

**“OUR SISTERS TOO MATTER”: EXAMINING THE CULTURAL PRACTICES  
THAT SERVE AS BARRIERS TO GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION IN BOLNI IN THE  
NANUMBA NORTH DISTRICT**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I, Matthew Gmalifo Mabefam, do hereby declare that with the exception of the references duly cited, this thesis titled; “Our Sisters too Matter”: examining the cultural practices that serve as barriers to Girl-Child Education in Bolni in the Nanumba North District was entirely conducted by me in the Department of Social Work, University of Ghana, Legon under the supervision of Dr. Kofi Ohene-Konadu. This work has never been presented in part or in full to any other Department or Institution for any academic undertaking.

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(SUPERVISOR)**

## DEDICATION

To my two little sisters; Pichaan and Bilegnan Mabefam and the rest of the girls in Bolni, both born and unborn, may you grow to have the priceless gift of formal education like other girls elsewhere.



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the true meaning of friendship. To my class mates; though the journey was rough, we were determined and through God's guidance, we have a reason to celebrate!!!



### **Abstract**

The education of the girl-child has suffered many setbacks both in the past and at present. As a result, some girls are denied access while others are forced to drop out of school especially in rural Ghana. This study examined the effects of cultural practices on girl-child education in Bolni, a rural community in the Nanumba North District in Northern Region of Ghana. The study adopted a mix method research design and employed questionnaire in collecting quantitative data while in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observation were used to gather qualitative data. One hundred and thirty six participants were sampled for the study. The study used descriptive and inferential statistics to determine the relationship between marriage arrangements and girl-child education. The findings show that Exchange, Betrothal and Traditional Boy/Girlfriend Relationship or preferred marriage arrangements all had negative effects on girl-child education. The roles girls played at home, during funerals and festive occasions also overburdened them and affected their attendance rate and performance in school. The study also found out that socio-economic and demographic variables such as poverty, large family sizes and distance to school among other factors posed challenges to girl-child education in Bolni. It is therefore recommended that government should enforce laws enacted against forced and early marriages as well as laws on compulsory basic education to pave way for all children to be in school.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CAT	Community Advocacy Team
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IREWOC	International Research on Working Children
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PASW	Predictive Analytic Soft Ware
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SMC	School Management Committee
SSSCE	Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination
SVAGS	Stop Violence Against Girls in School
UNCRC	United Nation Convention on the Rights of Child
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

*If we are to succeed in our efforts to build a more healthy, peaceful and equitable world, the classrooms of the world have to be full of girls as well as boys...Study after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutrition and promote health, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as powerful in increasing the chances of education for the next generation.*

*Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General, United Nations (2003 p.1)*

Access to, retention in and completion of school has been a major challenge for children in the world especially in developing countries. Evidence exist to the fact that about 105,035 million children of primary school going age were out of school in 1999 but this figure had declined to 71,791 million by 2007 (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO] Global Monitoring Report, 2010). Notwithstanding this decline, the number of primary school going age children who are out of school in the world remains considerably high, given that education is the basic right of every child and hence the need for all children to be enrolled and complete at least primary school. Out of the total number of children who were out of school in both 1999 and 2007 as revealed by the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest of 45,012 million in 1999 and 32,226 million in 2007.

Recent statistics still show that even though there has been some improvement, there is still a greater number of children who are denied access to school. In 2012, 30 million primary school age children in Africa, that is one in every four, were out of school along with 20 million adolescents (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2012). This is

worrying and might be among the reasons accounting for the slow pace of development in the region.

Despite the general gap that exists with regards to children's access to education, the case of girls becomes a double as a result of some likely biases towards girl-child education. For instance, the number of primary school age girls out of school in the world in 1999 and 2007 were 58% and 54% respectively but that of sub-Saharan Africa had remained stable at 54% over the two years ending (UNESCO Global Monitoring Report, 2010). This means that generally, Sub-Saharan African countries including Ghana may not have benefited much from the impact of the interventions embarked on by national governments and the global community to improve access of especially girls to school; however, there may be country variations with improvements in a few.

It is also very essential to mention that the survival and progression of children in school and girls, especially, is further narrowed as they attempt to climb higher on the educational ladder. For instance, some scholars assert that Africa is far below others when it comes to enrollment and years of stay in school and that about one third of children make it to secondary school compared to over half in South Asia (Watkins, 2013; Van Fleet, Watkins & Greubel, 2012). On the part of girls in sub-Saharan Africa as reported by UNESCO Global Monitoring Report (2010), only 30% of girls were able to progress to secondary school in 2007.

In Ghana, the picture of education for children is gloomy as the statistics are no better than the above, even though the country needs to be credited for some improvements over the years. The national average of Net Enrolment Ratio for children in primary school in Ghana in the 2006/07 academic year was 83.7% (National Development Planning Commission [NDPC] & United Nation Development Programme [UNDP], 2010). Though at the primary school level, the Net Enrolment Ratio looks a little higher,

the same could not be said of their counterparts in the Junior High School level in the same year as this was as low as 53.4% (NDPC &UNDP, 2010). This further decreased in deprived districts in Ghana as their Net Enrolment Ratio stood at 43.8% (NDPC &UNDP, 2010).

There has always been a gender gap between girls and boys in the various levels of education in Ghana as well. At the primary and Junior High School levels, the Gender Parity Index in terms of education was in-balanced, unfavourable to girls as their ratio to boys was lower than expected. For instance, the ratio when balanced stands at 1 but in 2006/07 academic year the Gender Parity Index (GPI) was 0.96 and remained the same for the 2007/08 academic year whilst at the Junior High School level the Gender Parity Index retrogressed from 0.93 in the 2005/06 academic year to 0.92 in 2007/2008 academic year (NDPC &UNDP, 2010). This is very unfortunate because, it is expected that the Gender Parity Index should have been narrowed. Despite these national Gender Parity Indices, there are regional differences with Northern Region obtaining the least index of 0.81 which fell below the national average of 0.94 in the 2008 academic year (ActionAid Ghana, 2011).

The above situation raises concern about the future of human resource development of Ghana. Should things continue this way, Ghana will not be able to harness the full potential of its citizenry. It is therefore important to ask questions and seek answers to the wide gender gaps that exist between girls and boys in schools especially in the Northern Region which had the least Gender Parity Index of 0.81 in Ghana. By so doing, the reasons for such an anomaly will be established and proactive steps taken to salvage the situation.

To that effect, some scholars have argued that the existence of gender disparity in education can be attributed to poverty-triggered high drop out and low enrollment rates of

girls (Sengupta & Guha, 2002; Mlama, 2001). Others are also of the view that part of the problem is due to low commitment level of governments to education especially at the basic school level and unfavourable school environments (Sengupta & Guha, 2002; Ghosh, 1992). The low number of girls in school may also be due to traditional cultural attitudes towards the role of girls and women in society (Bista, 2004). As a result, parents see girl-child education as a higher risk for investment because the girls would end up being married to someone with no direct benefit to them (Mlama, 2001; Bista, 2004). This shows that the factors that contribute to low enrollment of girl-child in school in most developing countries including Ghana are multifaceted and complex.

Contrary to the strongly held beliefs above, educating the girl-child exposes the girl-child and the whole society to so many advantages (Annan, 2003). This is reiterated by the human capital theory which stipulates that education is an investment that yield returns for the individual and for society at large (Schultz, 1961). In addition to that Colclough (1982) makes the point that, educating children has both economic and social benefits. These benefits are derived from cognitive skills as well as non-cognitive abilities gained and which are reflected in the person's ideas, perceptions and attitudes (Colclough, 1982). It also brings about awareness of people to issues surrounding them and how to advance development and the welfare of people in the nation (Sengupta & Guha, 2002). This implies that educating the girl-child avails opportunities to the girl-child which can help empower her. In the same line of thought, limiting the girl-child's access to education denies her the same advantages that would have been accrued if she had been educated.

Due to the advantages that could accrue as a result of educating the girl-child, several conventions and declarations have been instituted to address girls' low enrollment in school. Countries which have signed onto them are duty bound to ensure all girl children have access to and complete at least primary school successfully. For instance,

the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which Ghana was the first to sign stipulates under Article 28 that every child has the right to education, and that it is the duty of the state to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory. Article 28 of the UNCRC aims at ensuring that different forms of secondary education are accessible to every child and to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity (United Nations, 1991). The 1992 constitution of Ghana, article 25 enjoins the state to provide education to children without discrimination on the basis of sex. Ghana is also a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) among others which enjoin Ghana to provide education for all, irrespective of sex.

In response to the requirements of the above conventions, Ghana has instituted specific interventions such as the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education, School Capitation Grant and School Feeding Programme to improve school enrollment, retention and completion. Notwithstanding these interventions, the enrolment of girls in school is still not a palatable story to tell, as many girls are still out of school. The Nanumba North District which is one of the rural districts had a GPI of 0.81 which was slightly lower than the national average of 0.94 in 2008 (ActionAid Ghana, 2011). The number of girls out of school is higher in rural communities with Bolni inclusive (Abbey & Darkey, 2013). In Bolni, consciousness about education is still low and hence their way of life, tradition, cultural practices and belief systems support acts of bias towards especially the girl-child being taken to school. It is against this backdrop that this study is undertaken to explore peoples' culture and belief systems that serve as barriers to girl-child education focusing on Bolni community in Nanumba North District in the Northern Region.

## 1.2 Statement of Problem

The girl-child has been neglected and discriminated against in almost every community in Ghana with the case of rural communities being to the extreme. One of such discriminations is the lukewarm attitudes of parents towards educating the girl-child (Moletsane & Manuh, 1999). It is asserted that giving the girl-child access to education helps her develop “non-conformist” behaviours that are contrary to the status quo and hence education is a no go zone for her (Chowdhury, 1994). However, the explicit or implicit actions and inactions of rural communities towards denying the girl-child access to education has both short and long term consequences on the whole community and the girl-child in particular.

The denial of the girl-child access to education is a denial of her basic human rights culminating in her lower social status, feminization of poverty, her inability to be an active participant in society and her limited role in decision making in the public, household and sometimes her private life among other consequences (Kaag, 2011). This makes her dependent and subjected to several forms of abuse such as violence, discrimination in resources distribution, power and decision making. She therefore lives under the bondage and dominion of men all in the name of culture, religion and cultural belief systems (Obasi, 2006).

The situation of the girl-child’s access to and progression in education, in Bolni is of major concern. Few girls enroll in school and majority of the enrolled eventually drop out. This is evident in the fact that only one girl so far has sailed through the odds in the community and completed Senior High School as at 2012 (Information from preliminary visit to the field).

Though studies have been conducted on the barriers of girl-child education, most of them often focus on the infrastructural and economic factors (International Research on

Working Children [IREWOC], 2007; Osita-Oleribe, 2007; Moletsane & Manuh, 1999). This study seeks to explore a people's culture and belief system especially marriage arrangements, gender roles, funerals and festivals and the extent to which they serve as barriers to girl-child education focusing on Bolni community in the Nanumba North District of Northern Region.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

To find out the relationship between cultural practices of Bolni community and girl-child education as well as other social factors that hinder girls' progression in school.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

1. To examine the effects of socio-demographic characteristics of parents on girl-child education in Bolni
2. To determine the motivation for the perpetuation of cultural practices that serve as barriers to girl-child education in Bolni
3. To examine measures that can be instituted to mitigate the effects of cultural practices on girl-child education in Bolni
4. To explore interventions employed by Government and NGOs to improve Girl-child education in Bolni.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. How do socio-demographic characteristics of parents affect girl-child education in Bolni?
2. Are there any motivations for the perpetuation of cultural practices such as marriage arrangements, gender roles, funerals and festivals in Bolni?

3. How does the perpetuation of cultural practices such as marriage arrangements, gender roles, funerals and festivals affect girl-child education in Bolni?
4. What measures can be instituted to mitigate the effects of cultural practices such as marriage arrangements, gender roles, funerals and festivals on girl-child education in Bolni?
5. What measures do stakeholders employ to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study provide information that will inform policy makers and advocacy groups to be sensitive to and conscious of the cultural issues and belief systems of rural communities when designing policies that affect them. The study's findings may also be used as the basis for service practitioners such as social workers to sensitize rural communities on the need to enroll and retain their girl children in school and the benefits they stand to reap from such a venture. Furthermore, this study adds to existing knowledge on girl-child education, and hopefully generates interest in further studies in this area.

### **1.6 Study Area**

Nanumba North District was carved out of the former Nanumba District in August 2004 and covers an estimated total landmass of 1,986 square kilometers with Bimbilla as the district capital. Geographically, the district is located within Latitude 8.5° N and 9.25° N and Longitude 0.5° E and 0.5° W of the Greenwich Meridian. The district shares boundaries with Yendi District to the north, Nanumba South to the south and east, and East Gonja District to the West and South-West (Nanumba North District Assembly, 2006).

The Nanumba North District is dominated by tropical climatic conditions. Average temperatures range from 16° C during the harmattan season (December-January) to as high as 40°C during the dry season which spans from March to April. In recent times, the length of the harmattan and the dry season has been varying and very unpredictable due to the changing climatic conditions in the district. Generally, the rainfall pattern is characterized by fluctuations, irregularity and variability in terms of timing of the onset, duration and total amount of fall. The onset of the rains is generally around April and rises steadily to peak in August to September. In recent years, however, the onset of the rain in the district usually delays till May and peaks late in October (Nanumba North District Assembly, 2006).

The Nanumba North District Directorate of Education is headed by a Director of Education and assisted by four frontline Assistant Directors who head four (4) units. These are Finance and Administration, Planning and Research, Human Resource Management and Development, and Monitoring and Supervision. The objectives of the Education Directorate in providing education for the district are in tune with the broad objectives of the Ministry of Education, mainly: to improve access and participation, to improve the quality of teaching and learning, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of management performance and to strengthen capacity at the district level to promote decentralization (Nanumba North District Assembly, 2006).

The enrolment ratio of girls to boys in Nanumba North is 0.81 in 2008 (ActionAid Ghana, 2011). Majority of pupils in the district cover a walking distance of between 1.5km and 4km to school daily. The average distance is 2.5km. However, in some circuits such as Makayili, Dakpam, Bincheratanga, Chamba and Bakpaba pupils cover more than 2.5km. About 80% of pupils walk to school with 15% riding bicycles and only 5% get to school by other means. Pupils who walk spend considerable time, between 50 to 70 minutes,

before getting to school, while those using bicycles spend between 30 to 60 minutes. This phenomenon negatively impact on teaching and learning in the district (Nanumba North District Assembly, 2006).

Bolni is one of the communities in the Nanumba North District and it is the focus of this study. It is about 12km east of Bimbilla, the District Capital. It shares boundaries with Kariga in the south, Pusiga in the north, in the west with Ganguyili and in the east with Joukamonando. The total population of Bolni is about 1,539 inhabitants (Bolni Students Union, 2012).

Bolni is quite young when it comes to formal education. Formal education started in Bolni in 1983 when the first pupils sat under trees for classes until members of the community mobilized themselves and put up hats made of “zana” mat (locally woven mat using elephants grass). In the late 1990s they built rectangular rooms with bricks and got roofing iron sheets from the Nanumba District assembly to roof it. Currently Bolni has a well-structured six classroom block with the support of ActionAid and School for Life (Non-Governmental Organisations [NGOs] in the community). Majority of children in Bolni are in the primary and Junior High Schools. Tertiary school has the least number of five students. Bolni has four graduates who are gainfully employed. Aside these people, majority of the inhabitants are illiterates (information from preliminary visit to the study area, 2012).

There is wide gender gap in education in Bolni. Very few girls attend and are able to survive through the odds of society to complete school in Bolni. As at now there is only one girl from Bolni community who has completed Senior High School in 2012 (information from preliminary visit to the study area, 2012). Majority of them are not given access or drop out as they climb the academic ladder. This is so worrying and is the reason the researcher chose the community for this research work.

## 1.7 Definition of Concepts

For the sake of clarity and avoidance of ambiguity, the following terms are used in the context of this study:

**Access:** Giving the girl-child opportunity or a chance to be enrolled in school without any limitations.

**Barriers:** Any obstacles that prevent girls from enrolling and progressing in school.

**Betrothal marriage:** it is a type of marriage arrangement where a family agrees to give their daughter's hand in marriage to a potential husband at birth.. The arrangement could even be made when the girl-child is not born but being expected.

**Cultural practices:** Cultural practices refer to specific ways of life, behaviours, attitudes, traditions and belief systems that are cherished and practiced by a group of people with a common background (ethnic group). These practices help identify and bind them together as one group or a people of a common destiny (e.g. marriage rites, ways of dressing, food etc).

**Exchange marriage:** It is a kind of marriage arrangement where two families agree to swap their daughters or sisters where each of the families takes the others daughter or sister as a wife.

**Girl-child:** According to the 1998 Children's Act of Ghana, Act 560, a child is a person below the age of 18years. The girl-child therefore refers to a female child below the age of 18 years.

**Primary education:** This refers to the basic form of education received by a child mostly between the ages of 6-12. It is a six year course and ranges from primary 1 to 6.

**Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship/preferred marriage:** It is a type of romantic relationship existing between a young male and a young female and approved by the society. It is normally an institution of the youth and presided by the youth leaders of both

sexes. The relationship could lead to marriage and such marriage arrangement is referred to as preferred marriage.

**Reflect Circle:** it is an adult group formed by Grameen Ghana in Bolni to identify problems, resources and help connect the resources to finding solutions to the problems identified in Bolni. It is a community empowerment group which places premium on community participation as a potent technique for development.

**Survival:** It refers to the ability of a child to stay and complete school after he/she has been enrolled.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one entails the introduction of the study, which embodies the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, significance of the study, study area and the definition of key concepts.

Chapter two constitutes thematic review of relevant literature related to the study. Chapter three consists of the methodology of the study. It specifically looks at the research design, target population, study population, sampling procedures and methods of data collection. The rest are data handling, limitations and challenges of the study as well as ethical considerations. The fourth chapter presents analyses, interpretations and discussion of findings while chapter five presents the summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter brings together relevant literature on the concept of girl-child education and cultural practices that serve as barriers to their access, retention and completion of school in the world with special reference to Ghana. In this chapter, relevant literature is reviewed in consonance with the objectives of the study. The review starts with the theoretical framework, theoretical perspectives and ends with review of empirical literature that are relevant to the study.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

For the purposes of this study, the researcher used social learning theory as the framework to underpin the study. The social learning theory is used to explain the existence and perpetuation of cultural practices that hinder girl-child education in Bolni.

Albert Bandura is one of the leading proponents of social learning theory. His concept of social learning theory was formulated in 1977 as he sought to build upon what earlier authors on learning behaviour had theorised. Edward Thorndike (1874-1949) and B. F. Skinner (1904-1990) are among learning theorists who believe that learning is incremental and people learn through trial-and-error approach without the influence of mental constructs (Hammond, Austin, Orcutt & Rosso, 2001). In a shift from the traditional behavioural approach of learning in society, Taylor (1998) and Huitt and Monetti (in press) in support of Bandura argue that individuals play a rather active role in the learning process as opposed by his counterparts. This means that individuals within a society are not passive members but engage in and act out whatever happens around them through observational learning and modeling. Taylor (1998) argues that the intention of

individuals within a society to model or imitate behaviour is dependent on the rewards they or someone who had acted or will act similar actions got or may get.

The stance of the theory is that the modeling of a particular form of behaviour in a society can be learnt by others by observing others and thereby acting it out if it benefits them (Taylor, 1998). Taylor further adds that the observation of another's behaviour or action leads to cognitive representation of that same behaviour and this is utilised when he or she faces similar situations. Inferences are therefore made that as people observe what happens around them, it gets stacked in their cognition, is processed, evaluated and brought to bear at any point the person may be faced with a similar situation. This is however dependent on the judgment the person associates with that particular behaviour. The theory considers the individuals involved as active participants in the learning process. Thus the argument advanced by Taylor (1998) is that the social learning theory "gave people the central role in their own behaviour first through their abilities to learn new action sequence through observation and mental rehearsal and second through cognitive representation and constructions that they bring to situations as guidelines for behaviour" (p.66).

One significant feature of this theory is its concern with social issues, especially prejudice, neglect and discrimination in society. The researcher therefore regards it as one of the best theories to explain cultural practices in Bolni community that lead to the neglect of girl-child education, which is a significant social issue. The theory posits that prejudiced attitudes toward groups are learnt and developed in the same way as other attitudes in society are learnt and acted out. Thus children and other younger generations acquire negative attitudes toward various social groups because they hear such attitudes expressed and practiced by their parents, teachers, and peers (Taylor, 1998). These biases,

according to an earlier critique by Sears (1975) are either implicitly or explicitly reinforced through praise, approval, or tacit acceptance for expressing them.

In applying the social learning theory to the existence and persistence of prejudice and discrimination against the girl-child with regards to educational access, the researcher postulates that such ways of life, traditions and belief systems (culture) which embody the behaviour of the people of Bolni community are learnt from generation to generations from parents, relatives and members of the larger society through socialization. The continued perpetuation of such ways of life is because, those who act it out or model it (parents and/or their girls) benefit from it and often get approval in one way or the other for adhering and protecting culture. On the other hand, those who challenge it are chastised, blamed and their acts disapproved by society. To be accepted, parents and girls have learnt to engage in cultural practices that deny girls access to or pull them out of school. It is under this line of thinking that the social learning theory is utilized in this study.

## **2.2 Theoretical Perspectives**

The concept of culture is as old as the human race and several authors have given their understanding from various points of view. According to Tylor (1871), culture in the widest ethnographic sense, is that complex whole of a group of people which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a person as a result of his or her membership of a particular society. What Tylor tries to bring forth is the fact that culture is an epitome of a group of people's life, and those ways of life are learnt from others within society. Tylor however does not expatiate on whether people just learnt and practiced what happens in society in the name of culture or were selective in what they learnt regarding the benefits they stand to gain.

As a result of the gap identified above, Taylor (1998) agrees in the learning nature of people from one another within society but was quick to add that people do not just copy others' behaviour in the society as culture but they evaluate to see the benefits they will get from the act before they learn it or act it out when faced with similar conditions. The evaluation people often engage in could be one of the factors which make culture dynamic and changes from generation to generation. The dynamism and changes in culture is because, each generation will evaluate what has been handed down to them and make changes that will benefit them as a group (Belshek, 2006). This does not however, suggest that old behaviours are thrown away completely. They are only being modified to suit the current generation after a long tested period of time.

From the view of Linton (1940), culture is seen as the sum total of knowledge, attitudes and habitual behavior patterns shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society. Linton's definition of culture is not too different from what Tylor asserted earlier. The only difference that can be found in the two definitions is the wording of their definitions. Tylor (1871) and Linton (1940) had a consensus that a people's way of life which is considered as culture is a learned behaviour which is transferred from one generation to another through socialization. This establishes some kind of commonness and similarities in people's conception of the term culture. This to a large extent brings about some general understanding of the term culture. Though there is no universally accepted definition of the term because of little variations inherent in each author's definitions (Belshek, 2006).

Goodenough (1957) asserts that culture is the pattern of life practiced by a community where there is constant recurring of activities and materials emanating from the social characteristics of that group of people. In this definition, Goodenough (1957) supports the assertion already made by Tylor (1871) and Linton (1940) whose focus have

been on culture being a learned behaviour and its recurrence across generations. Thus culture is not a one-time activity but that activity or behaviour must have been in existence and practiced over a period of time.

Deductions from the above explanation of culture reveal that culture is a broad term that encompasses a lot of specific practices and together make a group of peoples' way of life. This way of life is unique to only people of that society and that makes them different from others and hence culture brings about identity to a group of people. Culture is unique, dynamic and varies across geographical locations (eg. Communities, countries, continents, etc), ethnic groups (e.g., the Akans, the Konkomba, the Dagomba etc), race (eg, white race, black race etc) among others. The culture of a particular group of people has a significant influence on their lives and the way they conduct their social, economic, religious and political activities (Belshek, 2006). The researcher infers from the assertion of (Belshek, 2006; Goodenough, 1957; Tylor, 1940; Taylor, 1998) that the actions and inactions of a group of people are directed and informed by their culture and education of the girl-child in societies is influenced by the position culture holds for them in that society.

Subsequent paragraphs focus on socio-cultural factors that affect girl-child education. All the socio-cultural variables reviewed looked at the specific cultural practices that pose challenges to access, progression and completion of girl-children in school. The section looks at marriage arrangements (child betrothal, exchange and preferential selection) and how they contribute to undermining and limiting girls' aspirations in school.

Literature available (Fant, 2008; Yando, 2011) reveals that infant/child betrothal is one of the marriage arrangements that pose a challenge to girl-child education in areas that it is practiced. It is a cultural practice where there is a promise of marriage between

parents of an infant girl to another man in the future (Fant, 2008; Yando, 2011). To make matters worse, Fant (2008) asserts that the promise could even be made when the girl-child is not yet conceived. The girl-child is only born to realize that her future has been determined by someone else without her consent.

Yando (2011) explains that child betrothal among Konkombas normally occurs between two men who have agreed (or promised) to give each other wives or between a woman and a man on the premises that the man is so kind to her and hence the only way to reward him is to promise him a wife.

The above conduct modalities revealed by Yando (2011) points to the fact that someone else is a beneficiary of that arrangement and not the girl-child in question. This is because, when the phrase ‘when a man is kind to a woman’ by Yando (2011) is critically examined, the mother is the beneficiary of the kindness and not the girl-child. He further adds that a man who offers the support to the woman starts to call the lady his in-law and anytime she gives birth to a female child, the man is called and told that the child will be his wife in future. This affirms the assertion of Fant (2008) that the betrothed girl-child sometimes may not even be conceived.

Fant (2008) identifies early marriage as an aspect of child betrothal. Fant (2008) finds in his study where a lady revealed that, “my father values marriage more than education. I stopped schooling because I got married at age 14” (p.43). At age 14, the girl is too young to be married and could have been in the Junior High School if she was lucky to have been enrolled in school early or probably in primary school if she did not go to school early. Inferences can be made from his findings that child/infant betrothal is a form of early marriage which limits girl-child education. This is because, the girls are married off at early ages which will not allow them the opportunity to be in school. However, considering the fact that the study was conducted in rural Ghana in Bunkpurugu in the

Northern Region, such a girl could have still been in primary school and was forced to drop out of school to marry. This shows that the inhabitants of Bunkpurugu place premium on marriage as against education of the girl-child and that possibly accounts for the girl's father withdrawing her from school for marriage.

In an assertion by Fant (2008), whose study was among the Bimoba ethnic group, the girl-child could be betrothed to a single man and in that case the girl grows to know who exactly her husband to be. There are other instances that the man who the child is betrothed to will not marry her himself, but to any of his children. In the case where the girl is betrothed to a family/man with many male children, the girl might not know her husband to be until she gets to the marital home. At this point, whoever the family asks her to heat water for to bath becomes the husband of the girl (Fant, 2008). Despite this open arrangement, elderly sons are always considered first, however there could be some variations depending on the family and the way it conducts its social life. The central issue of concern here is the fact that the girl-children are often looked at as subjects for marriage even when they are not born. In such societies, education may not be a priority hence girls born in one of such communities are deprived of their basic human right to education.

In addition, the would-be husband begins to honour some obligations to his in-laws (Yando, 2011). Some of the obligations asserted by Yando (2011) includes: farming for the in-laws every year and paying for a pot of pito brewed by the mother in-law every year. This is done each year beginning from the sixth year of the child (Yando, 2011). Aside the above, the man also pays guinea corn of any appreciable quantity to the in-laws and as well sends a pot of pito to the in-laws anytime there is a funeral.

It is therefore argued by the researcher that because of the advantages attached to child betrothal as outlined above especially for the in-laws, parents would do whatever they can to ensure their girl-children are betrothed. This does not call to attention the

interest of the girl-child, because her consent is not sought and the marriage arrangement is contracted at the time she was a child and could not even say anything meaningful concerning marriage. Additionally, betrothal practice also means that in areas that the girl child is always groomed for marriage her chances of enrolling in school or completing school may be limited. This implies that education may not be a priority for parents of such a child and hence betrothal acts as a limitation on her access to education. Other implications might be that if they educate such a child she will grow to refuse such a marriage. Therefore it is better for them to keep her out of school so she could be ignorant of her rights and accept to marry her betrothed husband (Chowdhury, 1994).

Yando (2011) and Fant (2008) assert that an exchange marriage occurs when two men swap/exchange girls for wives. They note that the exchanged/swapped girls could either be the biological daughters, or sisters of the men who are entering into the exchange contract of marriage. Among reasons accounting for exchange marriage arrangements is the fact that when the already married men do not have male children they would exchange some of their girls for more wives with the anticipation that at least one of the wives will give birth to a male child/children (Fant, 2008).

In dissecting the above, men who want to exchange their daughters or sisters may not give a chance to their girl-children to be enrolled in school. Inherent in this may also be the fact that male children may be preferred in such communities hence the reason people crave to have them. Konlan (1988) argues that among the Bimobas, all marriages are exchanged because whichever form of marriage arrangements one contracts, he is expected to pay back with a girl to his in-laws and thus a kind of debt on the person. Under such obligation, they would not choose education against the debt they owe and hence either the girl intended for replacement is withdrawn from school or not allowed at all to attend school.

Yando's (2011) concept of exchange marriage might have been different from Konlan's (1988) concept. This difference in conception is based on the argument advanced by Yando that exchange marriage arrangement surfaced in the Konkombaland in the late 1980s and early 1990s. If they had meant the same thing, then exchange could possibly have existed in the Konkombaland for a long time, because they engage in similar marriage arrangements like the Bimobas. Yando (2011) however failed to point out why such an arrangement evolved but was quick to put forward advantages for exchange marriage arrangement for their perpetrators. Among the advantages put forward by him are that it is cheaper when compared to the child betrothal, they do not pay bride guinea corn, the pot of pito every year and the concurrent farming right from age six of the betrothed girl-child till she is of age to marry as it exist in the betrothal system. However, the men are obliged to pay some services to their in-laws. In whichever ways, such services are less than those demanded in child betrothal.

Preferred marriage arrangement is a kind of marriage arrangement where people choose their partners themselves (Yando, 2011). Yando however notes that the choice of partners is restricted to only families or ethnic groups which are approved by their families or parents of both parties. This form of marriage arrangement can also serve as a barrier to girl-child education as the girl can get pregnant and drop out of school in the process.

The danger of preferred marriage arrangement (Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship) is that since the man is interested in getting a wife, he might not care whether the girl is in school or not and hence may not want to use contraceptives either intentionally or due to ignorance or the absence of condoms. This eventually gets the girl pregnant leading to her withdrawal from school to marry him. In this arrangement, the main problem is not lack of access to education. The arrangement only serves as a barrier to education because the girl may drop out of school.

Due to the importance placed on education, successive governments of Ghana have adopted, designed and/or implemented several interventions that are aimed at improving educational access of children. Some of these interventions adopted range from Treaties, Conventions, Declarations and Acts among others that seek to promote children's education. For instance, Ghana is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the United Nations Millennium Declaration among others. All these policies put premium on the need to educate all children without any discrimination. This therefore mandates the government to design specific programmes that can help realize the quest to achieve education for all Ghanaian children.

Apart from the ratification of treaties, declarations and conventions, successive governments of Ghana have designed local policy guidelines to promote the education of children in the country. The 1992 constitution of Ghana enshrines in article 25 clause 1 that every child has the right to education and should not be discriminated on the basis of sex. Another policy guide for Ghana when it comes to education is the Children's Act of 1998 (ACT, 560). Part I, section 8 of the Children's Act states that, no person shall deprive a child access to education. What this implies is that every child irrespective of the sex, race, religion, ethnicity and geographical location must not be deprived of education, because, education has been made a basic human right for them as enshrined in the constitution and the Children's Act.

In response to the requirements to the above Declarations, Acts and Conventions, Ghana has instituted specific interventions such as the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education, 1996 and School Capitation Grant, 2005 (Osei, Owusu, Asem, & Afutu-Kotey, 2009). Ghana has also introduced School Feeding Programme in 2005 and Free School Uniforms and Exercise books 2010 among others to improve school enrolment,

progression and completion. The government has also constructed and rehabilitated schools in remote areas to make education accessible to every child and trained more teachers, (NDPC & UNDP, 2010). These have paid off as many children including the girl- child have had appreciable access to education. However, there are still some children who are not in school. For instance the number of children in school at the primary school level increased from 93.7% to 95.2% in the 2006/07 and 2008/09 academic years (Global Partnership for Education and Ghana Development Partner Group, 2012).

### **2.3 Review of Empirical Literature**

This section reviews empirical literature on factors that serve as barriers to girl-child education. The review focuses on very recent literature dating not more than 12 years old. Again, the review places emphasis on the socio-economic variables of households and cultural practices (gender roles) that serve as barriers to girl child education as well as NGOs interventions to improve girl-child education. The review is not limited to any country but across the globe. Even though there might be contextual differences, the issue of girl-child education and their challenges bear resemblance in most instances.

Studies conducted to find the effects of socio-economic characteristics of parents on girl-child education found that there are significant relationships between household resources and girl-child education (Gyan, Mabefam & Baffoe, 2014; Abbey & Darkey, 2013; Kainuwa & Yusuf, 2013; Sengupta & Guha, 2002). Sengupta and Guha (2002) conducted a study on the impact of household demand factors on school participation and performance in four villages and two urban wards of West Bengal in India. They adopted a quantitative approach of research design. Sengupta and Guha (2002) found that educational status, occupational status, family size, religion and caste systems have strong correlations with girl-child education. The higher the level of education of parents (especially mothers), parents who have white collar jobs, parents who are rich have a

higher propensity of their girl-children to be sent to school and survive in school than their counterparts who are less educated, illiterate farmers and poor (Sengupta & Guha, 2002). Some scholars found that parents who are educated understand the needs of children in school, help them with homework and have regular income which they can spend on their children's education (Gyan, Mabefam & Baffoe, 2014; Sengupta & Guha, 2002).

The above findings are consistent with the findings of Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013). Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) paper examines how socio-economic status and educational background of the parents affect the education of children in Nigeria. They found that parents' educational and socio-economic backgrounds influence the education of their children. For instance, pupils from families where parents have less education tend to systematically perform worse in schools than pupils whose parents have more education (Kainuwa & Yusuf, 2013). They further found that educated parents are more concerned and more effective in helping their children in academic work by supervising and monitoring their children's academic progress (Kainuwa & Yusuf, 2013).

Gyan, Mabefam and Baffoe (2014) piloted a study in some selected communities in rural north and urban south in Ghana regarding the causes of poor academic performance and high dropout rates among children in Junior High Schools. They adopted a quantitative method of research approach and were guided by the social capital theory as the framework. Their study found that household factors such as large family size, poverty and poor educational status of parents affect children's schooling negatively and lead to their poor performance and/dropout of children from school.

Another factor that affects girl-child education is teenage pregnancy (Gyan, 2013; Muganda-Onyando & Omondi, 2008). Gyan (2013) conducted a study on the consequences of teenage pregnancy on girl-child educational attainment in Chorkor, a suburb of Accra. He adopted the mixed method of research design. Gyan (2013) found

that teenage pregnancy negatively affects girl-child educational attainment as most teenage mothers drop out of school. Gyan's (2013) findings are consistent with that of Muganda-Onyando and Omondi (2008) who also found in their study that teenage pregnancy acts as a catalyst to school dropout in poor families. The reasons why most teenage girls dropped out of school is the fact that teenage mothers usually feel shy to return to school (Gyan, 2013).

Furthermore, it is found that child labour serves as a barrier to girl-child education (Sengupta & Guha, 2002; Okyere, 2012; Gyan, Mabefam & Baffoe, 2014). Gyan, Mabefam and Baffoe (2014) found that some children are in school and at the same time working to take care of themselves in school. The findings of Gyan, Mabefam and Baffoe are consistent with that of Okyere (2012). Okyere (2012) conducted a study on the effects of child labour on children educational attainment in Kenyasi mines in rural district of Ghana. He employed the ethnographic method of enquiry with 57 children (30 girls and 27 boys) aged 14 to 17. Okyere (2012) found that over 80% of the research participants engaged in child labour activities in order to fund their education. For instance, a girl informant revealed that:

*“My father cannot give us school chop money and my elder sister has already stopped school because of this. I came here with some girls to see if I can get some money by myself and continue school next term”*

Again, Abbey and Darkey (2013) conducted a study to determine the fate of rural children in Ghana using Agortikope village as a case. They adopted the qualitative research enquiry and used a sample size of a 17. Abbey and Darkey (2013) discovered that inadequate learning and teaching materials, poor infrastructure, and teacher absenteeism amongst other factors make the ambition of rural children bleak. Similar findings were revealed by Gyan, Mabefam and Baffoe (2014). Gyan, Mabefam and Baffoe (2014) found

that school factors such as inadequate teachers, inadequate teaching and learning materials, inadequate infrastructure and poor conditions of the few available with walls having cracks, no ceiling and leaked roofing's in rural north of Ghana affect children's academic performance.

In addition, economic status of parents or the household and payment of school fees serve as a barrier to children's educational attainment (Okyere, 2012; Sengupta & Guha, 2002). literature available show that the introduction of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education, Capitation Grant, and others such as school feeding programmes in Ghanaian schools in theory have relieved parents of paying for the cost of education (Okyere, 2012). The non-payment of school fees at the basic level implies that children will to go to school free of charge at the basic level. However, Osei et al (2009) conducted a study on the impact of capitation grant and realised that it has not led to any significant gains in school enrolment rates. Even though parents do not pay direct tuition fees, they sometimes contribute in kind or in cash to build school structures, teachers bungalows, buy books among other school needs of their children (Colclough, Rose & Tembon, 2000). This becomes a burden especially for the poor families who are struggling for survival and their children could be out of school as a result. Colclough and his friends iterate that even if parents are not paying anything in school, they might consider the labour they are going to lose by enrolling their children in school, because such children serve as labour for them both at the household and outside of household.

More so, gender roles have also been found to have negative relationship with girls access to school and retention (Moletsane & Manuh, 1999). Moletsane and Manuh (1999) found that the plight of the girl-child in rural communities in Ghana is pathetic as some communities still did not have a single girl attending school at the time of the their research. Moletsane and Manuh (1999) revealed that those villages lacked basic needs like

water, light, and grinding mills and since it is the role of women to fetch water, go for firewood and go to grind flour. As they engage in such roles they assign their daughters to help with household chores thereby depriving them of school. This is because, they “do not see the sense of sending girls to school when there are important survival tasks to be completed” (Moletsane & Manuh, 1999 p.87). The findings of Moletsane and Manuh (1999) are similar to the findings of Dako-Gyeke and Owusu (2013) when they found that culture prescribed authoritative roles for males whereas females were responsible for caring roles within the household. Majority of the respondents indicated that traditionally, women were responsible for maintaining the household by performing chores such as sweeping, cleaning, preparing food and bathing children (Dako-Gyeke & Owusu, 2013).

In terms of the role of NGOs in improving the education of children, literature shows a positive correlation (Fielmua & Bandie, 2012). For instance, Fielmua and Bandie (2012) conducted a study on the role of NGOs in basic education in Nawdowli district of Ghana. They found that the Sustainable Integrated Development Services Centre (SIDSEC) which was the locus of the study had contributed in increasing enrolment and retention as well as performance through its education programmes. They also found that SIDSEC usually works through Parents Teacher Association, School Management Committees and Circle of Women Educators to improve children’s education.

#### **2.4 Gaps in Literature**

One major gap found in the literature above is that most of the studies employed the qualitative method of research enquiry. Although the methodology associated with qualitative research elicits rich, in-depth responses (Creswell, 2009), the findings are limited to the individuals from which the information had been elicited and the extent to which they opened to the researchers.

The second weakness is that as typical of qualitative studies, the sample sizes were usually very small. The small nature of the sample sizes makes the transferability of the results of these qualitative studies restricted and cannot be generalised (Hollway, & Jefferson, 2000). In order to fill the gap of limitedness of qualitative method of research enquiry in the empirical literature above, the researcher adopted the mixed method of research design where both quantitative and qualitative methods were combined with relative larger population as compared to those found in the literature. The mixed method design consequently assisted in reducing the biases of a single method. Though mixed methods studies also have their own limitations, at the least the limitations inherent in both methods will be complemented and their strengths enhanced (International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, 2011).

Again, there was inadequate empirical literature on the effects of marriage arrangements on girl-child education in Ghana and other countries. From the background of the study through theoretical perspectives, one thing that was often revealed is that girls are discriminated against on grounds of culture but none focused on how a specific cultural practices effects girl-child education. As a result the researcher focused on the theoretical perspectives by drawing inferences from books and unpublished thesis instead of empirical literature. This is a major challenge and the reason for which this research has been conducted to shed light on how selected cultural practices such as marriage arrangements, funerals and festivals as well as gender roles affect girl-child education in Bolni.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This section of the study focuses on the various methods used for the study. It specifically includes Research Design, Target Population, Study Population, Sampling Frame and Sample Size. The rest are Sampling Design, Methods of Data Collection, Data Handling and Analysis, testing of hypotheses, limitations and Ethical Considerations.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopted the mixed methods research design. The design focused on the collection and analyses of data by combining both qualitative and quantitative data (International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, 2011; Creswell, 2003). The usage of this method was based on the fact that it enabled the researcher to triangulate the findings from both methods. This consequently assisted in reducing the biases and limitations inherent in both methods and complemented their strengths (International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, 2011).

The two methods were also used because the problem under investigation was about culture which concerns the way of life of a group of peoples, thus the need for a larger coverage ( i.e. quantitative) in order to get diverse views on such practices as well as in-depth information ( i.e. qualitative) through interviews with key informants. Creswell (2003) justifies the usage of the mix method because it enables the usage of multiple methods of data collection and analysis especially on phenomena that are complex such as culture to which a single method is not sufficient to bring out a comprehensive understanding.

In this design, the qualitative and quantitative data were collected sequentially. The researcher initially collected qualitative data from key informants and focus group

discussants. The initial collection of qualitative data was to explore how culture affects girl-child education in Bolni. This enabled the researcher to get the general understanding of the problem. Then based on the knowledge of the people's understanding of the problem, the researcher developed and expanded the study to cover a large sample which was representative of the entire population from whom quantitative data were collected. This approach is justified by Creswell (2003) when he reveals that the main reason for the collection of data in phases and collecting qualitative data first is to explore the topic under study in-depth using key research participants at the site of the study and also help in designing quantitative instruments. Collecting data from different methods also helps to confirm, cross-validate or corroborate findings within a single study with different research participants (Morgan, 1998).

### **3.2 Target Population**

The target population for this study included all people from Bolni community, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), and Government Departments within Bolni in the Nanumba North District of the Northern Region of Ghana.

### **3.3 Study Population**

The study population consisted of household heads, men and elderly women between the ages of 30 and 65 years and children within Bolni community as well as selected officials from NGOs, CBOs and Bolni primary school.

### **3.4 Sampling Frame**

Sampling frame is defined by Panneerselvam (2004) as "the complete list of all members/units of a population from which each sampling unit is selected" (p. 191). In reference to the above definition, the sampling frame for this study consisted of girls (both in school and out of school), youth leaders, household heads, men and elderly women

between 30 to 65 years from Bolni community. The rest were key informants, including opinion leaders, staff of Bolni primary school and staff of NGOs, CBOs working within Bolni community. All these groups served as a frame within which the research participants were selected.

The sampling frame focused on the above because they have direct link with issues of girl-child education in Bolni community. The sampling frame also covered the entire population for which the experiences and knowledge about culture and girl-child education in Bolni was studied.

### **3.5 Sample Size**

According to Lind, Marshal and Wathen (2005), a sample is the selection of a portion of the study population for inclusion in a study. A sample size is therefore the total number of people who are selected from a given population to participate in a study. The selection of a sample size for a particular study is based on certain factors such as homogeneity (commonness in terms of characteristics of the research participants), heterogeneity (diversity in terms of characteristics of researcher participants), the methodology (quantitative or qualitative) and the availability of resources (financial, time and human) (Arthur, 2012).

In this study, the heterogeneity of the sample frame and the methodology were the main criteria that guided the researcher's choice of the sample size. One hundred and thirty-six people were sampled for the study. The sample size was classified into the following: 40 household heads and 40 elderly women between the ages of 30 and 65 years (Quantitative). The sample size for the qualitative study was 56 including 22 girls, 10 women, 8 men, 2 parents, the head teacher of Bolni primary school and 2 officials from Grameen Ghana and School For Life. Others included opinion leaders who were made up of the chief, assemblyman, 2 youth leaders, the chairman and secretary of Bolni

Community Advocacy Team (CAT), the chairperson of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and chairperson of School Management Committee (SMC) of Bolni primary school, the president of Bolni Student Union, a facilitator of Bolni Reflect Circle and a facilitator of School For Life. The diverse nature of this sample was to capture diverse views and depth of information of research participants' experiences on matters of culture and how it affected girl-child education in Bolni community. The sample size is displayed on table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1 sampling frame and sample size**

<b>Sampling frame</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
<b>QUANTITATIVE</b>	
Household Heads (Men)	40
Elderly women	40
<b>QUALITATIVE</b>	
Girls	22
Women	10
Men	8
Opinion leaders	9
Reflect Circle and School For Life Facilitators	2
NGO staffs	2
Parents	2
Head teacher	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>

### 3.6 Sampling Design

Panneerselvam (2004) asserts that sampling is a process of selecting a randomized subset of the population of study and the collection of data about their attributes whereas a design is the technique and the processes the researcher uses to select the individual research participants for the study.

For the sake of this study, both probability and non-probability sampling designs were employed. With regards to the probability sampling design, each potential research household had an equal chance of being selected to include in the study (Panneerselvam, 2004). All the households in Bolni were numbered. Through a simple random sampling,

80% of the households were selected for the study. In all, Bolni had 100 households. Eighty households were selected for the quantitative study. The individual research participants were purposely identified as the researcher selected only households' heads from 40 households and another 40 elderly women between the ages of 30 and 65 from separate households.

With regards to the non-probability sampling designs, purposive and snow ball sampling techniques were used. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the key informants. The use of the purposive sampling design assisted the researcher to interview people who had in-depth information about the issues under study. Snowball sampling on the other hand was used to select girls who had been victims of cultural practices that served as hindrance to their schooling. Parents whose daughters had ever been involved in cultural practices that served as barriers to their daughters' education were also sampled using the snowball method. The snow ball technique was employed because such populations were hidden and was identified and selected for interview through insiders who had the trust of the research participants. The researcher through community entry agent identified a girl and a parent in their respective categories who further linked the researcher to their colleagues. This is supported by Arthur (2012) who notes that snowball sampling is appropriate in dealing with sensitive issues and populations that cannot be seen from outside of the cluster. Panneerselvam (2004) reveals that though non-probability designs are not objective, their usage is premised on the judgment, biases and convenience of the researcher which at that point in time is the best option to obtain the needed information.

### **3.7 Methods of Data Collection**

#### **3.7.1 Sources of Data**

The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods in gathering data from the research participants. The data for this study were gathered from two main sources - primary and secondary. Secondary data was collected from published and unpublished books, periodicals, journals articles as well as publications and reports from UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO among others sources. The secondary data was integrated and discussed alongside primary data.

Primary data on the other hand, are the kind of data collected directly from the field under the control and supervision of the researcher (Panneerselvam, 2004). Panneerselvam adds that primary data are fresh and collected from the field for the first time. The researcher collected qualitative data through methods as observation, focus group discussions and list of questions for in-depth interviews with key informants while quantitative data was collected through the use of face-to-face interview.

#### **3.7.2 Qualitative Data**

The major methods employed for the collection of qualitative data were key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observation.

##### **3.7.2.1 In-depth Interview with Key Informants**

One of the methods for the collection of qualitative data was in-depth interviews with key informants. An in-depth interview according to Lofland and Lofland (1995) is described as a form of conversation between a researcher and research participant. In that line of thought, in-depth interviews are conducted with key informants for the purpose of gathering some specific information. The interviews were conducted in an informal and unstructured manner. This gave the research participants the flexibility to choose a

location and time that was convenient for the researcher to interact with them. Twenty participants were involved in the in-depth interviews. This included 4 girls, 9 opinion leaders, two facilitators (Reflect circle and School For Life), 2 staff (one from Grameen Ghana and the other from School For Life), 2 parents, and the Head teacher of Bolni primary school. The list of questions for the in-depth interviews was designed in the English language but the interviews were conducted in Likpakpaaln the local dialect of the people of Bolni.

Through this method, the researcher had the opportunity to probe and ask follow up questions in order to establish clarity and deeper understanding of the individual's experiences on the subject under study. This was done to cover broad topical areas for the purpose of gathering comprehensive data for the study through lists of questions in an open ended format. The researcher adopted the key informant interview method because, it helped to explore in detail with participants the reasons why girls in Bolni were out of school. The method was also less distractive and offered the chance for deeper insights of the subject matter (Kuhn, 2010). Examples of some key informant interview questions are: Please tell me about yourself? (Probes: Age, Level of Education, Religion and occupation), How will you describe the situation of girl-child education in this community? (Probes: access, progression, retention and dropout), Why is that most girls in this community are not in school? (Probes: economic, cultural, teenage pregnancy etc), How do these factors affect your education? (Probe; access, progression, retention and dropout)

### **3.7. 2. 3. Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

FGD is a form of interview that a researcher conducts with a group of people who come together to discuss issues on a particular topic and where the participants in the group

usually range between 4 to 10 in a single meeting (Ritchie, 2003). FGD according to Ritchie (2003) provides a social context for which the researcher is able to explore and interrogate how people think and talk about a topic, how their ideas are shaped, generated and moderated through interaction with them as a group. Fant (2008) adds that “The hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to generate data and insights that would be unlikely to emerge without the interaction found in a group” (p. 11). All the focus group discussions were conducted in Likpakpaaln, the local dialect of the people of Bolni.

For the purpose of this study, four FGDs were organized, one group for men (8 participants), one for women (10 participants) one with girls in school (10 participants) and another with girls who were out of school (8 participants). The researcher settled on men, women and girls for the FGD because, they were directly linked with the issues of culture and girl-child education in Bolni. This enabled the researcher to gather and record information from the groups pertaining to gender roles, marriage arrangements, funerals and festive activities and how they affect girl-child education in Bolni. All the FGDs were held in serene and conducive atmospheres that were devoid of interruptions from other people. The participants chose a classroom within the community for all the discussions but each of the groups had their discussions at different times. This was done to prevent distractions from other people who were not part of the groups. The number of participants in each of the groups ranged from 6 to 10 members. This is justified by Amoani (2005) when he notes that the ideal size of a FGD should be between 6-10 participants. The information gathered helped in cross validating and triangulation of data gathered from other methods especially those of individual interviews. Each of the FGD lasted between an hour and two hours. All interviews apart from those with NGO staffs and the Head teacher of Bolni Primary school were conducted in Likpakpaaln, the local dialect of the

inhabitants of Bolni. The researcher recorded the interviews and focus group discussion with audio recorder. The researcher also used field note book to note some key information as back up to the audio recordings.

### **3.7.3 Credibility and Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research Design**

The credibility and trustworthiness of the qualitative research data was ensured by adhering to the following:

#### **3.7.3.1 Triangulation of Findings from Multiple Qualitative Methods**

The researcher employed different qualitative research methods such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions and non-participant observation in collecting the qualitative data. These methods ensured triangulation of findings from the different methods. According to Patton (2002 p.556) triangulation “pays off by providing diverse ways of collecting data on the same phenomenon and adds credibility by strengthening confidence in the conclusions drawn”. This assertion by Patton (2002) suggests that triangulation is significant to qualitative studies if its credibility is to be established. The researcher therefore compared the data from the three methods and drew conclusions from them due to the resemblance of the emerged themes.

#### **3.7.3.2 Triangulation of Findings from Different Research Participants**

The researcher also recruited different research participants and involved them in the qualitative data collection. The researcher included in the frame, men, women, parents, children and the youth as well as NGO staffs and the Head teacher of Bolni Primary school. The findings from these different research participants helped in providing credibility and trustworthiness for the findings. This is supported by Patton (2003) when he noted that using different participants in data collection helps build confidence in the

findings of a study. The analysis of data from these different participants also helped triangulate the findings and common themes as presented in the findings section emerged. The commonness of the themes emerging from these different research participants re-established the reality of girl-child education in Bolni. Thus the trustworthiness and the credibility of the findings were justified.

### **3.7.3.3 Member Checking**

The researcher also employed member checking as a way of establishing credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative data. Lewis and Ritchie (2003, p. 276) state that member checking “involves taking research evidence back to the research participants to see if the meaning or interpretation assigned is confirmed by those who contributed to it in the first place.” The researcher did this in two ways. The first was during the process of the interviewing or data collection. During the process of data collection, the researcher summarised and repeated the conclusions drawn to the research participants. The research participants had the opportunity on the spot to correct or confirm the summary and conclusion drawn by the researcher. The second was after the data were analysed the researcher shared the findings with some selected research participants. The sharing of the findings with selected participants was to ensure that they findings were the exact information given by the research participants and captured by the researcher and thus, the conclusions reached on them are credible.

### **3.7.4 Quantitative Data**

Quantitative data were collected 80 respondents using a semi structured questionnaire which included both close and open ended questions. The questionnaire was designed in the English language but Likpakpaaln was used during its administration. The questionnaire was executed through a face-to-face interview. The use of the face-to-face

interview was due to the fact that most of the research participants could neither read nor write. This method also provided the researcher the opportunity to explain questions they could not have understood in his absence while observing non-verbal communications for probes especially for open ended questions. This is justified by Williams (2003) who notes that face-to-face method of administering questionnaires has the advantage where unclear questions can be clarified to the respondent and open-ended questions can be used to collect a range of possible responses. Some of the questions the researcher asked are: what is your educational status? Primary [ ], SSSCE, [ ], Diploma [ ], other (specify), None [ ], Occupation status: Farming [ ], Petty Trading [ ], any other [ ], Do you have children? Yes [ ], No [ ], If yes how many children do you have? , Are all children of yours in school? Yes [ ], No [ ], If no, how many of your children are in school? How many are not in school? How many of your children are girls? Are all girl-children of yours in school? Yes [ ], No [ ], If no, how many of the girls are in school? What explains the reason for some or all your girls not being in school? Etc. Each questionnaire was administered between one and half to two hours.

The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher within a short time period. The likely limitation is that it possibly had some ambiguities in its clarity and administration as compared to a standardised questionnaire. The researcher however, employed certain mechanisms which ensured that the questionnaire was valid, consistent and reliable as much as possible. This was done to enable the questionnaire solicit information to address the research objectives. The researcher adopted the following measures:

#### **3.7.4.1 Informal Tests**

With regards to informal tests, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to colleagues who examined them and gave their feedback on the clarity, consistency and the validity of the questionnaire. According to Statistics Sweden (2004), informal tests can help the researcher avoid unnecessary errors in the questionnaire. Aside, colleagues who reviewed the questionnaire, the thesis supervisor also went through the questionnaire and edited it as well as commented on its suitability in addressing the research objectives. The feedbacks from colleagues and supervisor were essential as the researcher integrated them into the questionnaire.

#### **3.7.4.2 Pre-test of Questionnaire**

The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire in Kariga, a rural community with similar characteristics as Bolni and administered the instrument on them. This enabled the researcher to understand the clarity, the scope and depth of data to be collected. It also assisted in finding out whether the instruments needed some revision to meet the research objectives and seeking appropriate answers to the research questions in order to address the research problem (Arthur & Nazroo, 2003). The questionnaire was revised and made clearer for data collection as a result of the experience from the pretest. Nevertheless, the researcher does not rule out the fact that there could still be inherent weaknesses in the questionnaire due to the short time frame of its construction.

### **3.8 Data Handling and Analysis**

The researcher recorded all interviews conducted with key informants and focus group discussants. The recorded information was stored in different media for safe keeping and analysis. The researcher transcribed interviews with key informants and focus group discussants with the aid of Microsoft word. The Analytical Framework' developed by the UK National Centre for Social Research (Richie & Lewis, 2003) was used as a guide in

the management and analysis of data. The first step in management and analysis of the data by the framework is familiarisation of oneself with the content of the data collected. The familiarisation process was done by reading and re-reading of the transcribed data. This was done to grasp the general coverage of the data collected. According to Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003), familiarisation is an important process because it is akin to building the foundation structure of the findings. The researcher also took note of recurring themes at this initial stage as he attempts to familiarise with the data.

The second stage of the framework is the development of a conceptual framework. Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003) assert that development of the conceptual framework draws on both recurrent themes and issues introduced into the interviews through the interview guide. The recurrent themes were sorted and grouped under smaller number of broader, higher categories or themes placed within the overall framework.

The third stage of the framework is the application of the initial themes identified in the familiarisation stage. At this stage, meanings and labels were given to each of the already identified themes as against indexing of the data as analytical framework showed. However, the framework noted that the indexing of data was an optional stage especially when the trend of interview guides were already ordered in such a way that the flow of information is orderly and makes sense (Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003).

Next is the sorting of data according to the themes created. At this stage, themes that were similar were brought together. According to Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003), this stage of thematic data sorting is to allow the researcher to focus on each subject in turn so that the detail and distinctions that lie within can be unpacked.

The final stage of data management and analysis is the summary of data. This helps reduce the amount of materials to a more manageable level. Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003) assert that the stage brings the process of distilling the essence of the

evidence for representation. It also ensures that the researcher inspects every word of the original material to consider meaning and relevance to the subject under enquiry. It was on the basis of these that themes and sub-themes were developed and discussed along reviewed literature. All quotations are presented verbatim in order to present a true reflection of the voices of the participants. At the end of the analysis, five themes were identified. They include marriage arrangements and girl-child education in Bolni, motivations for the perpetuation of marriage by exchange, betrothal, and traditional boy/girlfriend relationships, gender roles and girl-child education, other factors that affect girl-child education in Bolni and Government and Non-Governmental Organisations support for girls' education in Bolni as found in Chapter Four.

With quantitative data, the answered questionnaires were sorted, cleaned and kept in a safe place for analysis. The researcher coded and entered them onto the computer using the Predictive Analytic Software (PASW), version 20. Frequency distribution, measures of central tendencies, correlations, regression and chi-square were used to analyse the data and the results presented in tables in Chapter Four.

### **3.9 Ethical Consideration**

Any research that involves people as participants demands that the researcher be ethically conscious and be responsible to them as a result of the implications which might emanate from the direct actions and inactions of the study. As a result, the researcher conducted this study in consonance with ethical standards that guide social work research. The researcher sought the informed consent of the research participants. This was done through the use of a written consent form. Research participants who could read appended their signatures of consent on the informed consent form after the purpose of the study had been read and understood by them. In the case of those who could not read, the researcher

orally explained the purpose of the study to them in the local dialect (likpakpaaln) and only conducted interviews with them after they had given oral consent of participation.

The consent of children was sought from their parents or guardians with whom they were at the time of the interviews. However, the assent of the children was sought before the interviews were conducted. Research participants who had given their consent to participate in the study were guaranteed that their participation in the research was voluntary and they could opt out at any point they so deemed necessary.

The researcher also ensured that the identities of the research participants was not exposed or could be traced by any third party. This enabled the research participants to give information without fear. This was done by ensuring confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of research participants by the use of pseudo-names and organizing the interviews and discussions with participants at their preferred places where people did not interrupt. The researcher also avoided any descriptive information that could lead to the identification of participants.

Participants were duly informed and their permission sought before their voices were captured by audio during interviews. In order to avoid any form of plagiarism, all sources of information are duly acknowledged both in text citation and in reference.

### **3.10 Limitations of the Study**

The study faced two main methodological limitations. First, it was limited by the choice of Bolni, a rural community in northern region as a study site. The study was designed to measure the effects of cultural practices such as marriage arrangements, funerals and gender roles on girl-child education in Bolni. Other communities in the Northern Ghana especially the Konkomba rural settlements engage in similar practices and thus the choice of only Bolni was not representative. The findings from this study are therefore limited to

Bolni community and cannot be generalized to other communities. Despite the limited nature of Bolni as the study site, the researcher settled on Bolni because he was not interested in generalizing the findings to other communities instead he was interested in exploring the lived experiences of research participants and also to give a snapshot of how culture affected girl-child education in the community. Using Bolni as a snapshot to showcase the effects of culture on girl-child education is also intended to be the beginning of scholarship on culture and girl-child education in rural Ghana.

The second limitation of this study was the use of the mixed methods of research approach. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research methods. This did not allow the detailed exploration of each of the methods. The qualitative method gathered detailed and in-depth information for the study but all could not be used. Only selected portions were taken to support this study. If it were a purely qualitative study, all the information collected could have been used and this could possibly give a detailed account of how culture affected girl-child education without any limitation to data collected. The quantitative method was also limited, in that the sample size was not large for a purely quantitative study and hence the results from the sample cannot be generalised to other communities with similar problems. This limited the findings to only those respondents who engaged in this study. However, the researcher used the mixed methods because he triangulated findings which assisted in strengthening the weaknesses and enhancing the strengths of the two methods.

The above limitations notwithstanding, the researcher is of the view that the adherence to diverse population, multiple data collection and analysis methods, consent, confidentiality and privacy of research participants proofed that efforts were made to collect data that was comprehensive, valid, and credible and can be relied on in

ascertaining the effects of culture on girl-child education in Bolni. It is hoped that future researches in similar areas will adopt ways of improving on the methodology.

### **3.11 Challenges of the Study**

The study of this nature was not without challenges. The researcher faced a number of challenges especially during the data collection process. One of such was the fact that, the researcher hails from Bolni and therefore faced accusations from some inhabitants as wanting to alter culture and traditions in favour of modernity by encouraging girl-child education. In extreme cases some people refused to participate in the study.

Another challenge was the fact that the interviews were conducted in likpakpaaln, the local dialect of the people. When it came to translations into the English Language, there were some words that the researcher could not find their exact matching in the English language. This situation led to the loss or dilution of some vital information which could have helped to better understand some issues in this study. The researcher had to use synonymous words rather than the original words.

The last challenge the researcher faced was the issue of time scheduled for interviews with some key informants. Some of them severally postponed their interview schedules with the researcher. This frustrated the researcher and caused him to spend extra time in the field. In the end some simply could not participate and gave several excuses such as they could not give out any information without their “bosses” who had travelled at the time of the data collection.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSES, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussions of the findings of the study. The qualitative data set was analysed and the results thematically presented. This is then followed with the presentation of quantitative results. The final section of the chapter discusses the findings of the study.

#### 4.1 Results from Qualitative Data

The analysis of the qualitative data identified five themes. The five themes include marriage arrangements and girl-child education in Bolni, motivations for the perpetuation of marriage by exchange, betrothal, and traditional boy/girlfriend relationships, gender roles and girl-child education, other factors that affect girl-child education in Bolni and Government and Non-Governmental Organisations support for girls' education in Bolni. The various themes are elaborated as found below.

##### 4.1.1 Marriage Arrangements and Girl-Child Education in Bolni

This section looks at the mode of conducts of the various types of marriage arrangements and their effects on girl-child education in Bolni.

To begin with is exchange marriage arrangement. According to the participants, exchange marriage arrangement is conducted by swapping of girls between two families who have agreed to do so. Below is an explanation of exchange marriage arrangement in Bolni according to a key informant:

*If you have a sister or daughter you intend to exchange, you will give a message out to that respect. If someone also has a sister or daughter and is interested, you are informed and a day is scheduled for the two families to meet to declare their interests. This is the first time; one will be meeting his prospective in-laws. If they see your daughter and are interested, another meeting will be scheduled for you to also see their daughter. When you too are interested, then the processes of arrangement begin for the swapping of the girls. (Participant F)*

It was revealed from the study that exchange marriage arrangement has negative effects on girls schooling in Bolni. The participants mentioned that exchange marriage arrangement denies some girls access to school and affects the survival of others in school. With regards to denial of girls' access to school, a parent alluded:

*If I intend to exchange my daughter for a wife, I will never allow her to go to school. This is because, if she is sent to school, it will be difficult for me to pull her out of school and exchange her for a wife....a lot of people will come to fight for her and even she herself will object to that marriage* **(Participant I)**

Participants also identified exchange marriage arrangement to be a major contributory factor to the high dropout rate of girls of out of school. There was a consensus during a focus group discussion that victims of exchange marriage arrangement are not initially earmarked for exchange marriage purposes but it usually becomes compelling to pull them out of school anytime a brother or relative elopes another's daughter or sister and is asked to pay back with his sister, daughter or a relative. In support of the above, an out of school girl noted:

*I was in school when my brother eloped a girl from another community. The relatives of the girl followed and I was called and shown to them as their wife to be. I was henceforth stopped from going to school and preparations are being made to marry me off to them.* **(Participant J)**

It was also found that exchange marriage did not only deprive girls of the opportunity of being in school but mar their relationship with the family and the community if the girl in question resists. This is resonated by a school girl in the quote below:

*Ever since I refused to be exchanged, I have become the enemy of my family and the community at large. I have been the talk of the community and people point fingers at me...I have since not got support from my father and even up to date he does not talk to me though we live in the same house.* **(Participant I)**

With regards to betrothal marriage arrangement, the researcher found that parents usually betroth their girl-children at infancy after consulting other family members. It was revealed that when no family member objects to the man who is intending to ask for the

girls hand in marriage, the father can go ahead to betroth his daughter to him. This is resonated in the voice below:

*When there is a newly born girl-child in the community, anyone interested will send a pile of firewood to the parents of the girl. Within a short while you will follow up with a guinea fowl. When the girl-child begins to crawl or walk, you brew pito and send it to the parents of the girl. At this time, the father will convene a meeting of his relatives and let them know your intentions and his willingness to betroth his daughter to you for marriage in future should she survive. The rest of the processes of arrangement for marriage begin if the relatives do not have anything against you or your family and your community. (Participant J)*

According to the participants, betrothal marriage arrangement negatively affects girl-child education in Bolni. It denies girls access to school. An official from Grameen Ghana revealed that:

*From our interactions with Bolni community, we realised that girls who were betrothed were not sent to school. They were meant for marriage. This therefore deprived a lot of girls the opportunity to be in school...we saw this as an abuse of girls' right to education and hence directed our girls' intervention programme to help girls gain their rights. (Participant L)*

Participants noted that traditional boy/girlfriend relationship is an arrangement where males and females make their choices usually during their teen years. Participants revealed that the elderly are aware of the existence of traditional boy/girlfriend relationships but distant themselves. They indicated that Traditional boy/girlfriend is entirely a youth affair and is presided by the youth of the community. This is echoed in the voice below:

*Anytime a boy comes to Bolni to befriend a girl, he consults the girl first. If the girl is interested, he will then inform a brother of the girl about it. The brother will then also discuss it with other boys in the community mostly at youth gatherings. If no one objects to the boy's proposal, a day is scheduled, especially an evening where all the youth both boys and girls meet to approve of the relationship. This whole arrangement is presided by the male youth leader of the community. (Participant A)*

The study found that traditional boy/girlfriend relationship has negative effects on girl-child education in Bolni. Below is a voice to support the finding:

*I dropped out of school because of boy/girlfriend relationship. I got myself engaged in this type of relationship when I was in Junior High School....I got pregnant when I was in form three. I dropped out and gave birth after which I went to school again, before I could write my final exams I got pregnant again and dropped out but I won't give up. (Participant O)*

Others were of the view that traditional boy/girlfriend relationships help them to remain in school. In support of that a first Year Senior High School student revealed:

*It was my mother and boyfriend who paid my fees and bought me the provisions for school. This is because; my father had opposed my going to school. He instead preferred to give me out as a replacement to be married to my step mother's brother but the intervention of CHRAJ saved me. (Participant P)*

#### **4.1.2 Motivations for the Perpetuation of Marriage by Exchange, Betrothal and Traditional Boy/Girlfriend Relationships**

This section looks at the motivations for the practice of exchange, betrothal marriage arrangements and traditional boy/girlfriend relationship in Bolni. Participants identified a number of reasons for the practice of exchange marriage arrangements in Bolni. They asserted that it is a way for one to get a wife or husband, to strengthen family/friendship ties and to get a wife on conditions of old age, disabilities or poverty. Again participants made a comparison between exchange marriage arrangement and betrothal as well as preferred marriage arrangement and concluded that it was cheaper, faster, and convenient for one to engage in exchange marriage arrangement. In support of the above, a parent asserted:

*I don't know how exchange marriage came about but it has come to stay and everybody here and the neighbouring communities practice it. If I allow another man to take my daughter for free, whose own will I get to marry? (Participant G)*

Another parent revealed:

*With exchange marriage arrangement, the girl will be grown....you don't need to farm for her parents from her infancy. Again, those who are poor and can't pay bride wealth are given the opportunity to swap their sisters or daughters with little payment. With betrothal or preferred marriages, those privileges are not given.*  
**(Participant H)**

Participants also revealed a number of reasons for which they practice betrothal marriage arrangement. Among the reasons they mentioned were that it is part of their tradition to betroth a girl for marriage, it is done to strengthen family/friendship ties, it is done because the in-laws will farm for them or will support them financially when the need arises. This is echoed in the voice of below:

*When your daughter is betrothed to a man, the man and the relatives come to farm for you any time you call on them. They also pay bride wealth to you to buy your daughters things in preparation for her marriage... what else do you want for your family?* **(Participant K)**

Finally, the participants opined that they engage in traditional boy/girlfriend relationship in order to get a wife or husband, proof of their potency, for companionship, because of peer pressure or for financial support. The male youth leader revealed:

*If it gets to a stage in a young man's life and no effort is made to take a girlfriend, people point fingers at him and consider him as impotent. People begin to insult him. The common insult is "utinween" meaning a young man who doesn't know his left from right.* **(Participant M)**

The female youth leader had this to say:

*When they attempt to exchange us or force us to go for betrothal marriage arrangements and we refuse..., they cut all support for us in school. They don't give us money, food, bicycles or rent rooms for us to stay while in school. The only way out is to take a supportive boyfriend who can assist in some of these things, so that we can be in school.*  
**(Participant N)**

#### **4.1.3 Gender Roles and Girl-Child Education**

It was revealed by participants that the roles of girls are different from that of the boys in Bolni. While girls perform all the household chores such as cooking, cleaning, fetching of

water, firewood and taking care of the younger siblings in addition to farm work and schooling, boys only perform farm work and schooling.

As regards the reasons for the division of between girls and boys in Bolni, participants' asserted that it is their duty to socialize each of the sexes to where they belong in society. In that respect a mother retorted:

*It is the duty of every mother to bring up her daughter to be responsible and up to the status of a woman. That is, the mother should teach the daughter how to cook, wash, clean, carry water, care for younger siblings and be able to do multiple roles at the same time.... The girls can easily pick these things when they are young. (Participant Q)*

The study found that gender roles have negative effects on girl-child education in Bolni. This was captured in an interview with the Head teacher of Bolni Primary School as stated below:

*The girls sometimes carry these roles to the school (bring younger ones) or their mothers come into classes to call them out and either assign them roles while they (mothers) are going to farms or send them to the market (Bimbilla), or withdraw them completely when they give birth to assist them in the home. (Participant R)*

A school girl added her voice:

*It is too burdensome to be a girl. I work all day in the house, take my siblings to school and sometimes my mother comes to take me out of school to go on errands. I do miss classes and cannot concentrate in class. (Participant A)*

#### **4.1.4 Other Factors that affect Girl-Child Education in Bolni**

The study also looks at other socio-economic factors that affect girl-child education in Bolni. From the study, it is evident that funerals and festivals have negative effects on girl-child education. Participants indicated that festivals and funerals take a lot of girls' time, girls are overburdened and as a result they sometimes absent themselves from school. Some participants asserted that the girls are sometimes sent to neighbouring communities to support their relatives in household chores during funerals and festive occasions.

A school girl had this to say:

*I was sent by my mother to assist my elder sister during a funeral last year (2011) in a nearby village (Jagrado). For a period of two weeks, I was out of school. I needed to go early to help her collect firewood, fetch water, and grind flour for pito and corn flour for food for the strangers. This affected me because, I never understood some topics when I came back and the teacher never went back to teach those topics. (Participant S)*

It was also found from the participants that the performance of funerals and festivals are expensive. In line with that a participant espoused that:

*We are all expected to kill animals for funerals. We usually kill cows, pigs, goats and sheep for the funeral as well as brew pito and buy akpeteshie. It becomes an insult on the personality of anyone who has not been able to kill anything during a relative's funeral. We therefore at all cost, must search for resources to do so. (Participant A1)*

Another factor that serves as a setback to girls' education in Bolni is poverty. Participants indicated that due to poverty, they are not able to take care of the needs of their children in school. During a focus group discussion with men, it was agreed that:

*We are very poor and can't afford most of our basic needs. We do not have enough food during the lean season. Some of us still live in thatch and mud houses which leak during raining season. As far as our basic needs are not met, it is difficult for us to invest in children's education.*

Regarding poverty, a school girl revealed that:

*Anytime I ask my father for money for rent, examination fees or feeding, he tells me he doesn't have and that he never sent me to school. He tells me to take my troubles away and truly he doesn't give me anything. (Participant W)*

Distance to school was also one of the factors that pose as a barrier to girl-child education in Bolni. The girls revealed that they get tired and absent themselves at times due to the distance they usually walk. During a Focus Group Discussion with school girls the consensus reached was that:

*We walk every day to attend classes in Bimbilla, as a result of the distance involved, we get tired, frustrated and feel neglected. We are punished when we get to school late... and sometimes we absent ourselves due to tiredness.*

During data collection, the researcher observed that boys unlike girls ride bicycles to school. The participants at a focus group discussion with men concluded that: *The boys buy the bicycles themselves or pay the rent for themselves, from the proceeds of raising yams mounds on by-day basis.*

Participants indicated that girls who do not have enough support to school resorted to working alongside schooling. With regards to this a school girl indicated:

*I have to carry firewood and charcoal to sell in Bimbilla to pay for some of my needs in school, such as examination, furniture and admission fees. I do absent myself from school for some days to gather firewood and burn charcoal to sell.*  
**(Participant T)**

The only girl who completed Senior High School in Bolni had this to say in relation to labour:

*I had to engage in selling and buying to make money to pay my Senior High School fees and other provisions. I used to go to Joanayili market to buy pepper and come to sell it in Bimbilla market. I made some profits from such sales. This was what I put together to pay my fees. I also got some contributions from two staff of Grameen Ghana to assist in paying my fees, because what I had was not enough.*  
**(Participant U)**

Another factor that serves as a challenge to girl-child education in Bolni is teenage pregnancy. The findings revealed that school girls who have boyfriends normally become pregnant and drop out of school. Parents (men) during the focus group discussion were not pleased about the incidence of teenage pregnancy.

They concluded that:

*It is not worth investing in a girl's education. She will get pregnant and drop out from school. Your resources would have been wasted. They cited an instance where a girl got pregnant three times before writing her Basic Education Certificate Examination. She has three kids but managed to write last year (2012) while she was pregnant. How long will you continue to invest in her anticipating she will grow to be somebody?*

The father of the teenage girl in the above quote was contacted and he revealed that:

*I have three of them [children] who wrote their Basic Education Certificate Examination this year (2012) and had all passed and placed in different Senior High Schools. Two of them are boys, so I didn't have the money but they and their elder brother laboured on people's farms and have had their school fees and gone to school. My daughter could not go because, there was no money. She should go to those boys who got pregnant to pay her fees. (Participant V)*

#### **4.1.5 Government and Non-Governmental Support for Girls Education in Bolni**

Due to the precarious nature of children's education and girl-child education in particular in Bolni, some agencies have come to their rescue. Participants mentioned the stakeholders among which were: Bolni Students Union, School For Life, Grameen Ghana/ActionaidAid Ghana, Songtaba and the Government of Ghana through Ghana Education Service.

The president of the Bolni Student union revealed that they had to from the union in response to the low enrollments of children in school in the community. According to him, the union through a united front with other stakeholders could help champion and improve children's enrollment in school. The voice below captures the need for the union.

*The underlying factor that led to the formation of the union was to ensure all children in Bolni get access to education. This is due to the fact that, at the time of the formation of the union (2004), few children were in school especially the girls. (Participant W)*

The president indicated that the Union adopts community sensitization and education as a means to championing its agenda. The president further added that the Union organises students of the community every vacation where past students who are now in tertiary institutions or working places come back to motivate, inspire and to encourage the younger ones.

*Every year, we organise community and educate them about the importance of enrolling children in school. We emphasise girl-child education because, very few*

*girls are enrolled in school. We therefore explain to them the benefits they stand to gain, if they educate their girls. (Participant W)*

The president finally revealed that the union adopts annual end of year get-together which bring people, students, parents and other resource persons from far and near to come and speak on the importance of education and the need to enroll the girl-child specifically.

*The union also organises an end of year get-together. This brings all the community members, students and resource persons together. The resource persons educate them on the importance of girl-child education among other issues. (Participant W)*

According to the participants, Grameen Ghana and Songtaba are the implementing partners of ActionAid Ghana in the Bolni. Participants revealed that the NGOs advocate for the rights of girls to school and have put some strategies as girls camp activities, formation of girls clubs, community watch dog committee among other interventions to improve girl-child education. An official of Grameen Ghana indicated that:

*Grameen Ghana educates people on their right to education, what they are entitled to in the constitution and how they can access those entitlements rightfully from duty bearers (Participant L).*

In their quest to achieve what they preach, programme officer of Grameen asserted that:

*Grameen Ghana, Songtaba and ActionAid adopted community sensitization, formation of girls clubs, community watchdog committees (Committee Advocacy Team-CAT) and Reflect circle, Girls Camp as some of the strategies to champion their cause for girl-child education in Bolni. (Participant L)*

In addition to the above, the official of Grameen Ghana indicated that they also facilitate, strengthen and form School, Circuit and District level Parent Teacher Association Networks. This is shown in the quote below:

*We went round and told them the importance of having a single voice. We therefore went round from community to community and from zone to zone and sensitized them on these after which we brought them together to form the district wide PTA. The District PTA network serves as a voice for all PTAs in Nanumba such that if there is any issue about education, the network looks at it...Grameen Ghana comes to intervene when it goes beyond the District PTA. (Participant L)*

Finally, participants indicated that Songtaba is running a programme dubbed “Stop Violence Against Girls in School” (SVAGS) in Nanumba. The quote below gives details of SVAGS.

*The purpose of SVAGS is to help generate a policy plan that will help mitigate violence or threats of violence and give a free conducive environment to both boys and girls to school and achieve their dreams. (Participant Y)*

Another NGO operating in Bolni and champions girl-child education is School For Life. The Director noted that School For Life organises literacy class for out of school children, especially girls. These children after the nine months of the literacy class are enrolled in the formal mainstream schools. According to the Programme Director:

*When we got to Bolni, we realized that a lot of children were out of school, and those in school were sitting under trees because; there was no any structure for them. We educated the people and realized that their selfless spirit was very high and hence introduced the literacy and numeracy programme to them in 1999.*

The programme Director further added that:

*School For Life therefore sensitized parents of Bolni to realize the value of girl-child education. We adopted a gender policy of 50-50 for both boys and girls. However, the policy allows for either 13 boys or 12 girls or 12 boys’ 13 girls due to the fact the class size must be 25 children. But there are usually more girls in Bolni classes than other communities due to the peculiar situation of girl-child education*

School For Life programme Officer also identifies role models and uses them in the communities of operations. The programme officer revealed that:

*One of our supervisors is a woman and we used as a role model during animations exercises in communities. This motivated a lot of people and one can now cite a lot of examples of girls who have benefited from this activity.*

It was also revealed from the study that the community and government help in improving the education of the people. The community and government support as indicated by the participants include provision of land, posting of teachers to schools and the institution of the capitation grant. In support of this a respondent during an interview stated that “We provide the land and assist with manual labour for school projects” (Participant W2).

Another respondent added that: *“All the teachers in Bolni primary school are supplied by the government of Ghana”* (**Participant W3**). Government’s interventions are re-emphasized when another participant indicated *“Government has introduced capitation grant to ease parents’ burden of paying for the fees of their wards in school* (**Participant M5**)

The participants revealed that the strategies embarked by stakeholders in Bolni have yielded some desirable outcomes. Participants indicated that the strategies increased enrolments and progression of girls in school. The head count of girls’ enrollment in school by the participants revealed that with few or no girl in upper primary school in the latter part of the 1990s, Bolni now has 34 girls in Junior High School and 19 in Senior High School with one girl who had finished Senior High School in 2012.

The participants stated that another significant effect of the strategies on the well-being of girls is their level of assertiveness. This has been articulated by the programme officer of Grameen Ghana:

*Previously, girls had no say on issues concerning their marriage. If the family head decided that she needed to be married to a family, she had no say but to agree. But now, girls are able to resist men they do not like. They sometimes conditionally accept with a promise that when they finish school they will marry the very man in question. This happens in situations that they do not want to disgrace the family. There are instances that, they simply say they are not interested.* (**Participant L**)

Again, the participants revealed that Bolni now has infrastructure for conducive teaching and learning purposes. According to the participants, the infrastructural facilities were made possible through the efforts of the community, School For Life and ActionAid Ghana which augment their strategies by providing school blocks, chairs and tables. Finally the participants revealed that Ghana Education Service had posted enough teachers (8 of them) to Bolni primary school to impart knowledge on the children.

## 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

### 4.2.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants

This section depicts the descriptive statistics of socio-demographic characteristics of participants and girl-child education. The descriptive statistics considered in this section are the Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), minimum (Min.) and Maximum (Max.). In terms of age, the mean distribution of age was 49.43 years with a standard deviation of 10.33 and ranged from 32 years to 75 years. The number of children of school going age of participant had a mean distribution of 9.04 with a standard deviation of 2.62 and ranged from 4 to 14 children. With regards to the number of children who were in school, the participants reported a mean distribution is 6.79 with a standard deviation of 2.29 and also ranged from 2 to 14. In terms of the number of children of school age who were out of school, participants reported a mean of 2.41 with standard deviation of 2.19 and had a minimum of 0 and maximum of 8 children.

The table also displays the descriptive statistics of girl-children of participants. Regarding the number of girl-children of school going age participants had, the table shows a mean distribution of 3.70 with a standard deviation of 1.87 and ranged from 0 to 8 children. The number of girls of school going age who were in school had a mean of 2.34 with a standard deviation of 1.74 and ranged from 0 to 6 children. Again, the participants reported that the number of girl-children of school going age who were out of school had a mean distribution of 1.41 with standard deviation of 1.19 and ranged from 0 to 4 girl-children.

Finally, table 4.1a shows the descriptive statistics of the effects of exchange and betrothal marriage arrangements and traditional boy/girlfriend relationship on girl-child education. It is evident from the table that participants had girls who were either denied

access to school or dropped out school due to the marriage arrangements. With regards to the number of girls who were denied access as a result of exchange marriage arrangement, the participants reported a mean of .100 with standard deviation of .30 and ranged from 0 to 1 girl-child. The number of girls who dropped out of school had a mean distribution of .44 with a standard deviation of .55 and ranged from 0 to 2 girl-children. Again, betrothal marriage arrangement denied some girls access to school. The mean distribution of girls who were denied access to school as a result of betrothal marriage arrangement was .59 with a standard deviation of .63 and also ranged from 0 to 2 girls. Girls who dropped out of school as a result of betrothal marriage arrangement had a mean distribution of .100 with a standard deviation of .30 and ranged from 0 to 1. Lastly, traditional boy/girlfriend relationship did not have any effects of girls accessing school. It affected only drop out. Regarding the number of girls who dropped out of school due to Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship, participants reported a mean distribution of .19 with a standard deviation of .39 and ranged from 0 to 1 girl.

Table 4.1b displays results of sex, educational, occupational, marital statuses, type of marriage and religious affiliations of the participants. Fifty percent of the participants were females while the rest of the fifty percent were males. With regards to occupational status, majority (96.3%) of the participants had not been to school while only 3.7% of the participants had Secondary School education. The table further shows that majority, 87.50% of the participants engaged in farming activities while only 3.8% engaged in teaching. Regarding marital status, it is evident from the table that majority of the participants (88.7%) were married while 11.3% were widowed. With regards to the type of marriage, the table shows that 81.3% of participants identified their marriages as polygynous while 18.7% identified theirs as monogamous. Fifty-five percent of the participants were traditionalists, 42.5% as Christians while 2.5% were Muslims.

**Table 4.1a Descriptive Statistics of Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Girl-Child Education**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>
Age of participant	80	49.4375	10.32981	32.00	75.00
Number of children of school age participant had	80	9.0375	2.61662	4.00	14.00
Number of children of school age of participant in school	80	6.7875	2.28752	2.00	14.00
Number of children of school age of participant out of school	80	2.4125	2.18565	.00	8.00
Number of girl-children of school age of participant	80	3.700	1.8651	.00	8.0
Number of girl-children of school age of participant in school	80	2.3375	1.73529	.00	6.00
Number of girls of school age of participant out of school	80	1.4125	1.18742	.00	4.00
Number of girls who were denied access to school due to exchange marriage	80	.1000	.30189	.00	1.00
Number of girls who dropped out of school due to exchange marriage	80	.4375	.54758	.00	2.00
Number of girls who were denied access to school due to betrothal marriage	80	.5875	.63033	.00	2.00
Number of girls who dropped out of school due to betrothal marriage	80	.1000	.30189	.00	1.00
Number of girls who dropped out of school due to Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship	80	.1875	.39277	.00	1.00

**Table 4. 1b: Sex, Educational, Occupational, Marital, and Religious Statuses of Participants**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	40	50.0
Female	40	50.0
Total	80	100.0
<b>Educational status</b>		
Secondary school	3	3.8
Not been to school	77	96.3
Total	80	100.0
<b>Occupational status</b>		
Farming	70	87.4
Teaching	3	3.8
Petty trading	7	8.8
Total	80	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	71	88.7
Widowed	9	11.3
Total	80	100.0
<b>Type of marriage</b>		
Monogamy	15	18.7
Polygyny	65	81.3
Total	80	100.0
<b>Religious status</b>		
Traditionalist	44	55.0
Christian	34	42.5
Muslim	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

#### **4.2.2 Girl-Child Characteristics of Participants and Formal Education**

This section first looks at whether participants have children and whether they are in school. This is then followed with whether the participants specifically have girl-children and whether they are in school as well.

As shown in the table 4.2, all the participants had children. Regarding whether participants had all their children of school age in school, the table shows that 66.3% of

the participants did not have all their children in school while 33.7% had all their children in school. With regards to whether participants had girl-children of school age, 91.3% of the participants had girl-children of school age while 8.8% did not have. The table also depicts the results of whether participants had all their girl- children of school age in school. As seen from the table, 56.2% of the participants did not have all their girl-children of school age in school while 43.8% had all their girl-children of school age in school.

**Table 4.2: Girl-Child Characteristics of Participants and Formal Education**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Whether participant had children of school age</b>		
Yes		
No	80	100.0
Total	0	0.0
	80	100.0
<b>Whether participant had all children of school age in school</b>		
Yes	27	33.7
No	53	66.3
Total	80	100.0
<b>Whether participant had girl-children of school age</b>		
Yes	73	91.3
No	7	8.7
Total	80	100.0
<b>Whether all girls of participant of school age were in school</b>		
Yes	35	43.8
No	45	56.2
Total	80	100.0

#### 4.2.4 Motivation/ Reason for the Practice of Exchange marriage, Betrothal marriage and traditional boy/girlfriend arrangements

Table 4.3 shows the motivations for the practice of exchange marriage, betrothal marriage and traditional boy/girlfriend arrangements in Bolni. From the table, majority of the respondents (95%) indicated that exchange marriage arrangement is conducted for the purposes of getting a husband or wife while 1.3% of the respondents attributed this practice to the strengthening of family/friendship ties. With regards to betrothal marriage arrangement, 62% of the respondents indicated they engage in Betrothal marriage arrangement because it is a means of getting a husband or wife while 6.3% attributed it to financial reasons. In terms of traditional boy/girlfriend relationship, 85% of the respondents indicated that it is a means of getting a husband or wife while 3.8% attributed it to financial support.

**Table 4.3: Motivation/ Reason for the Practice of Exchange marriage, Betrothal marriage and traditional boy/girlfriend arrangements**

Motivation/reason	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Exchange marriage</b>		
To get a wife/husband	76	95.0
To strengthen family/friendship ties	1	1.3
To get a wife on condition of old age, disability or poverty	3	3.8
Total	80	100.0
<b>Betrothal marriage</b>		
To get a wife/husband	50	62.5
To strengthen family/friendship ties	15	18.8
For labour	10	12.5
For financial support	5	6.3
Total	80	100.0
<b>Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship</b>		
To get a wife/husband	68	85.0
Proof of potency	5	6.3
Companionship	3	3.8
Peer pressure	3	3.8
Financial support	4	5.0
Total	80	100.0

#### 4.2.5 Reasons for the Practice of Funerals, Festivals and Division of Roles in

Table 4.4 presents the reasons why funerals and festivals are celebrated as well as the reasons why boys and girls are given different roles to perform in Bolni. In terms of funerals, 70% of the respondents indicated that funerals are performed to bid the dead fare well to the world of ancestors and spirits while 5% posited that funerals are performed to preserve tradition. With regards to festivals, majority of the respondents (87.5%) indicated that festivals are celebrated to thank supreme God, gods, ancestors and other spirits for protection while 12.5% opined that festivals are performed to keep/preserve tradition. regarding the reasons why there is division of roles between boys and girls in Bolni, majority (95.%) of the respondents indicated that it is done to socialize boys and girls for future roles while 5% were of the view that the roles are defined by God due to the physical stature of girls and boys.

**Table 4.4: Reasons for the Practice of Funerals, Festivals and Division of roles in Bolni**

Motivation/reason	Frequency	percentages
<b>Funerals</b>		
Bid the dead farewell	56	70.0
Find the cause of death	5	6.3
Celebrate the dead	5	6.3
Keep/Preserve tradition	5	6.3
Pay last respect to the dead	4	5.0
Socialization	5	6.3
Total	80	100.0
<b>Festivals</b>		
Thank God, gods, ancestors & other spirits	70	87.5
Keep/preserve tradition	10	12.5
Total	80	100.0
<b>Gender</b>		
Socialization and preparation for future	76	95.0
Division by nature	4	5.0
Total	80	100.0

#### **4.2.7 Stakeholder Collaborations to Improve Girl-Child Education in Bolni**

Table 4.5 shows the results on whether there were stakeholders in Bolni working to improve girl-child education. As seen from the table, 85% of the participants indicated that there were agencies in Bolni working to improve girl-child education while 15% revealed that they were not aware of any agencies working to improve girl-child education in Bolni. The researcher also found whether Bolni community could embark on interventions to improve girl-child education and 87.5% answered in the affirmative while 12.5% answered no. In terms of whether there were measures in place to improve girl-child schooling, 75% said yes while 25% said no.

The researcher found from the participants whether they paid any fees in school for their girl-children and all of them affirmed they paid fees (ranging from furniture fees, buying of books, feeding fees, admission fees among other fees). It was revealed that 43.8% of fathers paid their girls' school fees while 13.8% of the fees were paid by the girls themselves. Finally, 56.3% of the parents wanted their girls to become teachers while 43.7% wanted them to become nurses. About 76.3% of the participants were optimistic their daughters can achieve their preferred profession while 23.7% doubted whether their girls can achieve their wish.

**Table 4.5: Stakeholder collaborations to improve girl-child education in Bolni**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Whether there are agencies working to improve girl-child education</b>		
Yes	68	85.0
No	12	15.0
Total	80	100.0
<b>Whether Bolni community can help improve girl-child education</b>		
Yes	70	87.5
No	10	12.5
Total	80	100.0
<b>Profession parent wished for the daughters</b>		
Teaching	45	56.3
Nursing	35	43.7
Total	80	100.0
<b>Whether daughter can achieve the parents wish</b>		
Yes	61	76.3
No	19	23.7
Total	80	100.0
<b>Whether there are measures in place to ensure all girls go to school</b>		
Yes	60	75.0
No	20	25.0
Total	80	100.0
<b>Whether parents pay any fees for their children in school</b>		
Yes	80	100.0
No	0	0.0
Total	80	100.0
<b>who pays the fees of children in school</b>		
Father only	35	43.8
Mother only	22	27.5
Child	11	13.8
Both father and mother	12	15.0
Total	80	100.0

### 4.3 Inferential Statistics

#### 4.3.1 Chi-Squares of Relationship of Demographic Variables to whether participant had all girls in school

In Table 4.6 the researcher presents cross-tabulations for the bivariate analyses. As indicated, only two of the socio-demographic characteristics were significantly related to whether participant had all girl-children in school or not at alpha level of .05 as follows: Educational status was significantly related with whether participant had all their girls in school ( $\chi^2 = 5.78$ ,  $p < 0.016$ ) and occupational status ( $\chi^2 = 6.91$ ,  $p < 0.032$ ).

**Table 4.6: Chi-Squares of Relationship of Demographic Variables to whether participant had all girls in school**

Demographic variable	Whether participant had all girls in school			
	% Yes	% No	$\chi^2$	p value
<b>Educational status</b>				.016
Secondary school (3)	3.8	0.0		
Not been to school (77)	31.3	65.0	5.78	
<b>Religious affiliation</b>				.273
Christian (34)	18.7	23.7	2.59	
Traditionalist (44)	15.0	40.0		
Muslim (2)	1.3	1.3		
<b>Type of marriage</b>				.293
Monogamy (15)	8.7	10.0	1.11	
Polygyny (65)	26.3	55.0		
<b>Sex</b>				.348
Male (40)	20.0	31.3		
Female (40)	15.0	35.0		
<b>Occupational status</b>				.032
Farming (70)	30.0	57.5	6.91	
Petty trading (7)	1.2	7.5		
Pupil Teaching (3)	3.7	0		
<b>Marital status</b>				.394
Married (71)	32.5	56.2	.72	
Widowed (9)	2.5	8.7		

### 4.3.2 Bivariate Correlations between Ordinal Socio-demographic Characters of Participants and the Number of Girl-Children who were Out of School

Bivariate correlation was conducted on the ordinal socio-demographic characteristics of participants and the number of girls who were out of school in Bolni. The results showed that there was a correlation between age and number of children of school going age a participant had and the number of girls who were out of school at the significant level of 0.01. Age of participant is negatively related to the number of girls who were out of school with a Pearson value of  $-.130$  which is not significant while number of children participant had is also positively related to the number of girls who were out of school with a Pearson value of  $.202$  as shown in table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Bivariate correlations between ordinal socio-demographic characteristics of participants and the number of girl-children who were out of school.**

		Number of girls out of school	Age of Respondent	Number of children of school age of participant
Number of girls out of school	Pearson Correlation	1	$-.130$	$.541^{**}$
	Sig. (2-tailed)		$.249$	$.000$
	N	80	80	80
Age of Respondent	Pearson Correlation	$-.130$	1	$.202$
	Sig. (2-tailed)	$.249$		$.073$
	N	80	80	80
Number of children of school going age of participant	Pearson Correlation	$.541^{**}$	$.202$	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	$.000$	$.073$	
	N	80	80	80

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### 4.3.3 Regression analysis of number of children participant had and the age of participant as predictors on the number of girls who were out of school.

Table 4.8 presents the number of children a participant had and age as predictors of the number of girls who were out of school. The table shows that age and number of children a participant had were significant predictors of the number of girls who were out of school at 1% (p-values .01). The table also shows that the number of children a participant had is positively related with the number of girls who were out of school with a beta value of .591. Thus the higher number of children a participant had, the higher the number of girls who were out of school. Again, the age of participant is also negatively related with the number girls who were out of school with a beta value of -.250. This implies that as the participant grows older the lesser the number of his/her girls who were out of school.

**Table 4.8: Regression analysis of number of children participant had and the age of participant on as predictors on the number of girls who were out of school.**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.658	.583		1.129	.263
1 Number of children of school going age participant had	.236	.037	.591	6.316	.000
Age of participant	-.029	.011	-.250	-2.667	.009

a. Dependent Variable: Number of girls out of school

#### 4.4 Reasons for Which Some Girls Were Out Of School and Recommendations to Improve Girl-Child Education

This section presents participants' reasons for which some girls were out of school and suggestion to improve girl-child education in Bolni. The statements captured in tables 9 through 14 are the approximate words of participants as captured by the researcher during the interviews. They are quite explanatory and the researcher will bring them to fore in the discussion section.

**Table 4.9: Socio-economic Reasons for which some Girls were out of School in Bolni**

<p><b>What explains the reason for which some/all your girls not being to school?</b></p>	<p>I had to withdraw some of the girls for exchange marriage purposes</p> <p>I didn't allow some of my girls to go to school because I betrothed them and had to fulfill that promise.</p> <p>Some of the girls dropped out from school due to teenage pregnancy</p> <p>Some of my daughters dropped out of school due to poverty</p> <p>Some of the girls are not interested in school, my daughter dropped out of school for no explicit reason</p>
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**Table 4.10: Effects of cultural practices on well-being of the girl-child in Bolni**

<p><b>What are the effects of exchange marriage arrangement on the well-being of the girl-child?</b></p>	<p>It leads to unhappy marriages, because of lack of love of the girl for the husband</p> <p>It leads to forced marriages</p> <p>It brings about early separation or divorce</p> <p>It leads to constant squabbles in the marital home</p> <p>It denies some girls access to school</p> <p>It leads to the drop out of some girls from school</p>
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<p><b>What are the effects of betrothal marriage arrangement on the well-being of the girl-child?</b></p>	<p>It leads to force marriages</p> <p>It leads to early marriages</p> <p>It leads to unhappy marriages</p> <p>It denies most girls access to school</p> <p>It leads to the drop out of some girls from school</p>
<p><b>What are the effects of traditional boy/girlfriend relationship on the well-being of the girl-child?</b></p>	<p>It makes some girls drop out of school due to teenage pregnancy, low parental support, divided attention on the part of the girls</p> <p>It creates conflicts between girls, parents and their boyfriends</p>
<p><b>What are the effects of polygynous marriage arrangement on the well-being of the girl-child?</b></p>	<p>It brings about enmity and creation of hatred among siblings</p> <p>It leads to large family size which overburdens parents ability to take care of all the children in the household</p>
<p><b>What are the effects of festive activities and funerals on the well-being of the girl-child?</b></p>	<p>High expenditure during funerals and festive occasions (parents must kill animals and buy drinks) leaves little to support children's education</p> <p>Promiscuity during festive and funerals celebration leads to teenage pregnancy which drops girls out of school</p> <p>Girls usually absent themselves from school to attend to household chores during festive occasions</p>
<p><b>What are the effects of gender roles on the well-being of the girl-child?</b></p>	<p>It overburdens the girl-child at home</p> <p>It makes her absent herself from school to attend to household or women roles</p> <p>Makes her accept her lower status in society and her place in the household</p>

**Table 4.11: Other Factors that Serve as Barriers to Girl-Child Education**

<p><b>What are some other socio-economic factors that affect girl-child education in Bolni?</b></p>	<p>My inability to meet the financial demands of my daughter in school (poverty)</p> <p>Teenage pregnancy leads to the drop out of girls from school</p> <p>Large family size also serves as a hindrance to our children's education</p> <p>Aside primary school which is found in Bolni, other schools are located far from Bolni. This adds to financial burden of parents, put stress on girls as they walk every day to and from school (Distance)</p> <p>Sometimes too, ill-health on the part of a parent, relative or the girls themselves also affect their schooling</p> <p>Heavy workload overburdens the girls and make them tired and absent themselves from school</p>
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**Table 4.12: Stakeholders Working to Improve Girl-Child Education in Bolni**

<p><b>What are some of the stakeholders operating in Bolni to improve girl-child education?</b></p>	<p>Grameen Ghana  Songtaba  ActionAid Ghana  School For Life  Bolni Student Union  Ghana Education Service  Bolni community</p>
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**Table 4.13: Interventions Employed by Stakeholders to Improve Girl-Child Education in Bolni**

<p><b>What strategies do stakeholders (Government and NGOs) adopt to improve Girl-Child education in Bolni?</b></p>	<p>They organise community sensitization and educational programmes for awareness creation</p> <p>They organise girls camp activities at the district, regional and national levels</p> <p>They assist in the provision of school infrastructure</p> <p>They assist in the placement of teachers in Bolni primary school</p> <p>They facilitate the formation of Community Advocacy Team (CAT), girls club, reflect circle and literacy classes</p> <p>They engage in child sponsorship</p> <p>They also assist and facilitate the formation of PTA networks</p>
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**Table 4.14: Recommendations to Improve Girl-Child Education in Bolni**

<p><b>What recommendations or suggestions can you give that will help improve girl-child education in Bolni</b></p>	<p>We as parent need to support our girls in school by buying school books and other teaching and learning materials</p> <p>We as parent should stop engaging our girls in practices that serve as barriers to their schooling</p> <p>Parents should reduce expenditures on funerals and invest in their children's education</p> <p>Parents should allow girls to study in the home and reduce their workload</p> <p>All girls must be enrolled in school and given the necessary support</p> <p>Parents need to be educated on the importance of girl-child education</p> <p>Girls should be serious in school and stop following boyfriends</p> <p>Parents should support their daughters financially in school</p> <p>Cooperate with NGOs working to improve girl-child education in Bolni</p> <p>Boys should be educated to stop dating school girls during their teen years</p>
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#### **4.5 Discussion of Major Findings**

This section presents a discussion of the major findings of the study. The discussion constitutes interpretations of the analysed data and discussed alongside current literature.

The chi-square test of relationships between the socio-demographic characteristics and whether participant had all their girl-children in school found that educational and occupational status of the participants were significant at 0.05 level. These findings are

consistent with Sengupta and Guha (2002), Gyan, Mabefam and Baffoe (2014) and Kainuwa and Yusuf (2013) who also found in their various studies that occupational status and level of education of parents were related to the level of girl-children in school and their performance. For instance, Sengupta and Guha (2002) found that the farmers' children especially the girl children were not sent to school as compared to the white collar job workers children in their study in west Bengal in India. Regarding educational status, pupils from families where parents have less education tend to systematically perform worse in schools than pupils whose parents have more education (Kainuwa & Yusuf, 2013). Contrary to the findings of Sengupta and Guha (2002) that religion and caste system had effects on girl-child education, this study found no relationship between religious affiliation of participants and girl-child education in Bolni.

The bivariate correlation test showed that age and number of children a participant had were strongly associated with the number of girls who were out of school. The regression analysis of the same variables that were correlated confirmed that age and number of children a participant had were predictors to the number of girl-children a participant had out of school. There was a positive relationship between the number of children a participant had and the number of girls who were out of school. Thus the higher the number of children a participant had, the higher the number of girls who were out of school. This is consistent with literature (Gyan, Mabefam & Baffoe, 2014; Sengupta & Guha, 2002). These authors found that large family sizes were major hindrance to girl-child education.

Furthermore, it was found that Exchange marriage arrangement had negative effects on girl-child education in Bolni. Men who were poor, disabled or elderly and could not date or court on their own resorted to exchange marriage arrangement as an alternative. The people of Bolni engage in exchange arrangement because it was cheaper,

convenient and faster as compared to other marriage arrangements. These support the findings of Fant (2008), Yando (2011) and Taylor (1998). Fant (2008) found that exchange marriage arrangement pulled girls out of school. In terms of its being cheaper and convenient, Yando (2011) found that men who engage in the exchange marriage arrangement do not labour on their in-laws farms and that the girl would have been grown and all they need is to have a sister or daughter and agree to swap. This is in line with the social learning theory projected by Bandura which states that people are active participants of the learning process and evaluate actions and only engage in them if they benefit them (Taylor, 1998).

In addition, betrothal marriage arrangement was found to have negative effects on girl-child education in Bolni. Betrothal marriage arrangement is contracted during infancy and parents who wanted their daughters to go for such marriages do not send them to school or they do send them but withdraw them later for marriage purposes. This agrees with the findings of Fant (2008) and Yando (2011) that betrothal marriage arrangement serves as a barrier to girl-child education. Fant (2008) for instance cited infant betrothal marriage as the problem that affects girls' educational attainments among the Bimobas of Ghana. Fant (2008) found a woman who revealed that: *'my father values marriage more than education. I stopped schooling because I got married at age 14'*. Some authors found that when girls are not allowed to go to school or are pulled out of school, it makes them ignorant of their rights and they therefore conform to status quo (Lambert et al, 2012; UNICEF, 2012 Kaag et al, 2011; Chowdhury, 1994).

Again, the study further found that Traditional Boy/girlfriend relationship had negative effects on girl child education in Bolni. The findings revealed that school girls who had boyfriends usually become pregnant and drop out of school. With such fragility in girl's education some parents never wanted to invest in girls' education. This is

consistent with the findings of Gyan (2013) and Muganda-Onyando and Omondi's (2008) that most teenage girls who got pregnant while in school dropped out of school. It was also found that boyfriends also sometimes elope the girls to far away places. Boy/Girlfriend relationship has been a cultural practice which has been transferred from older generation to the younger ones in Bolni as elucidated by other scholars due to benefits they gain from it (Kaag et al, 2011; Lambert et al, 2012; Taylor, 1998).

Also, the study found that the division of roles between boys and girls in Bolni had negative effects on girl-child education. Boys often work outside of home while girls perform household chores as cooking, cleaning, and fetching of water, firewood among other chores in addition to doing farm work. The roles girls perform are unending in a day. These findings are consistent with some other scholars (Dako-Gyeke & Owusu, 2013; Moletsane & Manuh, 1999; ActionAid, 2011). Moletsane and Manuh (1999) findings support the fact that gender roles have negative effects on girl-child education. They found that women “do not see the sense of sending girls to school when there are important survival tasks to be completed in the home” (Moletsane & Manuh, 1999. p.87). ActionAid Ghana (2011) also found that the abysmal performance of girls in school in comparison with boys in their selected schools in the Nanumba North and South was due to the fact that girls perform more daily household chores. Thus, “they miss school, arrive late and sleep in class because of tiredness” (ActionAid Ghana, 2011, p.11).

Furthermore, Stakeholders were working to champion the rights of girl-child education in Bolni. They included Bolni Students Union, School For Life, Grameen Ghana/ActionaidAid Ghana, Songtaba and the Government of Ghana through Ghana Education Service. These stakeholders employed several strategies among which were community sensitisation and education, formation and strengthening of PTAs/SMCs, Reflect Circle activities, provision of school infrastructure, placement of teachers to Bolni

primary school among other strategies. These helped to improve the enrolment of girls in school. These are consistent with the findings of Fielmua and Bandie, (2012) who found that NGOs were supportive in ensuring access of girls to school by providing communities with both infrastructural facilities and services. Fielmua and Banie (2012) for instance found that Sustainable Integrated Development Services Center an NGO they used as a case in Nadowli District built and renovated schools, increased school enrolments through their campaigns in communities and built the capacities of teachers.

Finally, the study found that the government of Ghana had also introduced School Capitation Grant in Ghanaian primary schools, provided free school uniforms and provided Bolni primary school with teachers. A number of findings support the role of government in education in communities (NDPC & UNDP, 2009; Osei, Owusu, Asem & Afutu-Kotey, 2009). These have taken away direct cost of education and reduced indirect cost used to be paid by parents.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

The study sought to ascertain the effects of cultural practices on girl-child education in Bolni in the Nanumba North District of Ghana. This chapter therefore focuses on the summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Study

Access to and drop out of school by girls is a major problem still confronting many societies in Ghana. The study therefore was conducted to ascertain cultural and other societal factors that served as barriers to girl-child education in Bolni, a rural community in Ghana. The main objective of the study was to find out the relationship between cultural practices of Bolni community and girl-child education as well as other social factors that hinder the progression of girls in school. In order to achieve this, the study adopted the following specific objectives; to examine the effects of socio-demographic characteristics of parents on girl-child education in Bolni, to determine the motivation for the perpetuation of cultural practices that serve as barriers to girl-child education in Bolni, to examine measures that can be instituted to mitigate the effects of cultural practices on girl-child education in Bolni and to explore interventions employed by Government and NGOs to improve girl-child education in Bolni.

Literature was reviewed thematically, beginning with the general overview of girl-child education and narrowed to the specific practices that limit the educational aspirations of girls. It also looked at the socio-cultural and economic factors that serve as barriers to girl-child education as well as interventions by government, local and international NGOs aimed at improving girls' access to education.

The study adopted a mix method research design and employed questionnaire in collecting quantitative data while in-depth interviews and Focused Group Discussions and observation were used to gather qualitative data. One hundred and thirty-six participants were sampled for the study.

The findings of the study revealed that marriage arrangements, gender roles, socio-demographic characteristics of participants as well as socio-economic factors serve as determinants to girl-child education in Bolni. Marriage arrangements were the most significant barriers to girl-child education in Bolni. This is due to the fact that in all of the marriage arrangements, girls are seen as major subjects around which every marriage transaction revolved. The study also found out that roles such as household chores were meant for girls. This means that roles in Bolni were strictly differentiated between boys and girls.

The roles played by girls were usually unending in a day and made girls tired. It also made them go to school late and as such, the girls had less time for their academic work. These overburdened girls and affected their performance in school. The study also revealed that girls were always withdrawn from school or absented themselves from school during funerals and festive occasions due to the demand for their services in the house. This was not the case for boys who had time for their schooling activities. Other barriers to girl-child education in Bolni included distance to school, teenage pregnancy, and poverty.

Due to the above barriers, some agencies intervened to pave way for girls' access to and retention in school. These agencies employed strategies such as education and awareness creation for the community use of role models, formation of PTA/SMC networks, placement of teachers to Bolni primary school as well as building school

infrastructure for children. They also established afternoon school for out of school children of which girls are often greater beneficiaries.

As a result of the above interventions and strategies, girl-child education in Bolni has taken a different direction. There is now evidence of girls in school. However, their survival and their progression to higher levels of education is slow. This conclusion is made with respect to the fact that, only one girl had finished Senior High School in Bolni in 2012. The assertiveness of girls has increased and they can now confidently challenge their parents when issues of cultural practices that serve as barriers to education crop up. Despite their assertiveness level, the girls are constrained when it comes to the resources needed to stay in school after they have challenged the status quo and definitely get enrolled in school. They are left to fend for themselves as the study found out that no agency as yet gives financial or material support to girls who have been abandoned by their parents.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This research approached the issues of girl-child denial of access and drop-out from school from a cultural angle and determined how some selected cultural practices such as marriage arrangements, gender roles, and festivals and funerals affected girls' access to and drop out from school in Bolni.

The findings showed that there were relationships between cultural practices (marriage arrangements) such as Exchange, Betrothal, and preferred marriage arrangements and girl-child education in Bolni. Thus as many girls as are involved in a particular practice, are either denied access to or dropout of school. This is inimical to their personal development of skills and knowledge and deprive their communities and Ghana at large of their contributions. Gender role divisions, funerals and festivals also had negative effects on

girl-child education in Bolni. Gender roles also overburden girls and as a result, they are not able to effectively attend school. It is therefore concluded that, for society to harness the full potential of every human being, the education of the girl-child is important and hence our “sisters too matter”.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The study makes the following recommendations for the improvement of girl-child education in Bolni: Due to the fact that, a lot of children especially girls are still out of school in Bolni despite interventions to improve their access to school, it is recommended that, the government backs its laws and policies with implementation power. This will compel parents to enroll all their children in school. It is only when this is done that children everywhere can enjoy their right to education as enshrined in the 1992 constitution of Ghana, Children’s Act of 1998 and other international conventions and acts such as United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children. If there is no enforcing mechanism to compel parents to enroll their children in school, all the laws and policies become white elephants. For instance, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education of government is not effective because; the compulsory aspect is not functioning. So parents who refuse to enroll their children in school are not dealt with in any manner and as result, parents often refuse to enroll their children because, they know that they will not be penalized in any manner.

The study also noticed that there are laws and policies on paper that seek to protect girls from forced and early marriages. Despite these, a lot of girls are forced to marry men they do not love at very early ages. This is human right abuse and pragmatic measures must be taken by government to ensure that such laws are enforced to save the girl-children from such abuses. For instance, the 1992 constitution of Ghana, outlaws forced

marriages; the 1998 children's Act of Ghana (Act 560), categorically states that, 'no person shall force a child – to be betrothed; to be the subject of a dowry; or to be married' and gives the minimum age of marriage of whatever kind to be 18 years. Yet girls are forced into marriage in the existence of these legislations.

Furthermore, due to the fact that some girls are still denied access to school or drop out of school as a result of cultural practices which are perpetuated by parents, the researcher recommends that, stakeholders (NGOs and CBOs) in Bolni should deepen their sensitisation programmes in Bolni. They should continue to hammer home the importance of girl-child education and the advantages that stand to be accrued if parents educate their daughters. This form of education and sensitization should be done through community durbars and forums, radio programmes and if possible television programmes in the area to let the people understand that it is illegal to deny girls access to education.

In addition, parents should be educated by social workers and gender activists on the need to socialize their male and female children to perform similar roles in the home. This will help solve the problem of girls being overburdened with chores as compared to their male counterparts. This will help them go to school early full of energy and participate effectively in class activities as well as concentrate in class and thereby improving their academic performance.

Again, social workers should educate girls to understand that taking boyfriends as helping mechanisms is inimical to their survival and progression in school. This is because, they get pregnant and dropout from school as a result. Instead, parents should be made to understand that it is their responsibility to take care of their daughters in school.

Due to the fact that some children are out of school due to their inability to pay school fees of any form, the researcher recommends that, the government through Ghana Education Service abolishes all forms of fees in school, especially the direct fees. It was

also realized that children still pay examination fees and as such any child who is unable to pay such fees is not allowed to sit the exams. This is not good for their academic performance. Part of the capitation grant should be channeled to the printing of exam papers to allow every child the opportunity to be in school.

Due to the distance children walk (24km to and from Bimbilla) to attend Junior High School, it is recommended that, government and other stakeholders should pool resources together to build a Junior High School in Bolni. This will reduce the burden of children having to walk and thus, get to school late and get tired and hence cannot concentrate in class.

Poverty is one of the challenges facing parents in Bolni, especially women. It serves as a constraint on their ability to help their daughters in school. It is therefore recommended that government, NGOs and other funding agencies should consider giving the women soft loans with low interest rates. This will improve their economic status and help take care of their children better.

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**APPENDICES****APPENDIX I****CONSENT FORM**

The researcher is undertaking a study on the topic “**our sisters too matter**”: **examining the cultural practices that serve as barriers to girl-child education in Bolni in the Nanumba North**. As part of the ethical requirements for the study participants are assured of the following, as applied to the study;

**Informed Consent:** The researcher will clearly inform participants of the purposes of the research and will proceed after the expressed consent of participants.

**Voluntary Participation:** Participants of the research will be engaged voluntarily devoid of any form of coercion or duress. Participants can opt out at any stage of the interview. Also, they are not obliged to answer any question they are not comfortable with.

**Confidentiality:** All information given will be kept confidentially and will not be disclosed to a third party under any condition, without the expressed consent of the participant. Information given will be used specifically for the purposes for which it was sort (i.e. academic).

In order to facilitate the interview process, the researcher will use a voice recorder. However, the interview will be used strictly for academic purposes and any information given will be destroyed a month after the submission of the researcher’s thesis. Thank you

**Signature:**.....

.....

**Matthew Gmalifo Mabefam**

**(Researcher)**

**(Participant)**

**APPENDIX II****UNIVERSITY OF GHANA****DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK****QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS**

This study is being carried out by Mabefam G. Matthew, a graduate student of the Department of Social work on the topic: *our sisters too matter”: Examining the cultural practices that serve as barriers to girl-child education in Bolni in the Nanumba North District* in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of master of philosophy in social work. Please be noted that, your participation in the study is voluntary and all information gathered will be treated with outmost confidentiality and would be solely used for academic purposes. Your support and contribution would be very much appreciated. Thank you

**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

1. Sex: Male [ ], Female [ ].
2. Age: .....
3. Religion: Christian [ ], Muslim [ ], Traditionalist [ ], any other [ ]  
(specify).....
4. Marital status: Married [ ], single [ ] widow/widower [ ] divorced [ ]
5. How many wives do you have if you are married? 1 [ ], 2 [ ], 3 [ ], 4 and above [ ]
6. Educational status: Primary [ ], MSLC/SSSCE, [ ], Diploma [ ], other (specify)..... None [ ].
7. Occupation: Farming [ ], Petty Trading [ ], any other [ ],  
specify.....
8. Do you have children? Yes [ ], No [ ]
9. If yes how many children do you have? .....
10. Are all children of yours in school? Yes [ ], No [ ]

11. If no, how many of your children are or have been to school? .....
12. How many are not in school? .....
13. Do you have girl-children? Yes [ ] No [ ]
14. How many of your children are girls? .....
15. Are all girl-children of yours in school? Yes [ ], No [ ]
16. If no, how many of your girls are in school? .....
17. How many of your girls are out of school.....
18. What explains the reason for some or all your girls not being in school?

.....

.....

.....

### ***CULTURAL BARRIERS TO GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION***

19. What reasons account for the practice of the following cultural practices in this locality?

<b>Cultural practice</b>	<b>Reasons</b>
Child betrothal	
Exchange marriage arrangement	
Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship	
Polygynous marriage	
Funerals	
Festivals (new yam etc)	
Girl-child roles	

20. In what ways do these practices affect the well-being of the girl child?

<b>Cultural practice</b>	<b>Effects</b>
Child betrothal	
Exchange marriage arrangement	
Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship	
Polygynous marriage	
Funerals	
Festivals (new yam etc)	
Girl-child roles	

19 Effects of marriage arrangements on access to and drop out from school

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Response</b>
No. of girl child denied access due to exchange marriage	
No. of girl child dropped out due to exchange marriage	
No. of girl child denied access due to betrothal	
No. of girl child dropped out due to betrothal	
No. of girl child denied access due to traditional boy/girlfriend relationship	
No. of girl child dropped out due to traditional boy/girlfriend relationship	

20 How are the following cultural practices conducted and the reasons for their practice?

Cultural practice	Mode of conduct
Child betrothal	
Exchange marriage arrangement	
Traditional boy/girlfriend relationship	
Polygynous marriage	
Funerals	
Festivals	
Gender roles	

***SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS TO GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION***

21. What other societal factors hinder girl child education in Bolni?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

22. What type of schools do you not have in Bolni?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

23. Where do your children attend the schools that are not found in Bolni?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

24. How far are those schools from Bolni? (Distance in Km) .....

25. Can the distance serve as a hindrance to girl-child education? Yes [ ], No [ ]

26. If yes, how?

.....  
 .....  
 .....

27. Do you pay any fees for your child in school? Yes [ ], No [ ]

28. If yes, how much do you pay in a term?

.....  
.....  
.....

29. Who pays the fees for your child/children in school?

.....  
.....  
.....

30. What happens to your child if you are not able to pay? Stops school completely [ ],  
absent herself till she gets the money [ ], continue to go to school [ ]

31. Do you stand to lose anything by enrolling your girl-child in school?

Yes [ ], No [ ]

32. If yes, what do you stand to lose if you enroll your girl-child in school?

.....  
.....  
.....

33. Does enrolling your girl-child in school have any advantages? Yes [ ], No [ ]

34. If yes, what are some of advantages?

.....  
.....  
.....

***MEASURES TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF CULTURAL PRACTICES ON  
GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION***

35. What do you wish your girl-child to become in future? Nurse [ ], teacher [ ], farmer  
[ ] any other [ ], specify.....

36. With the current trend of issues, do you think your girl-child can become what you  
want her to be? Yes [ ], No [ ]

37. If no, can any measures be instituted to enhance her ability to become what you hope for her in future? Yes [ ], No [ ]

38. If yes, can you suggest any of the measures?

.....  
.....  
.....

39. How will the suggested measures help reduce cultural practices effects on girl-child education?

.....  
.....  
.....

40. What personally will you do to ensure that your girl-child have access education?

.....  
.....  
.....

41. Can Bolni as a community do anything to improve girl-child education?

Yes [ ], No [ ]

42. If yes, what do you think the community can do to improve girl-child education?

.....  
.....  
.....

***STRATEGIES BY GOVERNMENT AND NGOS TO IMPROVE GIRLS EDUCATION IN BOLNI***

43. Do you know of any organizations that work in Bolni to improve girl-child education? Yes [ ], No [ ]

44. If yes, can you mention any of them?

.....  
.....  
.....

45. What strategies do the organizations you have mentioned adopt to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

.....  
.....  
.....

***RECOMMENDATIONS***

46. What recommendations or suggestions can you give to help improve over all girl-child education in Bolni?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

***Thank you for***

### **APPENDIX III**

#### **LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP**

#### **DISCUSSIONS**

#### **GIRLS WHO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF CULTURAL PRACTICES THAT SERVE AS BARRIERS TO THEIR EDUCATION**

Please tell me about yourself? (probes; Age, Level of Education, Religion and occupation)

How will you describe the situation of girls in this community? (probes; access, progression, retention and dropout)

Why is that most girls in this community are not in school? (probes: economic, cultural, etc)

How do these factors affect your education? ( probe; access, progression, retention and dropout)

How do you cope with these barriers to still be in school?

In your view, who benefits from practices that affect you? (probes; parents, girls themselves etc)

What benefits do they specifically get from such practices?

Has the issue of you being in school deprived you of some warm reception from your family?

What is society's response to you when you challenged such practices to be in school?

Despite the antagonism you face what motivates you to continue to be in school? ( probes; to be empowered, job security, economic independence etc)

Do you have a friend who has suffered such practices and did not continue in school?

What is your performance in school?

Who do you intend to marry in future? (Kind of man)

Do you intend to marry from this community? (Why or why not?)

What specific problems do you face while in SHS?

Do you regret going through the pain/challenges in school? (Why or why not?)

What support do agencies in Bolni give to girls like you?

What do you want to be in future?

How will you achieve such dreams?

Any recommendations to improve girl child education in Bolni?

### **GIRLS WHO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF CULTURAL PRACTICES THAT HAVE PREVENTED THEM FROM BEING IN SCHOOL**

Please can you tell about yourself? (probes; Age, Level of Education, Religion, Ethnic Group)

How will you describe the situation of girls in this community? (probes; access, progression, retention and dropout)

Why is that most girls in this community are not in school? (Probes: economic, cultural, etc)

How do these factors affect your education? (probes; access, progression, retention and dropout)

In your view, who benefits from practices that affect you?

What benefits do they specifically get from such practices?

Do you have a friend who has suffered such practices and did continue in school?

How did your friend cope?

Are there any organizations in Bolni which help girls like you? (Did you benefit from such assistance, what form of assistance do they give)

Do you regret not being in school? (Why or why not?)

Is it too late for you to be in school? (What plans are you making towards being in school if it is not late?)

What will be your wish if you had another chance of being in school?

Any recommendation to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

### **PARENTS WHOSE GIRL-CHILDREN HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF CULTURAL PRACTICES WHICH SERVE AS BARRIERS TO THEIR EDUCATION**

Please can you tell me about yourself? ( probes: Age, Sex, Level of Education, Religion, Marital Status, Number of Children (if applicable) Position Held, and Ethnic Group

What is your opinion about girl-child education in Bolni?

What are some of the practices in this community that affect girl-child education?

How do these cultural practices affect your girl-child's education?

In your view, who benefits from practices that affect your girl child?

Do you have a girl /girls who never went to school?

Who takes the decision as to whether the girls go to school?

What are the reasons for the practice of cultural practices in this community?

Did any organization intervene and what happened?

Who are those who enforce such cultural practice?

What is your opinion on such cultural practices?

Are there some roles reserved for the girl child only? (List some, why are they reserved for girls, and how do they affect their well-being)

Is there any educated lady you have ever appreciated? (why or why not)

What do you wish your girl-children become in the future?

How will they achieve such aspirations?

Any recommendations to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

#### **NGOs and CBOs OFFICIALS**

Please can you tell me about yourself? ( probes; Age, Sex, Level of Education, Religion, Marital Status, Number of Children (if applicable), Position Held and Ethnic Group)

When did you start operating in Bolni community?

What basically do you do in Bolni with regards to girl-child education?

What was the situation of the girl child education before you came into Bolni community?

What specifically have you done to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

What strategies do you employ to ensure girl-child education is improved?

What success stories can you associate to yourself as far as girl-child education is concerned?

What challenges have you faced in your quest to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

What is the situation of girl-child education now in Bolni?

Any recommendations to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

#### **HEADTEACHER, PTA and SMC CHAIRMEN OF BOLNI PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Please can you tell me about yourself? (probes; Age, Sex, Level of Education, Religion, Marital Status, Number of Children (if applicable), Position Held, Ethnic Group.

What is the situation of the girl-child with regards to education in Bolni? (Probe: access, retention, progression and completion)

What reasons account for some people not enrolling their girl-children in you?

What have you done/doing to ensure that all girls are enrolled in school?

What strategies have you adopted to ensure that girl-child education is improved?

What success stories can you associate with your strategies as far as girl-child education is concerned?

What challenges have you faced in your quest to improve girl-child education?

Any recommendations to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

### **OPINION LEADERS (CHIEF AND ASSEMBLY MAN)**

Please can you tell me about yourself? (Age, Sex, Level of Education, Religion, Marital Status, Number of Children (if applicable) Position Held, Ethnic Group

What is the situation of the girl-child in Bolni?

What accounts for few girls being in school in this community?

Do you see girls at home when schools are in session? What could account for that?

As a custodian of culture (chief), what kind of cultural practices do you ensure that girls go through?

How do the adherences of these affect their education in Bolni?

What kind of issues do parents/guardians bring to you concerning their daughters?

How do you normally resolve an issue brought before you concerning a girl who wants to go to school but the parents insist to exchange her for another wife?

What is your opinion on girl-child education in Bolni?

What are you doing to ensure that a lot of girls go to school?

Could there be alternative marriage arrangements either than exchange or betrothal?

Any recommendations to improve girl-child education in Bolni?

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

What is the situation of the girl-child in Bolni?

What accounts for few girls being in school in this community?

Who are those who enforce such cultural practice?

What is your opinion on such cultural practices?

Who benefits from practices that affect girl child education?

How do those practices affect the well-being of the girls and the community?

What do you wish your girl-children become in the future?

How will they achieve such aspirations?

Any recommendations to improve girl-child education in Bolni?