to be supportive to their husbands and therefore did not need land on their own.
- Women have come from a different place to be in their husband's home and are not permanent members of their husband's homes; they don't need to own land.
- Women are not good managers, so if entrusted with a valuable commodity like land they may misuse it.

Respondents were also asked to indicate what other factors also affected their women's access to land. Table 4.3 presents their responses.



Table 4.3: Factors that affect women's access to land

FACTORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Availability and size of land owned by husband	11	15.3
Financial status of woman	24	33.3
Type of crops to be cultivated	13	18.5
Attitude of woman towards the husband	9	12.5
Nature and location of land	7	9.7
Physical fitness of the woman	3	4.2
Belief system of the people	5	6.9
Total	72	100.0

Majority of the respondents (33.3%) stated that finance was the major factor that affected women's access to land. The respondents stated that availability of land in itself was not a problem but the women's financial ability to develop the land for crop cultivation was the major factor militating against their access to land. This agrees with the role of land access and distribution in rural poverty found in the literature on Land Tenure System and their Impact on Food Security and Sustainable Development in Africa (ECA, 2009).

18.1 percent of the respondents who answered the questionnaires indicated that the major factors that affected women's access to land were the type of crops to be cultivated and the availability and size of land owned by the husband who is supposed to provide land for his wife. They explained that the crops women cultivate do not require very 'fertile' and large lands thus why they are given marginal lands that are mostly closer to the



house. This scenario seems to be in agreement with the literature found on Women's Access to Land in Northern Ghana. It was argued that women usually obtain derived right to lands either through their husbands or from their husbands and that as pressure increases on agricultural lands, access by women continue to decrease and that means women ability to produce their own crops get excluded (MiDA, 2008).

Attitude of women towards their husbands was identified by 12.5% of respondents as a factor that affected women's access to land. They stated that women who respected their husbands easily got access to land while those who disrespected their husbands did not. This factor was also stated by respondents at focus group discussions and key informant interviews held during the study. Interviews were conducted for house wives to better understand attitude of women towards their husbands as a factor that affected women's access to land.

Plate 4.1: Researcher interviewing a house wife.



Interview of one house wife in plate 4.1 above said “*Husbands who do not want their wives to independently earn income may be even refuse to help them acquire farmland. If a woman obeyed her husband would get her land to farm*” (translated from Dagbani to English by researcher).

From table 4.3, about 4.2% of the respondents stated that physical strength of women was one major factor that affected women’s access to land. This was closely linked with 9.7% of the responses which showed that the nature and location of available land affected women’s access to it. It was argued that women do not have the physical strength to clear lands which are mostly located very far away making it difficult for women to travel to such lands. This problem therefore limited women’s access to such lands.

Belief system of the people was also stated by 5 (6.9 percent) of the respondents as a factor that affected women’s access to land in the study area. They believe that the role of a woman in the house is not to farm but to cook, bear children and provide other support services which the man was not able to provide. The literature on Gender and Food Security for instance, indicated about 80% of women in Africa had insecure access to productive lands due to land tenure system and the perception of men about women’s role in the society (IFAD, 2008).

4.4 Acquisition of Land by Men and Women

Generally, men and women living in households that own land often have access to land but women rarely have legal ownership right to such lands. The methods of land acquisition by both male and female respondents are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Methods of land acquisition

METHOD OF ACQUISITION	MALE		FEMALE	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Inherited	12	54.5	0	0
Allocated by family head	6	27.3	1	2.0
Sharecropped by household	0	0	43	86.0
Borrowed from neighbours	4	18.2	6	12.0
Total	22	100.0	50	100.0

The majority of women respondents 43 (86%) stated that they acquired land through sharecropped by household. Twelve respondents (54.5%) mainly males said they acquired land through inheritance. None of the female respondents had acquired land through inheritance. This might be so because inheritance in Northern Ghana is patrilineal where properties of a deceased person are passed onto the male children. While 27.3% of the men acquired land through allocation by family head, less than 3% of the female respondents had acquired land through the family head. This is because women were supposed to be allocated a portion of land from their husbands' fields. Ten respondents (13.2%), both male and female stated that they acquired land through a neighbours contact and do not have land on their own, even though they are heads of households. This seems to be in line with the literature on Women and Land in Zambia. In a study of 34 households, 29.4% of women acquired land from husbands' field (sharecropped), 20.6% and 14.7 % acquired land through headman and borrowing from neighbours respectively. Another 20.6% and 11.8% were given land by male relatives and by father (Kajoba, 2002).



The general picture, that emerged from the survey with respect, to the methods of land after harvesting the women followed up to plant groundnuts, guinea corn and cowpea on the same parcel of land. Plate 4.2 shows focus group discussion with women harvesting groundnuts on their husband's field under the sharecrop arrangement in Zabzugu.

Plate 4.2: Focus group discussion with women harvesting groundnuts



Even though this arrangement has implications for the soil fertility status of lands given to women, husbands continue to encourage it because of the soil enriching effects of the crops planted by women. Husbands would later return to lands regenerated by the legumes planted by women. With respect to divorced women, 9.7% of the respondents indicated that they were allocated land by the family head while 13.9% of the



respondents said widows cultivated the land which was left by their deceased husbands with help of their male children for sustenance.

The household questionnaire and focus group discussions (FGDs) with women revealed that women's insecure access to land hampered them in a number of ways: 74% of respondents stated that it limited them in the crops they can grow. (For instance, they would not grow tree crops if they thought they might lose the land when the trees started to bear fruit). While 82% of respondents said their insecure access to land encouraged low productivity and aggravated food insecurity, 45% of respondents said they are not able to access other forms of support such as credit from formal sector (banks) for cultivation because they cannot invest in large acreages.

4.5 Women's contribution to Household food security

One of the items of the questionnaire was for respondents to provide information about the average size of land used by women for cultivation of principal crops. This information was used to determine their contribution to food security in Zabzugu. The size of land for cultivation was generally small compared with the land sizes used by men. Sixty-one (85 percent) of both male and female respondents stated that women had land sizes less than 2 acres used for cultivation. This agrees with the Ghana Living Standard Survey report which recorded a mean land size of 1.7-2 acres cultivated by women in the Upper and Northern regions (GLSS, 2005). There were only 11 (15%) with land sizes between 2 and 4 acres used for cultivation by women.

The main crops cultivated by women in the 2009 crop season are summarized in averages in Table 4.5 on the next page.



Table 4.5: Main crops cultivated by women in Zabzugu

MAJOR CROPS	AVERAGE OUTPUT	AVERAGE HOME USE	AVERAGE QUANTITY	AVERAGE INCOME
	PER HOUSEHOLD (BAGS)	PER HOUSEHOLD (BAGS)	SOLD PER HOUSEHOLD (BAGS)	PER HOUSEHOLD (GH¢)
Groundnuts	2.24	0.7	1.54	184.80
Guinea corn	2.6	2.4	0.2	12.00
Cowpea	0.8	0.15	0.65	46.80
Vegetables (Okro/pepper)	0.18	0.15	0.03	7.00

Source: Field Survey, 2010

An evaluation of the averages presented in Table 4.5 indicated that on the average, large quantities of guinea corn 2.4 bags (92%) and 0.15 bags (83%) of vegetables produced by women were consumed in the house, while 1.54 bags (69%) of groundnuts and 0.65 bags (81%) of cowpea were mostly sold for income. This income was used to buy food supplements such as fish, salt and onions which they do not produce. This is so because the role of a man is to provide grains or tubers (maize or guinea corn and yam) while the woman provides ingredients to make a complete meal for their household. When the food stocks of the man finishes, the family then depends on grains the woman produced, mainly guinea corn. This accounts for the highest average 2.4 bags (92%) of guinea corn produced by women consumed in the house. This is an indication that women play crucial roles in the supply of food needed for household consumption in Zabzugu. This is



similar to the findings of World Bank (2007), which reports that about 75% of women in sub-Saharan Africa supplied most of the food needed for household consumption from the food crops they produced on the plots they managed.

Focus group discussions with women in this study indicated that women are gradually increasing their contribution to household food security either by growing food or by earning income to purchase food for the household. Household food security is year-round access to an adequate supply of nutritious and safe food to meet the nutritional needs of all household members (men and women, boys and girls). However, questions concerning whether women got enough food from their lands for home consumption revealed that over 75% of respondents could not meet their household food requirement from the lands they cultivate making them food insecure. Majority 64 (89%) of the respondents indicated that household food insecurity in Zabzugu is becoming a seasonal, problem occurring every year between May and August. This was attributed to poor yields as a result of low soil fertility and unfavourable weather conditions in the area.

Besides women's role in food crop production for home use, interviews with women groups indicated that about 78 percent of women in this study are major sources of farm labour for their households in times of planting, harvesting, processing and transport. This is similar to the literature on Women's Struggle to Secure Land Rights in Africa, which reported that 70 percent of women in Africa contribute to household food production. They also account for nearly half of all farm labour, and 80-90 percent food processing, transport and storage.

The study findings in Table 4.6 from household questionnaires indicated that, women work longer hours than men due to their multiple roles in food production, income generating activities and house chores. Besides their role in collecting of water and firewood for their households, preparing food absorbs a number of hours daily, particularly when women use firewood and crop residues which are not efficient sources of energy for cooking.



Table 4.6: No. of working hours of male and female respondents

TYPE OF WORK	NUMBER OF HOURS	MALE		FEMALE	
		No.	%	No.	%
Off-farm income activities	Less than 5	4	18.2	13	26
Food production	5-7	16	72.7	11	22
House chores	More than 7	2	9.1	26	52
	Total	22	100	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

In table 4.6 majority 26 (52%) of female respondents stated that they spent more than 7 hours on house chores while only 2 (9.1%) male respondent said they spent more than 7 hour on the same work. This means that house chores are mostly undertaken by women. Also, 16 (72.7%) of male respondents and 11 (22%) of female respondents indicated that they spent 5-7 hours on food production. The higher percentage of male respondents who spent 5-7 hours on food production as compared to the female respondents suggest that the primary responsibility of men is to produce food for the family with the support of women during planting and harvesting of the food crops. 18.2 percent of male respondents and 26 percent of female respondents indicated that they spent less than 5 hours on off-farm income activities to generate income to help feed their families. This agrees with the study findings in the Upper East Region of Ghana that the bulk of the rural household budget (over 75%) is spent on food. In order to generate the cash needed for this, women tend to take up off-farm income-generating activities to help feed their families (IFAD, 1998).



The findings from this study on women's contribution to household food security revealed that women's contribution is not valued. This is similar to the findings on women and development (Examining Gender Issues in Developing Countries), Leonard, (2003), which reports that the unvalued economic contribution of women is such that if women's unpaid work was properly valued they would emerge in most societies as the major breadwinners given their greater contribution of working hours than men.

4.6 Discussion of results

The responses from the survey showed differences among age, education and sex groups of respondents and their responses to how women's access to land impacts on household food security in the study area. Majority, 37 (51.4 percent) of the respondents form the elderly group (40 - 51+ years), even though not educated appeared to have a better understanding of the need for women to access land than 32 (48.6 percent) of the respondents who form the young group (18 - 39 years) who are not also educated.

Findings from interviews and focus group discussion during the study indicated women's access to productive lands in Zabzugu is a major challenge even though has largely been ignored over the years due to ignorance and the submissive nature of women to their husbands. It also revealed that women work longer hours than men due to their multiple roles in food production, income generating activities and house chores which are not valued. These suggest that, the absence in the public view of women's contribution in terms of food security may be related to the cause of land injustice against women, though, many entrenched customary and patriarchal principles are criticised for the problem particularly, in the study area. The narrowness in conceptual scope, thus the inability of many contributors in examining other possible reasons for the problem, especially as it relates to livelihood and development is another key concern in the discourse. Circumstances might initiate cultural dynamism, and other issues might be



responsible for gender-based resource inequality and land may not be the only factor that influences livelihoods sustenance in our societies.

Although, responses from the questionnaires indicated that all the respondents were aware of the need for women to have secured access to land for enhanced livelihoods, there were gender differences in responses to women having equal access to productive lands as men. A higher percentage of female respondents (86%) were of the view that women do not have the physical strength to clear lands because of that they cannot have equal access to productive land as men. This compared favorably with (100%) responses from the male respondents who said they own but gives part of their lands to women on request.

Focus group discussions with men and women revealed that men provide food needs of their families, but in times of food shortages women support their families by buying the foodstuffs or using the produce they got from their fields. Interview with key informants also indicated that in times of food shortage, women (house wives) take the responsibility of providing most of the food needs of their families.

The general impression created from the data is that in times of food shortages women bear the greatest burden of the stress of food shortage (because they are worry about what the family will eat). Since insecure access to productive land may increase the burden of women who bear the stress of food shortage, women should be involved in decision making on land planning and management.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section presents a summary of the study. It also provides conclusion, some recommendations and suggestions for further research. To arrive at these, different research tools such as focus group discussions, interviews, observation and questionnaires were employed during the study.

5.2 Summary of findings

The study was set out to examine women's access to land and how it affects household food security in Zabzugu. The analysis of the information collected through interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions and observation were presented in the forms of descriptive statistics, tables, charts and plates. The results from the analysis revealed the following findings based on the objectives of the study.

5.2.1 Factors that affect women's access to land

Generally, women's access to productive lands in Zabzugu is a major challenge even though has largely been ignored over the years due to ignorance and the submissive nature of women to their husbands. The following were the findings on women's access to land in the study area.

Women are restricted in several ways in term of access to land. These restrictions include

- Customary land tenure is a major challenge for women's access to and control of productive lands and production decision
- Customs and belief system of the people that encourage the allocation of degraded and infertile lands to women
- Availability and size of land owned by husband and the financial ability of women to cultivate the land. Land these days is limited in supply and less



fertile. Giving land to women would mean rendering the predominantly male headed household heads landless.

- The type of crops to be cultivated, nature and location of the land requested for by women and their attitudes towards their husbands were among the factors that affect women access to fertile lands.

5.2.2 Methods of land acquisition by men and women

The methods of land acquisition by men varied from inherited lands (54.5%), lands allocated by family heads (27.3%) to borrowed lands from neighbours (18.2%)

Women mainly acquire land through sharecropping in the household (86%), borrowed lands from neighbours (12%) and allocated by family heads (2%).

Women insecure access to land limited them in four ways. It limited the crops they grow, encouraged low productivity, aggravated food insecurity and limited their access to other forms of support such as credit from the formal sector (banks) for cultivation.

5.2.3 Women's contribution to household food security

The study found that, the average size of land used by women for cultivation is small (1-2 acres) compared with land sizes used by men (6-8 acres).

The main crops cultivated by women are groundnuts, guinea corn, cowpea and vegetables (okro and pepper). Guinea corn and vegetables were mostly consumed at home while groundnuts and cowpea were mostly sold for income to buy other food supplements such as fish and salt. Women in the study area are a major source of farm labour for their households in times of planting, harvesting, processing and transport.

Women work longer hours than men due to their multiple roles in food production, income generating activities and house chores. Besides their role in collecting of water and firewood for their households, preparing food absorbs a number of hours daily, of energy for Cooking.

Even though women contribute significantly to food security in the study area, household food insecurity is becoming a seasonal problem occurring every year between May and August due to poor yields resulting from low soil fertility and unfavourable weather conditions in the area.

5.3 Conclusion

The study was focused on women's access to land and how it impacts on food security in Zabzugu. Women's access to land impacts negatively on food security and environmental sustainability. Most of the problems on land access that exist in Zabzugu have their origin in the traditional value system of the people that places women as home keepers and not full time farmers. The relationship between land access, crop production and household food security have carefully been studied and there is enough evidence that as a basis for development, improved policies in support of food security must be carved out to discourage the unequal distribution and utilization of productive lands in the area.

It is in recognition of this that the report on women, land and food security in Africa concluded that women farmers, who are responsible for 60-80% of the food production in developing countries, use land more efficiently and make a greater contribution to food security. They therefore need access to land, management control of land-based resources, and economic incentives that security of tenure provides (FAO, 1997).



5.4 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are made.

- Men inadequate knowledge about the negative impacts of discrimination against women is a constraint. Respondents are not aware of policies in the study area on how agricultural lands are acquired and used. The inadequate knowledge about general laws in Ghana regarding the use of land and land use policy in the area has further worsened women's insecure access to productive lands. The Traditional Council in the study area should come out with common land use policies that will provide legal basis for women's secure access to land in the area.
- There is the need for traditional leaders and household heads to strengthen dialogue between men and women on issues concerning land. When men appreciate the benefit of making land available to women they will be more willing to give land to women for productive purposes.
- The mode of land acquisition is a major obstacle for women who intend to acquire land for production. Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other development partners in the district should launch advocacy programmes that target the removal of all forms of barriers that hinder the acquisition of land by women. Making the acquisition of land by women a topical issue is the first step towards easing and improving women's to land.
- Access to land means more than just acquiring a piece of land. The right to control production decisions such as what crop to plant as well as land use arrangement such as sharecropping contribute to enhanced land productivity and efficiency. Advocacy on women's access to control and use land should target encouraging traditional authorities and land owners to directly grant women freewill in the use of land.
- In Ghana, the 1985 Intestate Succession Law and the Head of Household Accountability Law were both intended to create greater security for widows and children. Yet this study in Zabzugu in the Northern Region found that few women



knew of either law and that customary practices continued to determine inheritance. This left many women without access to land after the death of their partners. The Community Initiative-Driven for Food Security (CIFS), an NGO operating in the district should intensify its advocacy to improve women's access to land in the study area.



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APPENDIX II

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

I am a student at the University for Development Studies, conducting a study to examine women's access to land and how it affects food security in Zabzugu. This is purely an academic work in partial fulfillment of the requirement for an award of Master of Art degree in Environmental Security and Livelihood Change.

You are humbly assured that the information you provide will be treated as confidential as it desired. Feel relaxed; spend some few minutes of your time and answer the questions as the issues exist in the community.

SECTION A

Background Information of Respondent

1. Sex

Male [] Female []

2. Age

18 — 28 [] 29 — 39 [] 40 — 50 [] 51 + []

3. Marital Status

Single [] Married [] Divorce [] other
(specify)

4. Religion

Islam [] Christian [] Traditional [] other
(specify)



5. Education

Basic [] SHS [] Tertiary [] None []

6. Occupation.....

SECTION B

Factors that Affect women Access to Land

7. Are you a native of Zabzugu? Yes [] No []

8. Do women have land? Yes [] No []

9. Why

10. What factors affect women access to land?

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.

SECTION C

How Men and Women Acquire Land

How do men and women acquire land in Zabzugu?

Inherited [] given by family head [] sharecropped by household [] bought [] rented [] borrowed from neighbour []

Do women have equal access to productive lands as

men? Yes [] No []



13. Why?

.....
.....

14. What are the consequences of women insecure access to land? (tick where applicable)

- 1. Limits the crops they can grow []
- 2. Restricts their access to credit []
- 3. Encourages low productivity []
- 4. Less food security []

SECTION D

Women's Contribution to Household Food Security

15. What is the average size of land women use for cultivation? (tick where applicable)

One acre [] Two acres [] Three acres [] Four acres [] above four acres []

16. Complete the table below.

Crops cultivated	Area (acre)	Output (bag)	Home use (bag)	Quantity sold (bag)	Unit price (GH¢)	Total income (GH¢)
1. Maize						
2. Guinea corn						
3. Millet						
4. Groundnuts						
5. Yam						
6. Beans						
7. <u>Others</u>						
i.						
ii.						
iii.						



17. Do you have enough food from your land for home consumption? Yes [] No []

18. Which time of the year are you food insecure?

1. Jan - Apr [] 2. May - Aug [] 3. Sep - Dec []

19. Where do get money to buy the supplement?
.....

20. What other things do you do to supplement household food?

21. How many hours do you spend on off-farm income activities daily? (tick where applicable)

1. Backyard garden [] 2. rear fowls [] 3. petty trading [] 4. sheabutter
5. processing [] 6. other []

22. How many hours do you spend on food production daily? (tick where applicable)

1. Less than 5 hours [] 2. 5-7 hours [] 3. more than 7 hours []

23. How many hours do you spend on house chores daily? (tick where applicable)

1. Less than 5 hours [] 2. 5-7 hours [] 3. more than 7 hours []



SECTION E

Existing Policies on Land Access

25. What policies exist on land access in this community?

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.

26. Are you satisfied with the existing policies?

Yes [] No []

Why?

-
-
-

27. What in your opinion can be done to improve women' access to land?

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.

END OF QUESTIONS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

