

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN RURAL WATER PROJECTS: THE
CASE OF KWAEBIBIREM DISTRICT IN THE EASTERN REGION OF
GHANA**



**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF AN MPhil IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DEGREE**

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DECLARATION

I, MABEL MENSAH, do hereby declare that this work is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in the work have been fully acknowledged. I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this thesis was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the university.

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DATE



DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family especially my mother, Madam Victoria Acheampong, for her unfailing love, and immeasurable support in making this thesis see the light of success.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CWSA:	Community Water and Sanitation Agency
DA:	District Assembly
DANIDA:	Danish Development Assistance Programme
DFID:	Department for International Development
DRA:	Demand Responsive Approach
DWST:	District Water and Sanitation Team
EDA:	External Donor Agencies
EVORAP:	Eastern and Volta region Assistance Project
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
FMP:	Facility Management Plan
GoG:	Government of Ghana
GOPDC:	Ghana Oil Palm Development Company
GPRS:	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GTZ:	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
GWSC:	Ghana Water and Sewage Corporation
KbD:	Kwaebibirem District
KbDA:	KbD Assembly
LI:	Legislative Instrument
MDG:	Millennium Development Goal
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NCWSP:	National Community Water and Sanitation Programme
PO:	Partner Organization

RWD:	Rural Water Department
RWS:	Rural Water Supply
RWSP:	Rural Water Supply Project
RWSSP:	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project
SPA:	Stand Pipe Attendant
STWS:	Small Town Water Systems
WATSAN:	Water and Sanitation
WB:	Water Board
WSDB:	Water and Sanitation Development Board
WSMT:	Water and Sanitation Management Tea

ABSTRACT

Participation is viewed as an essential element of community development. Women's involvement in rural projects is treated as an unrelenting subject in the field of development. The effective management and sustainability of RWSPs has been linked to the active involvement of women throughout the RWSPs processes. There is no doubt that certain mechanisms such as affirmative actions have succeeded in boosting women's representation on decision-making platform. Over the years, the participation of rural women in RWSPs in Ghana though encouraging, yet only limited to the implementation and management stages of the RWSPs. This current study examines the drivers of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd. Three communities (Pramkese, Abaam and Otumi) were purposely selected from the Kbd for the study. A purely qualitative approach of research was used for the study. Primary data was collected from in-depth interviews of twenty-five (25) key respondents, and three FGDs across three selected communities in the Kbd.

The findings of this study revealed that women who are driven by the need to serve their community, future aspiration and by the need for water appear to be women, who have high level of education, are older, unmarried and very courageous. These women participate better at the decision-making and planning stages of the project. On the other hand, women who were driven by fear of punishment, the need for water and nomination were mostly women who had low levels of education, and mostly unmarried. These women are more active at the implementation and post implementation stages of the project rather than at the decision making level. Nonetheless, the involvement of women at all stages of the project, particularly their financial contribution in terms of buying the water at point sources, was found to be very crucial in sustaining the water facilities till date.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

It is often said that a very essential element of development is people's participation. The argument has been that making people participate and take decisions in matters that affect their lives, especially in areas of human development, is a process of empowering them and enhancing their socio-economic welfare (white, 1996). Development scholars have highlighted the need for people's involvement in the formulation and implementation of policies that affect their lives (Oakley, 1991; Nwackukwu, 2006; Tigabu et. al., 2013; Bakalian and Wakeman, 2009; Hicks, 2011; Boateng et al., 2013a). These scholars assert that meaningful inclusion of the beneficiaries of any development programme or projects such as feeder roads, housing and water projects, will not only lead to the achievement of intended objectives, but will also result in the sustainability of the projects.

The challenges associated with the lack of quality water have become issues of global concern, and a major factor in devising developmental policies in developing countries (Tam, 2013). Besides, issues of delivery and maintenance of water facilities has become a crucial element of development strategies. This is eminent in the MDG-7 which accordingly focuses on the issue of environmental sustainability. In the light of this, a lot of attention has therefore been given to people's participation as a means to ensuring ownership and sustainability of development projects. Participation is viewed as a process by which people are allowed to actively and openly engage in outlining their problems, in making assessments and resolutions concerning societal issues through the

formulation and implementation of policies and strategies to achieve a desirable result or change (Breuer, 1999 as cited in Zadeh, 2010; 14). It can also be defined as “the involvement of citizens in a wide range of administrative policy-making activities, including the determination of level of service, and the acceptability of physical construction project in order to orient government programmes towards community needs, build public support and encourage a sense of cohesiveness within society” (Fox and Meyer, 1995; 20). Community participation in this regard is seen as essential throughout the design, implementation and evaluation stage of developmental projects or programmes.

Community participation is said to be instrumental not only in the sharing of ideas but also in building unity and trust between various agents of development as well as creating a sense of ownership and control among the beneficiaries of development projects (Mohammed, 2010).

Most scholars have argued that effective community participation in projects requires the representation of all groups and categories of people in the community (Agarwal, 2010; Mahmud, Shah and Becker, 2012). These categories cut across men and women, literate and illiterate, rich and poor, the young and the elderly and people from diverse religious backgrounds. However, several attempts by governments to address the issue of gender inequality through Affirmative Actions such as quota systems seem to have yielded little success (Bawa and Sanyare, 2013; Hicks, 2011).

Since the turn of the millennium, development strategies of most developing countries have been geared towards the attainment of the MDGs especially in the areas of poverty reduction, improved access to education, health, water and sanitation. In most developing countries, the issue of water scarcity, especially in rural areas have become a major challenge (Ladele & Tackie-ofosu, 2011). Literature shows that community participation in rural projects is generally low and even where the level of participation appears encouraging, various marginalized groups especially women are often excluded (Hemson, 2002; Prokopy, 2004; Tigabu et al., 2013 and Marks et al., 2014). These scholars argue that the elites who in most cases are men seem to dominate and the very people whom the projects seem to affect the most are often neglected.

The role of women in the management of water resources has been progressively acknowledged by development agencies, policymakers, national governments and NGOs over the past several decades. Despite the acknowledgment of the importance of women participation in Rural Water Projects (RWPs), evidence from literature shows a wide gap between the stated intentions of policy makers to improve their (women) access to management of water resources and practical results on the field (Chifamba, 2013). According to Siddiqui (1994 cited in Mohammed, 2010), most of the committees that oversee project implementation at the rural level are often dominated by politicians and people with high socio-economic background and that grassroots' participation has been impeded by these political and socio-economic factors whilst neglecting the views of the main beneficiaries of the developmental projects. For this reason, most water projects in developing countries have been found to be abandoned or broken down shortly after

completion (Agarwal, 2010; Harmon, 2013). This suggest that the participation is instrumental in ensuring sustainability of water projects in developing countries.

1.1 Research Problem

There is a general agreement among researchers about the low participation of women in rural water projects (Kelvany et al. 2013; Agarwal, 2010; Prokopy, 2004; Moraes and Rocha, 2013). Research shows that meaningful participation of women in decision making, implementation and evaluation of developmental projects, especially the ones that mostly affect their welfare such as water and sanitation projects, often lead to project success and sustainability (Prokopy, 2004; Ladele et al., 2011; Marks and Davis, 2012; Harmon, 2013;). According to Shang-Quartey (cited in Ladele et al., 2011:66), women constitute 51% of Ghana's population, 60% of whom are rural dwellers.

Nevertheless, there is poor representation of women in local government committees where decisions pertaining to development at the grass root levels are taken. Awortwi (2010) asserted that poor representation of women in decision making space is as a result of the fact that the Ghanaian constitution does not make any specific stipulation for women in such areas such as the reservation of parliamentary seats for women unlike that of South Africa, Niger and Mozambique where 50, 10 and 28 parliamentary seats respectively are reserved specifically for women (United Cities and Local Government Report, 2009). Even though the reproductive and domestic role of women make them the major users of piped bone water supply, existing literature seems to suggest that the traditional role of men as decision-makers for the whole community coupled with other

cultural and socio-economic factors such as age, traditional beliefs, low level of advocacy, low level of income, occupational status and low level of education hinder the effective participation of women in domestic piped water supply projects and its sustainability (Omoredede, 2014; Tigabu et al., 2013; Ladele et al., 2011; Harmon, 2013). It is fascinating to emphasize how regardless of these challenges, some rural women break the barriers and find themselves involved in RWSPs in rural areas.

Among the many studies which have looked at the participation of women in rural water projects (Agarwal, 2010; Kelvany et. al., 2013; Prokopy, 2004; Moraes and Rocha, 2013), very few have focused on Africa, as observed by Ladele et al. (2011) and Harman (2013).

In recent times both governmental and non-governmental organizations have implemented water supply projects in many developing countries especially in Africa. However Tigabu et al. (2013) asserted that most of these projects fail shortly after implementation as a result of low community participation leading to improper management of these facilities. Despite the wide acceptance of the view that the higher the participation of women in rural water projects, the higher the success of these projects and vice versa (Prokopy, 2004; Ladele, 2011), evidence is based largely on a small number of studies with most of these studies using quantitative approaches. Moreover, the focus of these few studies have been geared towards the extent of women participation, the reason for low participation of women in the RWSPs and the relationship between participation in RWPs and sense of belongingness to the projects (Tigabu et al., 2011; Marks and Davis, 2012; Boateng, Brown, and Tenkorang, (2013);

Kevany et. al., 2013; Moraes and Rocha, 2013). Hence a study that will seek to explore women's participation in rural water projects qualitatively would be a step in the right direction.

The general consensus in the above studies has been that the participation of women (especially in decision making) from the planning and design stage through to the operation and maintenance stages in RWSPs is generally low. This however, presupposes that at least some women participate in the Projects. Nonetheless, while some studies have highlighted the barriers to women's participation in RWSPs, none of these studies to the best of my knowledge looked at the reasons why some women show appreciable level of participation in rural water projects whilst others do not. Besides, for the few women who participate in these water projects, little attention has been given to the factors motivate women to participate in RWSPs, their characteristics and challenges. Against this milieu, this study focuses on the driving force for women participation and the characteristics of the women who appear more proactive in RWSPs processes. Understanding these aspects of women engagement in rural water supply systems will serve as an insight into the development of useful strategies that could potentially address the problem of non-sustainability of previously and newly installed rural water supply facilities in developing countries. It is presumed that if these factors are identified and analyzed, not only will it increase our knowledge on the possible drivers of women's participation in RWSPs but also inform strategies to adopt in persuading other women to participate in RWSPs as well. On the other hand, unless these elements are determined

and investigated, they are liable to generate unremitting obstructions on the level of rural women's participation in major developmental projects such as RWSPs.

The significant role of women in our African society in terms of reproduction, food production and home makers cannot be underestimated. Women constitute over 50% of the Ghanaian population and approximately 60% of them reside in rural areas (Shang-Quartey, cited in Ladele et al., 2011:66). Not only are women hard working but they are also dependable and dedicated to their duties (Tam, 2013). Like many African rural communities, rural areas of Ghana often suffer from lack of potable drinking water, poor sanitation, low productivity, and poverty leading to poor living standards which have harmful effects on the well-being of many rural women (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; Chifamba, 2013). Besides, Mohammed (2010) argued that development projects and programmes such as water projects turn to favour the few elites in the community whilst the marginalized remain enslaved with poverty without any hope for liberation. To this end, there appear a good ground to emphasize on the effective participation of rural women in developmental projects, especially at the decision making levels where issues of choice, assessment and resolutions are made on issues such as water supply projects which directly impact on their reproductive, food production and domestic roles in the society.

The theories of Participation by White (1996) and Vernooy (2005) were used as a theoretical frame work to determine the nature and levels of women participation in the RWSPs in the Kbd in this study. According to White, there are four types of participation which are: *Nominal, instrumental, representative and transformative*. For

White, each of these has different characteristics and manifest for specific purposes. Whiles Nominal participation serves as a display of legitimization, Instrumental serves as means of ensuring efficiency. Representative form of participation gives room for voices to be raised for the sustainability of the project. Transformative participation, which for her is the most effective of the four, it serves as both the means and an end to achieve a goal through the empowerment of the people the project seeks to serve. Therefore a meaningful participation would be the one that engages the people as a means and an end on its own through the empowerment of women. According to Vernooy, however, participation can take different shapes in terms of who participates in decision making, when and how. He differentiates between four types of participation thus: Contractual, Consultative, Collaborative and Collegiate participation. Contractual form of participation is where only one actor makes all the decision pertaining to a project and thus seen as the ultimate owner of the project. Others who participate are seen as formal or informal contractors who provide services for the owner. Consultative participation is where one actor solely makes all the key decisions pertaining to the project but only consults others. Collaborative participation involves the trade of knowledge which may not necessarily be equal between two or more parties. The final one is the collegiate participation where decisions are actively and equally made between all the parties involved for the purpose of equal ownership and distribution of responsibility. The Collegiate form of participation for Vernooy appears to be the most effective and meaningful form of participation in project delivery and management. These two frameworks are considered instrumental in analyzing the level and nature of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Various attempts have been made by various governments since independence to promote effective governance at grassroots' level through decentralization. However, decentralization has not been successful in increasing community member's participation in rural development projects (Mohammed, 2010). The question as to whether all the people with diverse background especially the marginalized have been well represented in the design, construction and maintenance of rural projects remain unanswered. There is also the concern as to whether there are certain factors that motivate some women to take active participation in all stages of RWSPs at the local level whilst others show little or no interest. Above and beyond, the majority of the Ghanaian population who happened to be women, live in rural areas with the prevalence of economic, environmental and social, insecurity in these areas. Hence mechanisms that seek to enhance women's participation in the socio-economic growth of rural Ghana should be central to the broader national development plan.

Considering the relative deprivation of rural communities in terms of social amenities, national efforts for participatory processes that reflect meaningful inclusion of women is seen as crucial in terms of providing freedom and opportunity for rural women to fully participate in any development intervention that seeks to improve their wellbeing and that of their society. In any case, why do some women participate in rural developmental projects such as water projects, at the rural level while others do not? The main purpose of this study is to unravel the drivers of women engagement in RWSP in the Kbd.

1.3 Significance of the Study

None of the aforementioned studies, though valuable, have attempted to develop a model to explore women's participation in rural water project, especially regarding the driving force for women participation in RWSP management and sustainability. This study will fill the literature gap on the drivers of women's participation in RWSP, characteristics of women who participate in rural piped water projects, the factors that ensure effective and efficient participation of women in rural water supply projects and its maintenance. It will also inform the thinking/knowledge of stakeholders on the link between the forces of women participation, their characteristics and contributions to rural water projects and the sustainability of such water projects.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide an insight and increase commitment of stakeholders towards the empowerment of rural women, through the development of plans, policies and projects that serves as drivers to boost women's participation in rural water development projects and programmes. Hence there is room for arguably a unique contribution to literature in terms of theory and practice. The findings of the study will not only serve as impetus for future research into similar areas, but will also be beneficial to policy makers in the sense that it will inform them on the drivers of women participation in rural piped water projects, especially in Africa and in Ghana where little is known on this subject.

1.4 Scope of the study

Development scholars, development practitioners and policy makers have described local government systems as a channel of decentralization to ensure participatory development

at the grassroots' level. Various studies have been carried out to explore the level of grass root participation in local development projects. This study will geographically focus on three (3) selected communities within the Kwaebibirem district of the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Kwaebibirem District is one of the mining districts in the country with several water bodies such as the river Birem and river Pram which serve the inhabitants of the district. Unfortunately, the actions and inactions of illegal miners (Gallamsey) have polluted these water bodies beyond their elastic limit and as such rendered the water bodies not hygienic for use (Amankwa, 2013). It is in the light of this that several piped-borne water projects have been embarked on to cater for the water needs of the people. Whilst some of these water projects are still in good shape, others have been found to be either in a deplorable state or abandoned. The focus of this study is to explore the nature of women's involvement in the water projects, particularly at the planning, implementation and management stages. The key interest is to understand women's contribution throughout the life cycle of these piped water projects. The findings of this study is based on three selected communities: Abaam, Otumi and Pramkese which are the three most recent communities within the KbD to have received a small town piped water system within the last ten years. The selection of these communities within the district will allow for cross examination of the level and nature of women's participation in these three communities within the district, without underestimating their socio-economic background and educational diversity.

1.5 Research Objectives

Decentralization has been pursued by various governments as a way of realizing people's participation in development process especially at the local level. However, it has been alleged that most often than not, men happen to participate more in rural developmental projects than women even in areas that affect women the most (Ladele et al., 2011). Poverty, illiteracy, and religion, among other factors, have been identified as reasons for the low participation of women in developmental projects (Kongolo and Bamgose 2002; Ladele et al., 2011). The question is: what is the driving force for the few women who participate? The main objective of this study is to examine the participation of women in RWSPs even in the face of the above challenges. This study seeks to:

- Explore the underlying drives of women participation in the management of water supply projects in the Kwaebibirem District;
- Identify the characteristics of women who appear more proactive in these projects and why; and
- Examine factors that obstructs the effective participation of women in rural water supply projects.

1.6 Research Questions

This study seeks to answer some questions regarding women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd. The answers to these questions will reveal the rationale behind the level of women's participation as well as the nature of their participation in rural development processes and will broaden our understanding of why some women participate whilst others do not. The main research questions of this study are:

- What accounts for the varied levels of women engagements in rural water supply projects in the Kwaebibirem District in the Eastern region of Ghana?
- Which particular type of women appear more proactive in these processes and why?
- What factors hinder the effective participation of women in rural water supply projects in the Kwaebibirem District?

1.7 Proposed Research Design and Methodology

The study used the interpretative approach of research which allow the researcher to make sense or interpret the meaning other people have about a social phenomenon; in this case women's participation in RWSPs (Creswell, 2007). This approach helps to understand the factors that affect women participation in rural water projects. This study employs qualitative methods to carry out the research. Qualitative methods such as personal interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were employed to collect data on the factors that motivate women to participate in RWSPs, characteristics of these women and the barriers to their effective involvement in the RWSPs.

Qualitative data was collected through oral interviews of twenty-five respondents. Comprising of fifteen (15) water committee members (both men and women), five from each of the three communities selected, two (2) women participants at the planning stages of the project in each of the three communities, one institutional respondent from the Ministry of water resource works and housing, and three (3) district officials at field level (District Planning Officer, Project Engineer and the District Head of WSDB) were all interviewed. Focus group discussions were conducted with six selected women each in

the three communities for the purposes of data triangulation. So as to gain a deeper understanding and reality of local women's participation in planning, implementation and management of piped water projects. Data were gathered on the drivers of women's engagement in the project and socio-economic background of women's participation in RWSPs as well as the barriers to their participation in the water projects. In addition, some selected case studies of completed or ongoing piped water projects were studied. The data obtained from the interview and focus group discussions were manually analyzed, based on the emerging themes that came out of related research questions. Additional data was generated through the internet and other secondary sources (scholarly journals and books) to identify existing literature on women's participation in RWSPs and the maintenance of development projects in rural Ghana more broadly.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

This study is confined to women's participation throughout the planning, implementation and post-implementation processes in RWSPs of the three communities which have had mechanized RWSPs within the last eight years in the Kbd in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

One major limitation of the study is the inability of the researcher to cover all over 20 communities in the district. While this became impossible due mainly to time and resource constraints, it is recognized that this limitation will make it difficult to generalize the findings of this study. Some of the women who partook in the FGDs had to be persuaded to talk or give out information. Some of them felt shy to contribute to the discussions; they either refused to talk or seconded their fellow women who appeared

more vocal and active in the discussion, thereby retaining some information which could have been vital to the analysis of the findings.

Also, much attention was not given to women's engagement at other equally important stages such as the monitoring and evaluation stages of the water projects due to resource constraints. Besides, other subjects such as the role of community leaders (especially the men) in promoting the effective participation of women especially at the decision making levels of the project remained unexplored. My inability to cover these areas of women's engagement may hinder the holistic understanding of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd. Regardless of these shortcomings, this study contributes to literature by providing an in-depth analysis of essential elements of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd.

1.9 Definition of Concepts

The terms used in the study have been operationally defined below:

Women's Participation: the active involvement of women in terms of voice, cash, and physical labour contributions throughout the planning, implementation and management stages of the RWSPs in the Kbd.

Meaningful participation: the active and equal involvement of women throughout the planning sections, implementation and management of the RWSPs such that the project outcome reflects their decisions, ideas and suggestions.

Demand driven approach: community member's expression of the demand for a water facility with the readiness to partially finance, implement, operate and maintain the water facility.

Supply driven approach: the supply of water facility to a community solely by government's discretion.

Gender: a set of characteristics, which are culturally defined for specific socially acceptable behavior for women and men as well as the relationship that should exist between them which could be changed over time.

1.10 Chapter Outline of the Study

This thesis is organized into six chapters. The First Chapter introduces the research and comprises of the research background, research problem, and research purpose, objectives of the study, research questions, research significance, scope and limitation of research and chapter synopsis / organization of the research.

Chapter Two presents a review of relevant literature on the participation of women in rural water projects. The research framework for the study was also developed in this chapter.

Chapter Three covers the methodological approaches which highlight the research strategy, study population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments and method, data processing and analysis, and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four and Five presents the data collected, discussions, and analysis of findings.

Finally, **Chapter six** comprise of the summary of the research, conclusion, implications and recommendations to research, practice and policy as well as future research directions. The references and appendices follow this chapter.

1.11 Conclusion

Women's participation in RWSPs is considered an essential element of rural development. Not only does the effective participation of women in rural projects help in the delivery and maintenance of the projects, but also likely to result in the sustainability of RWSPs. Over the years, Affirmative Actions such as quota systems have been recommended by development scholars as a necessary tool to boost women's involvement in development project. However, these schemes have only succeeded in increasing the number of women on decision making platforms rather than increasing their contributions to decision making. Consequently, the inclusion of women in RWSPs in terms of the quality of their participation has been low with very few women found on planning and decision making boards where decisions pertaining to the overall project delivery and maintenance are taken. Against this background, this present study explores women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF PARTICIPATION AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN RURAL WATER SUPPLY PROJECTS

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews relevant literature on the issue of women's involvement in RWSPs in the Kbd. This section seeks to achieve three (3) main objectives. Firstly, it provides a base of relevant definitions, concepts and theories on participation and related issues from which to view later findings. Secondly, it provides a mapping and a brief overview of the relevant literature on women's participation in RWSPs across Africa in order to situate my study in the wider context of literature. Thirdly, to explore my research questions within existing literature on the field of women's participation in RWSPs. Four sets of literature are reviewed to inform my study of women participation in RWSPs. To begin with, the concept of Community participation in RWSPs, Women's participation in RWSPs, Women's contributions to RWSPs management and sustainability, and barriers to women's participation in RWSPs.

2.1 The Concept of Participation

The participation of people in the execution of projects through the contribution of their skills and other resources facilitates implementation; but it also seeks to ensure that the needs and priorities of the people are met and development outcomes are sustained (Tam, 2013 and Boateng, 2013b). Against this milieu, people's participation has been viewed as:

- A learning process through which people get the capacity to identify and actively deal with their challenges.

- Evident at all stages of the project involving identification of problem, design, resource mobilization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Tam, 2013).

Participation should therefore involve significant representation of different segments of people in the community, leadership and opinion leaders, irrespective of their socio-economic background. Notwithstanding, Marks et al., (2014) are of the view that it is not the mere participation of community members that leads to project sustainability rather, it is a participatory process that involves true representation of a meaningful segment of the community, in the management-related and technical-related decisions that appear significant in predicting the sustainability of RWSPs. This implies that participation goes beyond just the representations of people in developmental intervention but should consider the ideas, opinions and decisions of the representatives.

Despite the general agreement among scholars about participation being an essential element of development and sustainability, Harmon (2013) noted that participation could as well be used by the dominant group or politicians in the society to promote their selfish interests and maintain the status quo. In her study on participatory processes in Uganda, she observed that the decentralization structure in Uganda had failed to produce a desired outcome as the community members asserted that development processes were hijacked and dominated by the elite and political leaders. From the above argument, it can be said that a participatory process that leads to project effectiveness and sustainability is the one that accommodates every segment of community members devoid of skewed power relation and gender bias.

2.2 Types of participation

There are two ways by which community participation can be understood. One of these is community participation where the parties involved in the processes in terms of gender, age, socio-economic background are represented; and secondly, in terms of the magnitude of participation regarding people's involvement throughout the three stages of development intervention (White, 1996). White identified four types of participation that could be present in any society at any point in time. These are: Nominal, Instrumental, Representative and Transformational. Each of these types of participation according to White serves different interest and purposes. She defined the four types of participation as follows:

- **Nominal participation:** A type of participation which does not involve meaningful transfer of power but only embed in the people the feeling of inclusiveness. This kind of participation only exists for legitimating existing power relations in a given society.
- **Instrumental participation:** The type that involves the people as an instrument to carry out a task necessary for a particular programme to run effectively. This kind of participation does not necessarily involve the people in the design of the entire programme per se.
- **Representative participation:** The type where the people's opinion and ideas are represented in the implementation process. This kind of participation however does not imply that the outcome of the project will entirely reflect the views of the people.

- **Transformational participation:** This is a type of participation where the ideas, opinions and views of the people are not only represented but are also considered throughout the project's developmental processes. This is the only kind of participation where the beneficiaries of a development intervention sort of challenge the existing power relation in a society and determine the what, when, where and how of a development interventions.

These observations presuppose that community participation cannot be meaningful unless it is transformational in nature. It is in the light of this that some scholars propose that genuine participatory process should encompass education and capacity building elements that will equip community members to effectively and efficiently participate in the processes of community development (Connell, 1997).

However, Vernooy (2005) identified four forms of participation depending on the nature and terms of the participation with respect to when, who and how the involvement of the people was organized. He made a distinction between four types of participation: **Contractual, Consultative, Collaborative and Collegial participation.**

- **Contractual participation:** this is where only one actor makes all the decision and thus seen as the ultimate owner of the project. Others who participate are seen as formal or informal contractors who provide services for the owner.
- **Consultative participation:** this is where one actor solely makes all the key decisions pertaining to the project but only consults others.

- The third form of participation is collaborative participation which involves the sharing of knowledge which may not (necessarily be equal) between two or more parties.
- The final one is the collegiate participation where decisions are actively made by all the parties involved for the purpose of equal ownership and distribution of responsibility.

The Collegiate form of participation seems to be the most meaningful form of participation in project delivery and management. This is because all parties actively engaged all the phases on the project in terms of decision making, labour and financial contribution. The two distinctions of people's participation, although different, attempt to look at participation in different dimensions. A careful look at the two theories implies that the Collegiate (from Vernooy) and the transformative types (from White) of participation are the most effective or meaningful forms of participation that could result in the achievement of the intended goal and ensures project sustainability.

2.3 The Need for Community Participation

All over the world, development activities related to the provision of social infrastructure such as the construction of roads, educational, health, water and sanitation facilities has been a major concern of individuals, governments, NGOs and the community as a whole (Tigabu et al.,2013). Water is a major commodity without which life will be impossible. However, access to quality, regular and safe drinking water has become a problem for many people in the developing world especially in sub-Saharan Africa (Marks et al., 2014). Water scarcity worldwide has been attributed to rapidly growing population,

intensive agricultural and mining activities, climate change and lack of sustainability for water infrastructure (Chifamba, et al., 2013; Marks et al., 2014; Kevany et al., 2013). The issue of poverty, sanitation and environmental sustainability, has called for the attention of both local and international initiatives to come up with programmes and projects to curb the problem of water scarcity as it is seen as central to environmental sustainability (Kevany et al., 2013).

Like many other concepts in the social sciences, the concept of participation in development has been widely defined by many scholars to reflect their views or field of study. According to Fox and Meyer (1995), community participation involves the inclusion of citizens in series of administrative policy-making undertakings which include accepting and owning the project and determining the preferred type and level of services, with the intention of placing government activities in the context of community needs to ensure community backing and boost a sense of unity within the society. Similarly, Marks and Davis (2012: 2) defined community participation in rural water supply planning as “the contribution of cash, land, or materials toward the construction of the system; participation in key decisions about the project, such as the level of service to be provided to households; and the contribution of labor (e.g., in completing civil works) during system construction.” Community participation in this sense extends from the design, construction and management to the evaluation stages of every developmental project.

Even though participatory planning at the local level is sternly recommended by most development scholars, the guideline for participatory planning that ensures that every

segment of people at the local level in the design, implementation and management phases of rural development projects is absent in the national constitution of Ghana (see for example Awortwi, 2010). According to Mohammed (2010), ‘concrete development’ can be achieved by effective and efficient involvement of local people in the decisions and planning of projects both at the national and local level. Similarly, Fuber (2013) found that an essential instrument for achieving national and rural goals of development is people’s participation. These studies suggest that in order to implement any project or programme, the people, the main beneficiaries of developmental projects are to be involved at all levels of developmental intervention.

Even though a number of frameworks have been developed to ensure grassroots involvement in rural development activities, there seem to be a gap between the needs of the local people and the services provided for them (Harmon, 2013). One major reason for this has been that the local beneficiaries of the projects are often not included in the major decision making, implementation and evaluation of these projects. Therefore, the importance of people’s participation in development cannot be overemphasized because when people participate in development projects, they generate a pool of ideas regarding the what, where, when and how of the project. Hence participation ensures credibility, acceptability of projects, trust, unity, and also builds a sense of ownership among community members (Harmon, 2013; Boateng et al., 2013a). In the light of this, the involvement of community members coupled with the approaches that are gender sensitive have been identified as necessary for sustainable development (Hicks, 2010; Harmon, 2013). Several studies across Africa on community participation (especially the

participation of women) and water supply sustainability have shown that there is a strong relationship between participatory planning and project sustainability (Chifamba, 2013; Boateng et al., 2013a; Tigabu et al., 2013; Hicks, 2011; Bakalian et al., 2009; Marks et al., 2014).

2.4 Approaches to RWSPs Delivery

Before 1995, water supply to rural communities in Ghana was guided by the ‘Supply Approach’. Under this approach, the government was solely responsible for supplying water facility to the communities in need of water. However since 1995, the underlining guidelines for the provision of water and sanitation facilities to rural areas changed from the ‘Supply-led Approach’ to ‘Demand Responsive Approach’ (DRA) under the watch of the National Community Water and Sanitation Programme (NCWSP). With the DRA, not only was the community members expected to express demand for a water facility, but were also required to finance part of the services, manage project implementation, operate and manage rural water and sanitation systems. Under the DRA, who takes the decisions is very crucial. The community members make the decisions with regards to the type of project and the level of service they prefer rather than having the government make decisions for them. By implication, a project would be more demand driven if basic decisions with respect to level of service, type and location of the project are made by the community members themselves. Accordingly, the greater proportion of costs the users pay, the more likely a project is to be demand- driven (World Vision, 1998). A study conducted in the northern region of Ghana suggests that community participation in rural water project was mainly by contributing financially and through communal labour (Tam, 2013). However, some scholars believe that participation, regardless of the form it takes

cannot escape the constraints imposed on it by existing power relations that prevails in a particular society (Cronnell, 1997; White, 1996). In other words, participatory mechanisms are often structured in such a way that it preserves the interests of the dominant group or politicians in a given society unless a serious attempt is made to amend the situation. This implies that various forms of participation exist in theory to attain different agenda.

However, the fact that citizen participation has been recommended as a significant tool for sustainable development does not imply that central government should do away with envisaging strategic plans for rural development. Rather, such plans should be localized to reflect the ideas, opinions, mechanisms and decisions of the local people so as to ensure that development interventions gain local ownership and sustenance (Kukumba, 2010).

2.5 Women and Participation in RWPs

There are several forums that have identified and voiced out the plight of women over the years, all of which acknowledge and articulate the need to champion the rights and conditions of women in the society in order to ensure women empowerment and socio-economic development. The goal of development can only be realized when women contribute their full potentials to the development process (Omoredede, 2014). Omoredede (2014) also observed that Even though women constitute approximately 47% of the active labour force in sub-Saharan Africa, they (women) are the most overlooked and often sidelined in the arena of development and self-reliance. Literature shows that one key component of water project planning, implementation and maintenance at the rural

level is the involvement of women in the decision making process. Reason being that women best know local realities and are the primary beneficiaries of rural water supply projects (Bakalian et al., 2009). Nonetheless, a lot of factors mitigate against the involvement of women in RWSPs. In her study on ‘organizing women for socio-economic development and self-reliance’ in Nigeria, Omorede (2014) observed that the challenges to rural women’s participation in development include; access to credit facilities such as land, machinery, extension services and agricultural training, marginalization of women in the society, inadequate education and skills. For her, inability of government to address these challenges has resulted in the under representation of women in local politics and governance, a major reason for low participation of women in development projects.

One major finding of her study revealed that discrimination against women coupled with poor educational background are the major reason for non-involvement of rural women in policy decision making which also has adverse result on the socio-economic development of the nation. Gender is a set of characteristic which are culturally defined for a specific socially acceptable behaviour for women and men and the relationship that should exist between them (Vernooy, 2005). A critical examination of the differences between the role of men and women in most African countries has a bearing on the inequalities in decision-making, power relation and wealth, productive and reproductive functions between men and women which is referred to as Gender analysis (Omorede, 2014).

Research indicates that power relation, which is greatly influenced by gender and class between men and women to a greater extent determines who makes decisions and manages resources in the society. It is evidence that the marginalized who in most cases happen to be women and children, have limited access to decision-making and resources in rural communities (Dawlati and Hemati, 2012; Agarwal, 2010). In the light of this, Marks and colleagues proposed the need for a participatory approach which will incorporate all parties including the marginalized and the affluent into the decision-making arena as necessary for effective project delivery and sustainability (Marks et al., 2014). Notwithstanding, some scholars have also argued that affirmative action such as the quota system have rather worsen the plight of women rendering them excluded rather than included since such processes did not consider, understand and address the perpetuating social differences and power relation existing in the rural society (Connell, 1997; Agarwal, 2010). According to Vernooy (2005), the mere increase in the number of women in a project or programme or giving women the space to focus on a small activity do not necessarily mean they are meaningfully participating in the project. Simply inviting women to meetings without considering the meeting time and space, their domestic workload and ability to speak at meetings will not yield any meaningful result.

Drawing from the above analysis, the meaningful participation of women in RWSPs can be said to be a situation where women do not only attend meetings but also contribute to discussions and ensure that their contributions are adhered to and reflected in the final outcome of the decision reached throughout the cycle of the project. Hence, a participatory process which allows for the marginalized to have a level playing field with

the powerful is the kind of participation that this study regards as transformative in addressing the power struggle existing in the rural communities.

Even though approximately 61% of women in Ghana happen to be rural dwellers, this does not reflect their representation on the local government committees where decisions pertaining to rural development are taken (Shang-Quartey, 2010 cited in Ladele et al., 2011: 66). The effective involvement of women in any development project, both in the rural of urban areas cannot be undermined (Boateng et al., 2013). Evidence from sizeable number of studies have proofed that the effective participation of women in rural water projects go a long way to determine the sustainability of such projects (Marks and Davis, 2012; Ladele et al., 2011; Harmon, 2013; Prokopy, 2004). These studies also assert that despite the above revelation, the participation of women in RWSPs remain minimal.

Despite the several mechanisms that have been put in place by development agencies and governments of developing nations to ensure representation of women in local governance as 'quota systems' these mechanisms seems to have failed to achieve their intended aims. According to Hicks (2011) one major reason behind the failure is the fact that the perpetuating stereotyping, conduct and behavior between men and women in the society unfortunately follow them into any participatory arena they find themselves and these to a larger extent affect women's contribution in decision making processes at the rural levels. To address this issue, meeting times, language used at meetings and sitting arrangement at meetings are the suggested ways by which women can be motivated to participate in decision making processes (Beall and Todes, 2004).

In his study on '*Governance and Politics*' in Bangladesh, Aminuzzaman (2008) noted that central government's control of rural project resources, central government representatives influence at the local level, and the absence of effective participatory mechanisms deprive the marginalized from partaking in the design and implementation of rural development projects. The above mentioned factors serve as the major impediments to the quality of participation and governance at the local level, especially among rural populations. He further argued that these affect accountability and community participation and project sustainability at the local level of governance. However, another study conducted in the Eastern region of Ghana revealed that time constrain, lack of confidence, lack of money and work load are the major constrains to the participation of women in rural water project (Ladele et al., 2011).

Most studies on women participation in rural water supply found that the effective participation of women in rural water projects often result in the empowerment of women and increase their sense of ownership and control of these projects (Ladele et. al., 2011; Bawa et. al., 2013). However, Marks et al. (2012) argue that some, but not all types of participation enhance community members' sense of ownership for rural water projects leading to project sustainability. He asserted that participation in decision making regarding the level of service delivery invoke high sense of ownership among households as compared to participation in the form of cash or labour contributions. These observations imply that diverse forms of community involvement is likely to produce different levels of households' sense of ownership. According to Boateng et al. (2013)

the contribution of women in water management is a key to ensuring the improvement and sustenance of water supply projects.

2.6 Approach to Rural Water Supply Programme

In the Kwaebibirem District, as in many parts of Ghana, availability of clean and drinkable water is a main challenge in most rural communities. The situation further heightened during the dry season where most women walk long distances in search of water which most often than not are unhygienic for consumption. This stressful situation has numerous consequences on the quality of life of the rural populace. For instance, the inaccessibility of water for rural folks results in waste of productive time and effort, physical injuries, and incidence of water-related diseases (Kelvany et al., 2013).

The need to step up mechanism in rural areas for the provision of good drinking water and sanitation services has become the priority of many developing countries. It is in the light of this that the government of Ghana is capitalizing on the global consensus on the provision of community water supply and sanitation services in deprived areas, embarked on Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme (RWSSP) with the aim of providing clean water supply in rural areas. This kind of projects is known as the Demand Responsive Approach (DRA) which demands that the community members themselves take active participation in the design, implementation and monitoring of the RWSPs in order to ensure the acceptability of the project, and instill the sense of ownership in the community members (Tigabu et al., 2014). With this kind of approach, the central government facilitates the provision of the water facilities by setting policies, legal framework and strategies that enhance that DRA operates effectively and efficiently.

Finally, government obtains internal and external funds to support the sector and set the conditions for efficient and cost-effective channeling of funds. The DRA requires that the local people form Water and Sanitation Committees which should be gender-balanced to see to the effective involvement of women in the project delivery. There is also District Water and Sanitation Teams (DWST) at the district level, whose role is to plan, supervise and manage water facilities in the district in collaboration with the rural beneficiaries.

2.7 Women Participation in Rural Water Supply Projects

Despite the role of women as the major users and managers of resource in the water sector, it seems women continue to be left out from major decision making process pertaining to water resource management (Chifamba, 2013). Even where women are involved, the nature of their involvement is often restricted to voluntary services such as fee collection, cleaning and greasing of hand pumps (Boateng et al., 2013b). The contribution of women in RWSPs often take the form of physical labor, materials contributions, money, ideas, and exchange of information (Agarwal, 2010). The argument for the inclusion of women into RWSPs has always been that women as the major and primary users of water suffer excessively from broken water facilities, shortage of water and hence women can best make suitable managers and maintenance technicians (Tigabu et al., 2013; Marks et al., 2013).

In 1988, the Community Water Supply and Sanitation Agency was established by an Act of Parliament (Act 564) solely for the implementation of programmes and projects relating to RWSSP services. The rationale behind this was to ensure that the local people who are the main beneficiaries of these projects take active participation in the design,

implementation, operation and maintenance of these projects. According to Boateng et al., (2013a), one major specification of the DRA project was to make sure that women were to enjoy up to 40% of the leadership and managerial position on the water and sanitation (WATSAN) committee. Three Stages of rural water supply provision were identified. These are: decision making and planning, project implementation and project management/maintenance.

Regardless of the seemingly general agreement among scholars about the sustainability of water projects where the participation of women is eminent (Ladele et al., 2011; Boateng et al., 2013b; Hicks, 2011; Chifamba, 2013), evidence from these studies indicate that the participation of women in such projects is generally not encouraging. Even though some scholars have proposed affirmative action as an instrument to boost women involvement in decision making (Chifamba, 2013), others are also of the view that affirmative action as an instrument of women participation has yielded little success (Bawa and Sanyare, 2013; Hicks, 2011). Among the many reasons that have been attributed to the low participation has been the fact that the standard for participation is often seen as male dominated (Hicks, 2011). Besides, the rules and practices involved in the participatory process often entails considerable amount of time, monetary cost, and social risk, which made men the major decision makers in most communities (Chifamba, 2013; Tam, 2013) and for which most women in the rural areas may not be able to afford. A study conducted in Timor-Leste (Tam, 2013) revealed that the contribution of women in the RWSPs was only limited to preparation of food and sending the food to men at the project site.

Other contributions of women include cleaning the site and filling sandbags and that even after construction, their role was limited to sanitation and healthcare delivery. She further argued that often, opportunities were not opened to women to partake in the planning stage which was regarded as the most significant level since it is the stage where major decisions regarding the type, and location of the project were made and even when women attend such meetings their views and opinions were seemingly not regarded (Tam, 2013). Another study identified that one major barrier to women's involvement in decision making and leadership role is the fact that even in organizations and institutions where women dominate, they tend to leave major leadership roles for men as a form of defense mechanism (Beall et al., 2014); an attitude which has been perpetuated by tradition. This seems to suggest that women do not see themselves as empowered enough to take up leadership roles.

According to Hicks (2011) and Boateng et al. (2013b), the active participation of women in projects that directly affect their livelihood has a strong correlation with the success or otherwise of the project hence women must be empowered to take up leadership roles and active roles in decision making processes. For Hicks, three major ways by which women empowerment can be enhanced include; increasing the representation of women in political and bureaucratic studies, making developmental planning and implementation processes a gender issue and ensuring the direct participation of women in planning and decision making processes. He however did not explain how this can be done.

Women possess incomparable knowledge of local environment and water condition emanating from their domestic responsibilities and gender roles. Therefore there is a need

to tap into this knowledge in every decision making arena to ensure effective and efficient environmental sustainability (Kevany et al., 2013). Unfortunately the opinion of women with respect to the management of water and similar environmental issues are mostly curtailed. Water inaccessibility, especially in rural areas, has often resulted in women and children resorting to harvesting water from dirty and far off places leading to numerous health related diseases and sicknesses (cholera, diarrhea, typhoid etc.) which adversely affect their economic activities (Kevany et al., 2013; Boateng et al., 2013a).

2.8 Determinants of Women's Participation in Rural Water Projects

Socio-economic variables such as age, educational level, marital status, number of years stayed in the community and type of occupation have been found to be among the factors that shape the extent and nature of women participation in RWSPs (Boateng et al., 2013a; Tigabu et al., 2013). The study however found that the socio-economic background as a set determine the level of participation of women especially in project design and implementation phases of water projects but not in the operation and maintenance of such projects.

The theoretical underpinning for these factors was that age has a direct relationship with educational level of women in that as age increases level of education is likely to increase as well. However, a study by Dowlati et al. (2012) showed that majority of women who participated in RWSPs were between the ages of 13 and 15. This suggests that women who are young and physically active are likely to be more proactive in the participatory process than old and aged women. Age and level of education on the other hand is

expected to increase the level of awareness of women about water management issues (Tigabu et al., 2013).

With regards to economic determinants, income has also been found to have a significantly relationship with women contributions for water supply provision. The argument is that women who are more economically stable are likely to contribute substantially in terms of cash and labour to water project management. Besides, women who engaged in economic activities involving a significant use of water such as in soap and oil making were found to be more proactive in the operation and maintenance of rural water projects (Boateng et al., 2013b; Dowlati & et al., 2012; and Tigabu et al., 2013).

According to Tigabu et al. (2013), the closeness of location of the water supply facility also play a key role in influencing the participation of women in RWSPs positively, be it in cash or labour. They argued that if a particular water facility is located close or near to their residence, the probability of women's involvement in its management and protection would be high. On the other hand if the facility is not close to their residence, their willingness to contribute cash and labour to its construction will be low. Another variable worthy of note is advocacy or social awareness of the establishment of water supply project in the community which may be provided by donor agencies, local government or traditional authorities. High level of project awareness among women within the community is likely to positively affect contributions of women be it in cash or labour. It was assumed that social awareness promote and educate women on the socio-

economic benefit that will be derived from the use of clean water from improved water facilities which is likely to influence their decision to contribute to water supply system management. Literature shows that the socio-economic background of women serves as major determinants of their level of participation in rural water projects (Tigabu et al., 2013; Boateng et al., 2013). A study carried out in Ethiopia on the determinants of household participation in the management of rural water systems (Tigabu et al., 2013), revealed that households who use water in their income generating activities such as in agricultural production are more likely to participate in RWSPs in terms of labour and cash contributions than those who do not use water in their economic activities. The study further discovered that the degree of advocacy provided on the project and the level of household income are major determinants of community participation in terms of cash and labour contribution. Similarly, Boateng et al. (2013) observed that even though the socio-economic background of women in WATSAN Committees served as a significant determinant of their level of participation in decision-making in budget allocations and project implementation, these socio-economic characteristics of these women had no significant influence in the operation and maintenance of RWSPs management in the Asante Akim South District of Ghana.

2.9 Constrain to Women Participation in Rural Water Projects

Governments of most developing countries have embarked on numerous policies to boost the involvement of women in rural development intervention in recent times. Yet the socio-economic norms and the channel of RWSPs management in these communities have created an unequal pattern of decision making, and training processes which often

favour the men. Even where the involvement of women is encouraging, their position seems to be subjected to that of men. For instance, Boateng et al. (2013a) observed that while men take active role in decision making regarding RWS projects, women were only prominent at the implementation stage of the project. In his study on gender and water management in the Ashanti region of Ghana, Boateng et al., (2013b) observed that the only position held by a woman in the WATSAN committee was that of a treasurer while majority of other women were ordinary members of the committee.

Evidence from literature indicates that the few women who show considerable level of involvement in RWSPs often have their lives improved (Ladele et al., 2011; Chifamba, 2013). A recent study in Zimbabwe on the Buhera women who participated in the RWSPs revealed that their involvement in RWSPs has increased their confidence level as they could now manage their own affairs, and go places (public institutions and offices) they could not go initially. However, regardless of these positive turn around, they (women) face certain challenges that their male counterparts do not encounter. For instance, the study revealed that some construction work being overseen by women, most often than not are either hindered or destroyed by some community members.

It has been found in literature that the inability of women to meaningfully participate in RWSPs in the rural area is due to some constraints they (women) face as a result of their socio-economic roles in the society (Mohammed, 2010; Hicks 2011; Harmon, 2013; Boateng et al., 2013; Chifamba, 2013; Kevany et al., 2013) . Some constraints found in the above studies have been highlighted below:

- Unequal distribution of land and other resources such as water. These resources broadly are concentrated in the hands of the local authorities who in most cases are men, leaving very limited room for women to manage these facilities (Omoredede, 2014;
- Skewed power relations – most often than not, women depend on the elite or their political leaders who most often happen to be men especially in the rural areas for major decision making on their behalf (Chifamba, 2013).
- Lack of political will on the part of national and local government to fully incorporate women into their decision making process. One reason for this may be in order to maintain the power relation and promote their selfish interest (Mohammed 2010; Harmon, 2013).
- Unemployment, lack of knowledge, information and skill, and vocational training which appears to be the main tool for sustainable development is another barrier to women’s participation in RWSPs. Besides, the criteria used to elect women to responsible decision making positions, is that which does not give room for the seemingly poor women to participate. Chifamba (2013) observed that, in Zimbabwe, elected women were those who command some sort of respect from the community members, or a woman with a certain level of resources such as bicycle or cash (Chifamba, 2013; Omoredede, 2014; Marks et al., 2013).
- Absence of proper policy approaches to eradicate gender inequality and power play at the grassroots level. Most governmental approaches have been efficiency centered rather than on equality concerns. The predominant concern continues to be on the sustainability and efficiency distribution of water rather than

empowerment of women and education on societal changes. (Hicks 2011; Harmon, 2013; Boateng et al., 2013; Chifamba, 2013; Kevany et al., 2013).

- Fear of being mocked and ridiculed coupled with destructive criticisms from people especially their fellow women mostly out of jealousy accuse them of trying to gain recognition from men. This results in lack of courage to stand in public and talk on issues pertaining to their welfare. Hence men take the initiative and decide for them Boateng et al., 2013a).
- Domestic and economic activities also serve as a barrier to women participation in RWSPs. The fact that most meetings were held in the evenings when most women were busily preparing domestic chores of trading made it difficult for them to partake in such meetings (Boateng et al., 2013b).

2.10 Women and Rural Water Supply Projects Sustainability

The concept of sustainability like many other concepts in development does not have a universally accepted definition, since most scholars define it to suit their ideologies and field of study. IRC (2001), defined sustainability as “the capacity of the community itself to maintain the service” (cited in Bakalian et al., 2009). Sustainability has also been define as “the length of the useful life of a water supply infrastructure i. e it is the capacity of an improved water supply system to provide continual beneficial services overtime”. (Tigabu et al., 2013: 3).

In a study involving sixteen (16) water supply systems across 160 households in Ethiopia, Tigabu et al. (2013) found that the contribution of households in the planning and implementation of water supply projects has a strong positive relationship with the management of these projects. Therefore, for water projects to be sustainable, the overall participation of key beneficiaries should not be overlooked. In the light of this, households are made to pay for the operational and maintenance cost of water projects since households are seen as beneficiaries and water is seen as an economic good that should be willingly purchased (Tigabu et al., 2013). Effective participation of both sexes could be improved through the active involvement of beneficiaries, based on their potentials and aided by the right activism and persuasive efforts of stakeholders.

2.11 Background of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA)

Before the 1990s the Ghana water and Sewage corporation (GWSC) was the sole entity in charge of both urban and rural water provision. However, it was later realized that much attention of this cooperation centered on the urban area whilst majority of the rural areas within the country lacked access to clean and portable drinking water. It was in the light of this that Rural Water Department was created under the GWSC in 1986 in accordance with the declaration of the United Nations General Assembly in the years 1981-1990 as a decade for 'International Drinking Water and Sanitation throughout the world' with the anticipation that by the close of the decade, nations would have given prompt responsiveness to the provision of adequate and accessible water facilities to their populace. Following this development, the Ghanaian government held a donor conference which focused on water and sanitation in Accra in 1987, where pledges were

requested from donor agencies across the globe. By 1991, close to sixty participants from institutions and External Donor Agencies (EDAs) converged in Accra for a workshop aimed at strategizing for the Rural Water and Sanitation Sector. Thereafter in 1994, following the government's policy of decentralization, the government of Ghana launched the National Water and Sanitation Programme (NCWSP). Out of which emerged the Community Water and Sanitation Division (CWSD), which was a semi-autonomous unit under the NCWSP to manage the delivery of rural water and sanitation services within the country. The division was subsequently transformed to Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) by an Act of Parliament, Act 564 in December 1998, with the core mandate to facilitate the provision of safe drinking water and related sanitation services to Rural Communities and Small Towns in Ghana. Since 1998, the CWSA has been responsible for the facilitation of the NCWSP functions following the structures of decentralization at the district and community levels as approved in the Act.

2.12 Procedure for Selecting Beneficiary Communities

The CWSA as part of its operations solicit for funds from either external or internal organizations. When funds are received from donor agencies, CWSA undergoes a number of activities to select the beneficiary communities. According to the District Assemblies Model-Bye Laws (2008), the processes are listed below.

1. The agency launches the programme in the region and explains the processes and procedures guided by the DRA model to potential beneficiaries including the community in charge of operation and maintenance of the facility. The targeted

audience here will include: the regional and district political heads, stakeholders, opinion leaders, development partners and the CWSA staff etc.

2. The programme is then launched at the district level where the details of the programme are explained to the various community members on how the communities can benefit from the project. Here the demand responsiveness of potential beneficiaries and operational maintenance of the facilities are emphasized.
3. Afterwards the communities meet and discuss their interest in the programme and then apply to the District Assembly (DA) for a facility of their choice, showing evidence of their ability to mobilize local resources, operate, maintain and manage the facility after its delivery.
4. The DAs evaluate the submitted applications of communities by ensuring the validity of the information provided in the applications, in order to authenticate their ability to operate and manage the facilities.
5. The DAs then shortlist the beneficiary communities based on the District Water and Sanitation plans (DWAp) using their own established general criteria agreed upon by all parties such as population size, existing facilities, current community economic activities, existing community initiated development projects, absence of conflict such as land, chieftaincy and ethnic disputes, water borne and water related diseases among others.
6. The DAs will thereafter select the final beneficiary of the project in a general assembly meeting. The final selection is however based on a certain criteria as follows:

- Beneficiary community acceptance of responsibility to manage , operate and maintain the system
 - Community's ability to release land and make transfer of ownership to community, depending on the quantum of funding available
7. When the above is done, the community members are mobilized by Partner Organizations (POs) or consulting firms leading to the preparation of sub-project proposals, Facility Management Plans (FMP) and feasibility reports on resource mobilization.
 8. Water Boards (WBs) are formed and trained to operate and manage point sources and piped systems respectively.

2.13 Conclusion

The consensus from the discussion so far has been that the involvement of women in RWSPs, an area that directly hammers on the welfare of women, has not been encouraging. Even where their participation seems encouraging, it appears that their involvement is limited to the implementation or post implementation activities. Very little women show interest in participating at the decision making levels. The assertion that the participation of women is low especially at decision making stage suggests that at least some women show up at that planning stage and the rationale behind the interest and participation of these few women is what this study seeks to unravel, in order to contribute to theory and to identify the best practices for enhancing the participation of women in RWSPs.

2.14 Conceptual Framework

Rural water supply and sanitation (RWSS) is seen as one of the greatest determinant machineries in poverty reduction that aims at achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals in most developing countries (Nguyen, 2012). Any developmental project goes through three basic phases: the planning, implementation and post implementation. It is therefore worthy of note that participation is likely to occur at different levels of each of the project phases. However it is argued in literature that, the participation of women in RWSPs is more pronounced at the implementation phase than at the rest of the phases (Boateng et al., 2013a; Kevany et al., 2013).

This presupposes that, if there is any sort of community participation at the decision making, planning and post planning phases of RWSPs; it is often dominated by men.

The main task of this research is to unravel the factors that account for the varied levels of women participation in RWSPs, bearing in mind that most women are faced with numerous political and socio-cultural hurdles to effectively involve partake in RWSPs which appears central to their wellbeing and personal development. Women's effective participation in RWSPs ensures effective project delivery and sustainability (Tigabu et al., 2013).

A study by Ladele et al., (2011) prove that women who actively participate in these projects had a boost in confidence level and better negotiated with their male counterparts on similar issues of community development. Yet a lot of women remain sidelined when it comes to participation RWSPs specifically at the decision making arena.

It is argued in literature that lack of consultation of women at the planning and decision making phase of the water projects, has often resulted in awkward design and inconvenient location of facilities and thus made most facilities useless and affected the sustainability of such projects (Agarwal, 2010; Kevany et al., 2013; Marks et al., 2014). Research shows that in 2009 for instance, approximately 36% of water facilities provided for Africa by development agencies all over the world were found to be broken-down at any given point in time (Rural Water Supply Network, 2009, as cited in Marks et al., 2014). Once women are neglected at an early stage of a project, there is the likelihood that they would be sidelined at the later stages of the project cycle. (IRC, 1991: 3, as cited in Tam, 2013). A number of studies indicate that factors such as socio-cultural, economic and political determine the participation of women in RWPs. For instance, socio-cultural factors such as age, marital status, and level of education influence people's participation in RWSPs projects. Economically, women participate in RWSPs if they are able to get important livelihood sustaining benefits from the project. Hence that poor socio-economic background in terms of occupation and level of income influences the extent of participation of women in RWSPs (Ibid, 2013).

2.14.1 Political/ institutional framework

Literature reveals that political interference from both national and local levels can either promote or impede the effective participation of women in RWSPs. These institutional factors could be in the form of frameworks, rules, regulations, policies institutional arrangements, and laws governing the establishment of a development intervention both at the national, district or community levels. How these rules function, in terms of

bureaucratic procedures, can either be women friendly or not. For instance, the composition of the WATSAN committee members in Ghana demands that 40% of its members be women (Boateng, 2013b). Similarly, Chifamba (2013) noted that the meeting times of this committees is also another factor that could either encourage or discourage women to participate in the decision making processes. These factors therefore, suggest that where the conditions are favorable, women are likely to involve in the decision making, implementation and monitoring of the RWSPs.

2.14.2 Socio-cultural factors

The varied demographic profiles of community women have been highlighted in the literature as influential determinants of women participation in RWSP. These factors are: age, number of children, education level, marital status, motivation, confidence level and level of advocacy or social awareness (Dowlati et al., 2012; Boateng et al., 2013a; Tigabu et al., 2013; Kevany et al., 2013; Ladele et al., 2011; Chifamba, 2013). These factors may either hinder or facilitate the extent and the effectiveness of women participation in RWSPs. Similarly some cultural elements such as gender roles, believe in destiny, culture of silence (women have to be silence when men are talking) have also been found to mitigate women's participation in RWSPs (Tam, 2013).

2.14.3 Economic Factors

Economic activities have also been identified as a determining factor for women's participation in RWSPs. A study conducted by Boateng et al. (2013a) in Ghana, revealed that, women whose economic activity involves the use of water to a greater extent were

more proactive in RWSPs than those who use less supply of water in their economic activities. Similarly, Dowlati et al. (2012) observed that women who showed active participation in the RWSPs were those who were into the cultivation of vegetables and animal rearing. This finding, therefore, suggests that women who stand to benefit more from the water supply apart from the normal domestic uses, are more likely to show appreciable level of involvement in RWSPs than those who only need the water for domestic purposes. With regards to the economic factor, Tam (2013) identified in a study conducted in Timor-Leste that the level of education of both men and women considerably influence their employment capacity and this further affects their level of income. For instance, UNESCO (2004) noted that there is a strong relationship between the level of education attained and the distribution of personal incomes in the society. This probably explains why women with low level of education do not contribute much in financial terms to RWSPs in their communities. Similarly, factors such as: meeting times, location of projects, capacity building, and effective project advocacy schemes have been found to have strong positive relationship with effective and sustainable project implementation.

Based on this, I can conclude that some sort of relationship seem to exist between the socio-cultural factors and the economic variables that have been found to determine varied levels of women's engagement in RWSPs. Blending the above concepts and interrelated factors which display the underlying forces of the of women's participation in RWSPs, I came up with a conceptual framework of determining variables for women's participation in RWSPs.

To attain a meaningful participation of women in RWSPs, a suitable strategy, policy framework or conducive institutional arrangements coupled with the socio-cultural and economic background of women are essential in determining and boosting women participation in RWSPs.

Meaningful participation of women in RWSPs in this study refers to the kind of participation, where women do not only sit to watch and listen to men take decisions for them but rather take active role in attending meetings and voicing out their views and opinions and ensuring that their views, ideas and opinions reflected in the overall outcome of the project (Marks et al., 2014). This kind of participation is what Sarah White (1996) termed; Transformational Participation. The researcher agrees with the aspect of literature that suggests that it is only through the meaningful participation of women that RWSPs can be effective and sustainable. Based on the findings of Tigabu et al. (2013); Boateng et al. (2013); Dowlati et al. (2012) and Marks et al. (2014), I came out with a conceptual framework that explains the determinants of meaningful women's participation in RWSPs.

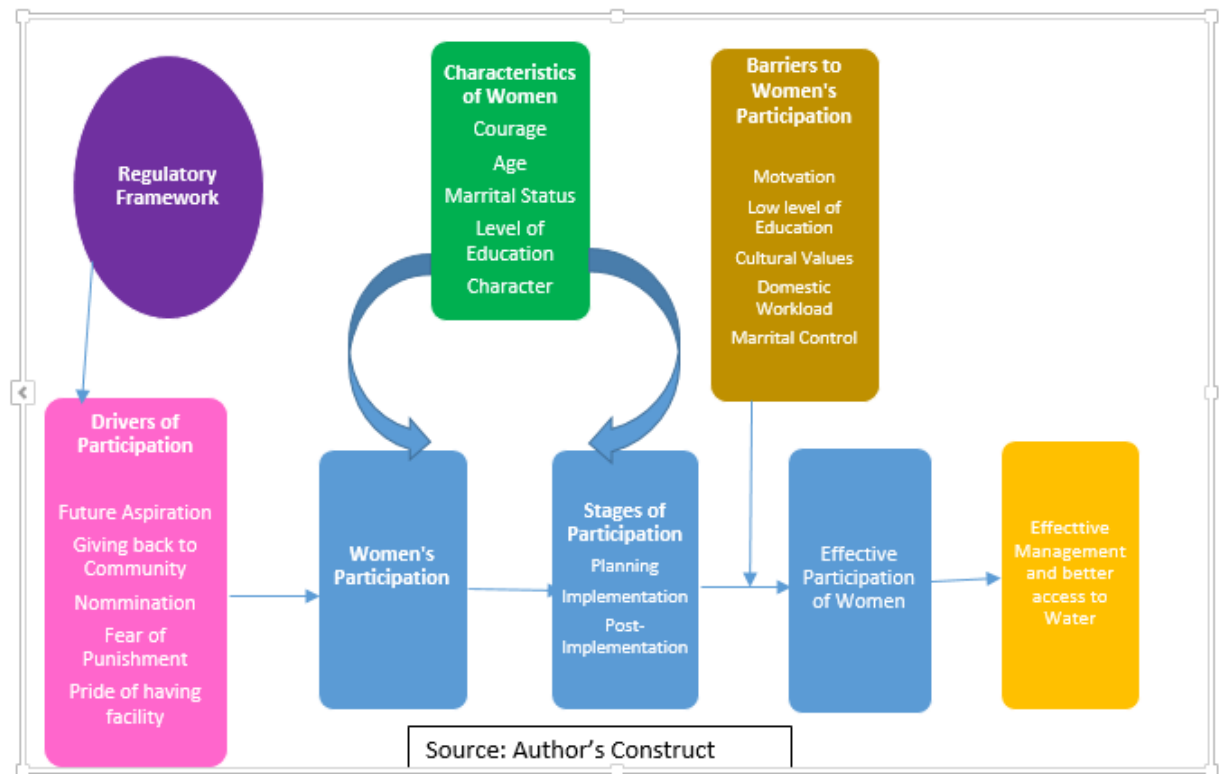


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.14.4 Operationalization of Concepts

This framework suggests that the institutional policy or guideline is very instrumental in determining whether or not women will be involved in the participatory processes. If the guideline gives room for women to participate, as it is the case in Ghana, the DA's bye-law on water and sanitation (2008) stipulates that at least 30% of the composition of any planning or management committee on water should comprise women. Once this is clear, then women will be urged or motivated to come on board. However, certain factors also serve as drivers that propel the engagement of women in this project. These drivers include:

Future aspiration: When a woman has personal desire for certain position in the community in future or the intension to climb higher in the community's decision making lather she would want to be involved in any developmental project in the community to showcase her interest, skill, or talent.

The need to give back to the community: women who have acquired certain level of status in the society feel the need to serve their communities whenever duty calls on them with the notion that the community has contributed in one way or the other to shaping them into what they are and so they should give back to their community.

The pride of enjoying a water facility: the joy of having a water facility after a long time of struggles and discomfort associated with the unavailability of water, urge some women to get involved in the water project.

Nomination: the need to adhere to the laws governing access and management of water facility propel some women to be nominated to join any decision making body on the water facility governance.

Fear of Punishment: the need to avoid punishments also compels some women to participate in other to escape punishment, regardless of the benefits of having a water supply facility.

The above characteristics are assumed to be the drivers of women's involvement in RWSPs. However, literature suggests that these women possess certain characteristics that allow them participate at different levels of the project cycle. These characteristics include, age, marital status, level of income, level of education, courage to speak in public and respect from community members. The characteristics of these women will

determine the level of their participation in the project. For instance, it is assumed that women with high level of education are likely to be more proactive at the decision making and planning stages than at the implementation and management stages. However some factors are likely to obstruct the meaningful participation of women in RWSPs. These factors include: traditional cultural values, fear of criticisms, low level of educational, domestic responsibility, and marital pressure.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section presents the nature and strategy by which the study employed to gather and analyze necessary data for the study. The main objective of this research is to find out the factors that account for women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd in the Eastern region of Ghana. This chapter presents the study area profile and discusses the methods employed in gathering and analyzing the data for the study.

3.1 Study Area Profile

The Kwaebibirem District was formed in November 1988 by legislative Instrument (LI) 1425, and has Kade as its District capital. In June 2012 however, another district, Dekyembour was created out of Kbd by L.I 2043. The Kbd is positioned in the South – Western part of the Eastern Region and lies between latitude 1 degree 0'W and 0 degree 35'E and Longitude 6 degrees 22'N and 5 degrees 75'S. On the West, the district is bound by the Birim-North District, East Akim on the East, Denkyembour district on the South, Brim-South on the West, Atiwa District at the North-East and by Suhum Kraboa Coaltar at the South-East. The Kbd falls within the Oseawuo division of Akyem Abuakwa Traditional Area (KbDA Information Department, 2015).

The Akans are the dominant tribe in the Kbd, although there are pockets of tribes like Krobos, Akuapems, Adamgbe, Ewes and Guans, who settled in the district as farmers and/or miners. A lot of water bodies such as River Birim, Pram, Kadepon and Subin

traverse the district from the north to the south. However the activities of illegal miners in the district have rendered almost all the water bodies unhygienic for domestic use. The total population of the district is estimated to be 113,721, with 57.3% residing in the rural areas of the district (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). Approximately, 39.4% of the population is youthful (Ibid, 2010). In terms of education 58.7% of the entire Kbd population is illiterate out of which 46.7% are women (ibid, 2010). There are over 20 communities in the district. Like many rural communities in the country, agriculture is the predominant occupation of the inhabitants of the district with citrus, palm fruit, cocoa, vegetables, cassava, maize and rearing of poultry as their main source of livelihood. Agriculture employs 70.8% of the total population. It is worthy of note that the district hosts the Ghana Oil Palm Development Company (GOPDC) which is the biggest oil palm company in Ghana. Aside farming, gold mining is extensively undertaken in the district especially in communities such as Krobo, Abodom and Okyinso (KbDA, 2015).

There are a number of challenges facing the district at the moment. Some of these challenges include: poor farming practices, deplorable road networks, insufficient supply of basic social amenities and services such as health services, educational, water and sanitation facilities. These challenges among many others have resulted in a high prevalence of poverty, deprivation of basic social needs, and low level of education, coupled with low standards of living among many inhabitants of the district. Many attempts have been made to curb these challenges, through the implementation of many development plans to alleviate poverty in the district and raise the general standard of living. Among these plans are: Medium-Term District Development Plan (1996-2000),

implemented in line with *Ghana Vision 2020 – First Step (1996-2000)*, Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) 2002-2005, which focus primarily on poverty reduction and the creation of wealth. Regardless of the aforementioned efforts of government to elevate the living conditions of the inhabitants, there is still more to be tackled especially in the areas of potable water provision and sustainability.

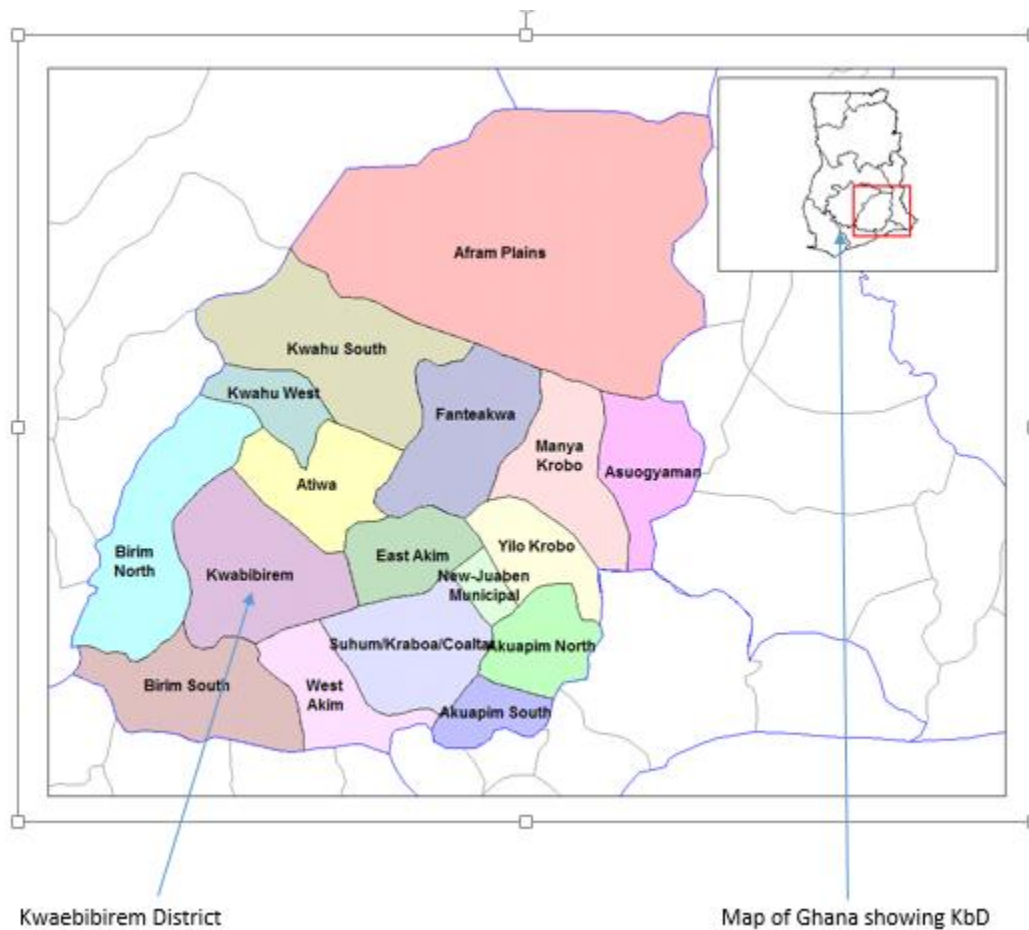


Figure 2: Map of Eastern Region of Ghana indicating KbD.

Source: Kwaebibirem District Assembly, Information Department (2015).



Figure 3: Map KbD indicating the three selected communities.

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2014).

3.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a set of underlying views that guide the deeds of a researcher (Guba, 1990). According to Kuhn (1970), it is a set of techniques, values and beliefs adhered to by members of a scientific community which shapes the sort and questions researchers seek to address and the kind of explanations given to them. A research paradigm is therefore seen as principles that guide behavior and practices of an enquiry (Creswell, 2007). Creswell recognized four main logical molds that guide the actions and inactions

of a researcher. These assumptions are; Interpretive, Positivism, Pragmatism and Participatory.

Nonetheless, the study employs the interpretive assumptions as a paradigm for this research. The interpretive philosophical assumption holds that individuals build up their own personal interpretations and understanding to the experiences they encounter in the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2007). For Creswell, the meanings individuals give to their own experiences are ‘varied and multiple’. Hence, the challenge rests on the researcher to make meaning out of the compounded views identified. On the other hand, positivism is based on the postulation that there exist a neutral truth (reality) to be uncovered, while advocates of constructionism argue that ‘truths’ are meanings that comes into existence as a result of our engagements with other authenticities of the world. In other words, “meaning is not discovered, but socially constructed” (Crotty, 1998:9).

The fundamental supposition of interpretism allow researchers to make decision based on respondent’s interpretations of the subject under study (Ibid, 1998). The focal point of constructionist is to understand the existing historical and cultural context in which the people live and work so as to understand how participants background shape their interpretation of the phenomena under study. I deem an interpretive assumption suitable for this study in the light that, I seek to understand women’s participation in RWSPs in the Kbd based on the beneficiaries’ (respondents) cultural and historical setting and the meanings they give to the concept of participation.

3.3 The Research Design

According to Creswell (2013), research designs are plans and procedures for research that covers the decisions, assumptions, methods of data collection and analysis adopted by the researcher. There are three types of research methods. These are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods approach. The type of method to employ depends on the nature of the study being undertaken. This study will employ the qualitative method due to the nature of the research question to be addressed. (Creswell, 2013).

3.4 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a research method that endeavors to understand or gain an in-depth knowledge of a phenomenon or a case by studying it in details. The case could be a group of people, an individual person, an occasion, event, an institution or even a policy process. “Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them.” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). Within the context of this study, my case is viewed as the participation of women RWSPs in the KbD in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

Qualitative research is deemed appropriate in this study as I do not necessarily seek to unravel any universal truth but aim at seeking to unravel the participation of women in RWSPs in order to enhance knowledge and understanding of a particular phenomenon, in this case women’s participation. I employ a qualitative method because the study requires an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons behind the participation of women in developmental projects (RWSPs) at the rural level. Thus this kind of study

requires a physical contact between my respondents and me. Therefore, the issue of ambiguity, misunderstanding and inaccuracies of expressions which are likely to occur in the research were highly reduced. Qualitative research provides deeper understanding of the subject under study and usually takes place in a natural setting (Creswell, 2013; Silverman, 2001). This requires the presence of the researcher at the study area or location, where the study is to be conducted. In the light of this, I interviewed officials who happened to be directly involved in rural development and more specifically water projects at the district and community levels to get a deeper knowledge of the topic under study.

3.5 Weaknesses of Qualitative method of research

Qualitative research has some weaknesses such as the likelihood of respondents to misunderstand the concept under study which is likely to affect the findings of the study. This study however dealt with this limitation by explaining with vivid examples to in the local dialect to respondents for clearer understanding of the research questions. There is also the argument that qualitative studies often cannot generalize findings. However, when the contexts and the phenomena are similar, as in the case of almost all the communities in Kbd, the result of the case from the three communities sampled can be applied and lessons can be learned from sampled communities (Katsirikou, 2013). The issue of the researcher not having knowledge about what variable to be controlled in qualitative studies was also addressed by constantly focusing the attention of respondents to the core of the research questions.

3.6 Target Population

The population of the study is all women in the KbDA in the Eastern Region. However, the accessible population was women in the three selected communities (Abaam, Otumi and Pramkese). The participants were women above eighteen years (It is assumed that these women are more active and as such likely to participate in any development intervention than the others) who have stayed in these communities for at least two years and have participated in the RWSPs in their respective communities.

3.7 The Sampling Method

Techniques for sampling provide a variety of devices that allow researchers to reduce excess data collected by focusing only on data from a smaller group rather than on all conceivable cases or elements (Saunders et al., 2011). Two sampling techniques were employed in this study. These are: Convenience and Purposive sampling techniques. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique which entails the selection of subjects due to their accessibility and/or closeness to the researcher (Creswell, 2008). Convenience sampling was used to select the study area due to data accessibility and the convenient use of language between the researcher and respondents. Purposive sampling on the other hand entails the selection of subjects due to their knowledge of the research subject and purpose of the study. Purposive sampling was used to select the three communities and respondents so as to target specific women who are information-rich, have insight and characteristics relevant to the research questions.

These three communities were the only communities in the district with the most recently constructed Small Town Water Systems (STWS) provided by donor agencies in collaboration with the Government of Ghana through the local government (LG) and the inhabitants themselves within the last ten years. These projects however were completed and already in use at the time of the study. In all forty-three respondents were sampled for the study. Qualitative data were gathered through oral interviews of twenty-five respondents comprising of three (3) district officials: project engineer, district planning officer and the district head of WDSB at the district level to get their views on the level of women's participation in water projects in the Kbd. Five (5) water development and sanitation board (WDSB) members (three women in key positions and two men) were interviewed in each of the three communities to determine their actual participation and the reasons behind their participation. Besides, two (2) women who were on the planning committees at the initial stages of the water projects were as well interviewed in each of the three communities to ascertain their contribution in decision making at that level. One official at the Ministry of Water Resource was also interviewed. All of these respondents were purposely selected. The purpose for this sampling technique is to ensure that the actual participants of the rural water projects get interviewed for the study (Yin, 2009).

Table 1: Sampling summary

Unit	Females	Males	FGD (Females)	Total
Community 1	5	2	6	13
Community 2	5	2	6	13
Community 3	5	2	6	13
Institution	0	4	0	4
Total	15	10	18	43

Source: Author's construct

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The combination of primary and secondary data were used for this study. Primary data were gathered through a semi-structured interview-guide for the in-depth interview schedules and FGDs. The purpose of the semi-structured interview-guide was to guide the researcher as to the kind of questions to ask the interviewees so as not to sway them off the main objectives of the research. The FGDs were as well instrumental in collecting primary data on the drivers of women's participation. The secondary data were drawn from scholarly articles, journal, relevant books, report from recognized institutions (such as World Bank) that were related to the study. The internet was also used to get materials useful to the study.

3.9 Data collection instruments for the Study

The official instruments for the study were in-depth-interviews and FDGs. The interview guide was designed to moderate the interviews in order to carry out the research. As far as this study is concern, only semi-structured interview-guide was used because of the qualitative nature of the study (Creswell, 2013). The use of the semi-structured interview-

guide allowed the researcher to collect large amount of data in a relatively short time. The interviews and discussions were audio recorded for detailed transcription.

Two sets of interview schedule were employed for the study. One for district officials: project engineers and head of (WSDT). The other set of interview schedule was meant for WSDB members and household respondents who showed active participation in the RWSPs in the district. The interview and discussion questions were adopted from studies done by Boateng et al., (2013), Kevany et al., (2013), and Moraes et al., (2013), Tigabu et al., (2013). The data was collected over a month period during respondents' available time. A verbatim transcription of the data was done to ensure reliability and validity of findings for the qualitative study.

3.10 Interviews

WB members, and institutional respondents were interviewed separately. With exception of institutional respondents, all the other participants in the interviews were people who have stayed in the communities for at least two (2) years. It is assumed that such people have a comprehensive knowledge of the developmental projects in the communities. The interviews with WATSAN committee members and project engineers lasted for 30-40 minutes. The FGDs also lasted for 45-60 minutes each. This is because women are the main object of this study and as such deserved much attention. Prior to the study, participants were informed that breaks were allowed if they felt the need for it. With the exception of the district officials who were interviewed in their respective offices, all other interviews were conducted in their (participants) various homes and in languages that the respondents felt comfortable with. The interviews were audio recorded and field

notes constantly taken by the researcher during the interviews. Verbal consent was sought from the participants before the interviews were conducted.

3.11 Focus Group Discussions

Originally focus groups were referred to as called “focused interviews” or “group depth interviews” (Marczak & Sewell, 2005). A focus group is a group of people who are asked about their attitudes and opinions about a service, issue, concept, idea or product (Ibid, 2005). In this research, the attitude and opinions of women were solicited with regard to their participation in rural water projects in the Kbd. Members of the group were at liberty to talk with other members in the group while the researcher played the role of a moderator who asked questions, listened, observed and managed the group. The proceedings of the discussions were audio recorded and side-notes were also taken by the researcher.

The focus group in each of the communities consisted of six members: four (4) women SPAs and two (2) sanitation officers. In all eighteen (18) women were sampled for the FGDs. These were women who are unacquainted with each other and carefully chosen because they possess certain features (such as age, level of education and were involved in RWSPs) in common that relate to the theme of the research questions. However, like most FDGs, it was difficult to verify how 'representative' (in terms of capturing the human diversity) the final group was.

The FGD was used to triangulate and gain deeper insight into information obtained from the interview schedules. The issues discussed at the FGDs were the central themes that emanated out of the interview schedules. The FGDs mainly centered on the reasons for

women's participation in RWSPs and their contributions and challenges to RWSPs management and sustainability in the Kbd. The focus groups provided an opportunity to gather women's unique perspectives in a way that allowed for open-ended discussion, debate among participants, and in-depth follow-ups.

FGDs were employed by the researcher because it provided valued data or perceptions into the ideas, memories and experiences of individual members. The researcher was mindful of the fact that she has little control over the group than in an individual interview and that much time could be spent on extraneous issues. Notwithstanding, the researcher took precautions and handled varying behaviors of the group members with professionalism.

In each of the three communities, the district officials: the head of WSDT, was relied on for information on the various WBs members contact and residence. On arriving at the communities, the WB members were first contacted, interviewed and relied on in contacting other women who were instrumental at the initial decision making and planning stages of the project. It was however difficult to trace such women because most of them had either passed on or not in the community at the time of the data gathering. Regardless of this, two women who were part of the initial decision-making and planning of the project at the early stages of the project were identified and interviewed accordingly. The WB members and some village authorities assisted the researcher to organize the FGDs at the communities by inviting the women to the discussion grounds, after proper permission had been granted by the village elders. Participation in the FGDs was voluntary and participants were made to give a verbal consent before commencement of the interviews. As small as the group was, some women found it difficult to speak up

like other women in the group probably due to lack of courage or shyness. Regardless of this, their verbal and non-verbal expressions as well as their gestures that exhibited approval and disapproval during the deliberations were highly noted and interpreted. I must admit that at the end of the discussions, the diversity of opinions and expressions gathered went a long way in providing evidences either affirming or contrasting previous information gathered by means of interview or observations.

3.12 Documents and Reflective Journal

Aside the interviews and discussions, other documents were gathered from the study connected to the participation of women in the Kbd. Copies of such documents were made and kept for the purposes of data analysis. In addition, reflective journal and field notes were also taken. The journal allowed the researcher to describe her feeling about conducting research in this area of study. The field notes as well provided additional information for the analysis.

3.13 Data Analysis

The qualitative data was analyzed using the transcription of the audio interviews of comments and statements from the respondents and FGDs. The data analysis was done based on the themes that emerged from the discussion and interviews in relation to the research questions to enable the researcher make logical deductions and conclusions (Miles and Wilberman, 2002). Sub-themes were also generated from main themes until the point where no new themes were discovered by the researcher. This process is what Morse, (1995) termed ‘point of saturation’.

All recorded interviews, documents, observations, discussions, journal entries and field notes were transcribed. The process of transcription helped me to get familiar with the data. After this process, a file was created for the primary data collected. For the purposes of confidentiality, the file created was saved on my personal computer and protected with a password for safe keeping. The contextual meaning of the data collected was used as a basis of analysis for coding and description. The data gathered was hereafter analyzed case by case following the themes that emerged from the data relative to the research questions. The guidelines developed by Braun and Clarke (2013) was used to analyze the qualitative data. The guidelines are as follows; (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) recoding throughout each transcript, (4) reviewing themes, (5) naming and defining themes, (6) producing the report.

3.14 Validation Strategies

Social scientists use various validation strategies to make their study credible and reliable (Creswell and Millar 2000). One of these strategies is triangulation. This study used triangulation and a rich deep description of events and cases as a strategy to ensure credibility of data. The different forms of data gathered (interviews, observation, documents, field notes and discussions) were triangulated to get the deeper meanings of the issues under discussion. The rich deep description was done through the presentation of participants' voices under each theme and by means of providing comprehensive explanation of each of the cases. The findings of the study were later on discussed with respondents in the KbD at the end of the study for additional confirmation.

3.15 Ethical Considerations

Although there are no identifiable risks for taking part in this research, some considerations were kept in mind in dealing with the respondents in accordance to the American Psychology Association (APA) ethical guidelines. Three ethical issues were considered in the study.

Firstly, only relevant questions concerning the key variables (the drivers of women participation and the management of rural water supply) were asked to capture the reality on the ground regarding the participation of women in water supply projects in the Kbd. Secondly, the reputation of respondents were considered where interviews were conducted by withholding their personal identities. This made the respondents feel comfortable with the kind of questions that were being asked. The last is plagiarism. I am aware of the academic blunder of plagiarism, therefore all relevant sources of information used for this study have been duly acknowledged. All of these considerations were adhered to during the research design stage. Severe precaution was also taken to make sure that all participants felt safe, secured and comfortable throughout the duration of the study.

3.16 Conclusion

This current study gathered data from both interview schedules and FGDs qualitatively. The combination of these two methods has ensured the reliability and validity of the findings by means of data triangulation, which is recommended as a good method of data validation (O'Donoghue and Punch, 2003). Information collected from the interviews was cross checked with that of the FDGs for consistency. Field visitations and data

collection was conducted by the researcher herself. For the sake of credibility and to ensure reliability of this study, principles of objectivity and authenticity were maintained throughout the content analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE DRIVERS OF WOMENS' PARTICIPATION IN RURAL WATER SUPPLY PROJECTS

4.1 Introduction

Most development projects or programs of government are carried out at the rural level through the local government/district assembly who must carry out these projects in collaboration with the beneficiaries of such interventions. It is therefore crucial that the views of these people are sought and considered when implementing any project for them. This is because local people are the direct beneficiaries and know best what their problems are and how best these problems could be addressed. The aim of women's participation in RWSPs is to ensure that women have a say in the provision and maintenance of these projects through their engagement all through the project cycle. To weigh up the level of women's participation in development process in the KbDA, three communities (Prankese, Abaam and Otumi) were selected in the district for the study. These communities were selected because they happen to be the only communities within the district with the most recent constructed mechanized piped-borne water supply facilities. Men and women in these communities as well as two district assembly officials (women) were interviewed to explore the extent of women participation in RWSPs in the district.

This chapter presents the findings of the study. It starts by providing some background information about the three communities in the district as well as the state of the water projects as at the time of this study with a view to analyzing the varied levels of women engagement in the water projects and reasons for the variation. Thereafter, the primary

findings of the study is presented in line with the research questions of the study. Finally, the chapter gives the summary of the major findings of the study.

4.1.1 State of the Water Project in Kwaebibirem District Assembly

Since the 1990s, the German Agency for technical cooperation (GTZ) has supported the government of Ghana's (GoG) effort towards the decentralization of water supply development and management. In 1995, GoG initiated the Eastern and Volta regions Assistance Project (EVORAP) for improvement of water supply in the two regions. Investments under the projects are funded on a cost sharing basis amongst the donor agency (the Federal Republic of Germany through the Department for International Development (DFID) in the case of Pramkese and Otumi as well as Danish Development Assistance Programme (DANIDA) in the case of Abaam. The republic of Ghana, through the DA and the beneficiary communities, makes financial contribution to the project on a ratio of 90:5:5 (GoG 90%; KbDA 5%; and beneficiary community 5%) respectively. The terms of the agreements demand that the beneficiary community own and manage the water supply facility after its completion. The type of facility provided for these communities is the Small Town Water System (STWS). This is a water system whereby a bore-hole is drilled and a pump-machine is used to pump the water into a big reservoir where the water is purified and distributed to the various stand pipes (KbDA Information Department, 2015).

The Water and Sanitation Development Board which is often referred to as the Water Board (WB) and WATSAN have the same modality i.e. same regulations and compositions by gender. Each community within the district that has STWS has WB

whereas communities with Point Sources have WATSAN committee which manages the water facility while STWS(s) are overseen by the WBs. The WB in collaboration with project engineers evaluated the old water supply system and identified technological options for water supply improvement. This resulted in the choice of a mechanized system which consists of a bore-hole equipped with submersible pumps using the national electricity grid transmission and extensive distribution channels, high-level storage tank and stand pipes. The facility provided 17 public standpipes in all sections of the community for Pramkese, 15 public standpipes for Abaam and 10 public stand pipes for Otumi all of which are still in good shape till date. At the time of this study, the Stand Pipe Attendants (SPAs) in all the three communities were women while the technical operators (two in each community) were males. This shows a clear division of labour on water projects were women engage in the sanitation aspect of the maintenance of the projects while men engage more on the technical maintenance of the water projects (Marks et al., 2014; Chifamba et al., 2013).

The total investment cost for the water supply facility for both Pramkese and Otumi was \$168,000 each whilst that of Abaam was \$ 221,550. The beneficiary communities were obliged to pay 5% of the entire cost of the project. This monetary input has been referred to in literature as ‘contributions’ rather than ‘fees’ since it is seen as voluntary contributions by community members (Tigabu et al., 2013). The water facilities for the three communities were handed over to them in 2007.

4.1.2 The Water and Sanitation Development Boards

The water board is a group of people from a beneficiary community made up of Ten to Fifteen people of whom at least 1/3 is expected to be women and at least 1/3 should as

well be representatives of the Assembly or town/areas Council. It is the responsibility of the DA to determine the total number of people on each board based on the number of constituencies that exist in the area. The mandate of the Board is to manage the piped water systems and to promote good sanitation and hygiene in the area or community within its jurisdiction. The board therefore has the power to operate, maintain, repair, replace and manage the water facility within their jurisdiction. Another obligation of the board is to establish a mechanism for consultation with the community and Town/Area Council in arriving at decision on all matters affecting the water system. Each water board has an executive committee made up of members from amongst its members comprising a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Technical (operation and Maintenance) and Technical (Sanitation and maintenance) of which at least one shall be a woman. In both Pramkese and Otumi the WBs comprise nine members and four of whom are women. The WB at Pramkese has eleven members, five of whom are women. However none of the technical operators in all the three communities is a woman. The tables below depict the gender composition of the WB members in three communities.

WATER AND SANITATION DEVELOPMENT BOARD COMPOSITION

Table 2. WSDB Composition in the three communities

COMMUNITY	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
PRAMKESE	5	4	9
ABAAM	6	5	11
OTUMI	5	4	9

Source: KbDA Water and Sanitation Development Unit (2015).

Table 2 depicts the gender composition of the WB members in the three communities under study. This composition was necessitated by the DA bye-law which stipulates that at least one-third of all committees set up on water related projects must be made up of women.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS COMPOSITION

Table 3. Composition of executive members of the WB

Prankese		Abaam		Otumi	
Position	Gender	Position	Gender	Position	Gender
Chairperson	Male	Chairperson	Male	Chairperson*	Female
Secretary*	Female	Secretary	Male	Secretary	Male
Treasurer*	Female	Treasurer*	Female	Treasurer	Male
Head of Technical Unit	Male	Head of Technical Unit	Male	Head of Technical Unit	Male
Head of Hygiene and Sanitation	Male	Head of Hygiene And Sanitation	Female	Head of Hygiene And Sanitation	Female

Source: KbDA Water and Sanitation Development Unit (2015).

From table 3 above, it can be observed that men do not dominate the top most positions on the WB in all the three communities and at least two women hold key executive positions

on the WB. With the exception of Otumi, the women who occupy executive positions in the other two communities were seen as active and influential on the WB because they were women who had at least attained tertiary education and had retired either as teachers or health workers. This current study affirms the notion that most women on the WB had no significant influence on the decisions of the WB (Boateng et al., 2013). The reason being that, apart from the two women who hold executive positions on the WB, the rest do not have any significant influence on the decisions of the board due to their low level of education or lack of courage to talk in the group. Pramkese chairman, who is a senior high school teacher noted:

My secretary and treasurer are very vocal and contribute very well to any decision made even better than some of the men on the WB but I am not surprised because they are both retired teachers unlike the other two who are traders (Interview with Pramkese WB chairman, 5th February, 2015).

This confirms that indeed some women on the decision making platform are only there for representation sake. This is what Mohammed (2010) calls ‘tokenism participation’. This is contrary to the findings of Hicks (2011) that women often assume subordinate position such as administration positions rather than leading roles on the structures which apparently is a result of the strong patriarchal system in these communities leading to the low level of verbal engagement in water related decision making at the rural level.

At the time of the study, all the three communities selected under the Kbd: had with small town piped water systems. Two out of the three communities (Pramkese and Abaam) had a standing Water and sanitation development board (WSDB) which manages the water facility. However, the officially recognized Board for Otumi had been dissolved by some community members against the bye-laws of the DA with some community members forming their own board and managing the facility their own way. Surprisingly,

it is the only community with a woman as the chairperson of the WSDB. In an interview, the district chief engineer noted on the woman WB chairperson in the following words:

Even though she makes powerful contributions at meetings, unfortunately because the community members see her to be a woman they try to walk over her. Unlike the other communities where men are the chairpersons, because they think women are somehow weak, they just got up one day and carried out a heated demonstration locked up the office of the WB and dissolved the board, something which has never happened in the other communities before. If it was to be a man who was a chairperson, he will not tolerate that and the people would not even dare to do that because they know that the man can equally meet them with the same force, but since women are a little bit 'weak' in terms of aggressiveness, they did all that and went scot free. Interestingly, most of those who do that were men (Interview with District Chief Engineer, 3rd February, 2015).

This assertion may mean that merely occupying upheld positions by women does not necessarily translate into proactive decision making by women because the FGD revealed that the community members dissolved the Otumi WB for the reason that the leader was a woman. As one respondent (a farmer and a SPA with primary level of education) at the FDG in Otumi said: *"Men do not fear women in leadership positions because they think we are weak"* (FGD respondent, 17th February, 2015).

This confirms the assertion of the district chief engineer which implies that indeed women are seen as weak and are not eligible for certain positions that are reserved for men. Similarly, Boateng et al. (2013b) observed in Ashanti region of Ghana that the position of women on the WB was only limited to either secretary or a treasure because the men have the view that women appear to be better custodian of money than men. However, all the three communities had their water facilities intact and functioning during my visit to these communities showing a high level of maintenance by the community.

4.2 WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AT THE THREE MAJOR STAGES OF THE RURAL WATER SUPPLY PROJECT CYCLE

Every project goes through three major processes: Planning stage, Implementation Stage, and the Post-implementation /management stage. Research shows that even though women are the major water users, their participation in the provision of water facilities in the rural areas remain generally low (Hicks, 2011; Tigabu et al., 2013; Boateng et al., 2013a; and Chifamba et al., 2013). These studies further argue that even where their involvement seems encouraging, their participation appears skewed toward only two of these stages and not all the three stages. While they actively engage at the implementation and management stages, they continued to be sidelined from the decision making process (Chifamba et al., 2013). This section explores the level of women engagement throughout these three processes of RWSP in the Kwaebibirem district.

4.2.1 Planning Stage

At the community level, the chiefs in collaboration with the Assembly Members organized a durbar where everyone especially the women in the community and the town committee members were encouraged to attend for the discussion of the impending project. Here, issues of how and where to situate the facility, and who to include were raised at the gathering. The recommendation at that point was used to design the water system. At this stage, nine people were selected from the various groups in the community (Muslim, Christian, traditional worshipers, teachers, health workers, farmers, chief's palace, market women, oil palm producers, and petty traders) to form a planning committee:

Initially when the planning committee was formed we had eight men and only one woman was included to be our treasurer. Later when we presented the committee to the District assembly, we were asked to balance the gender composition so we restructured the committee composition to four women and five men. With regards to training, about ten women and seven men were sent for a workshop on water treatment and management but unfortunately only three people were able to complete the training. The men stayed throughout but most of the women abandoned the training with the excuse of overburdened domestic chores and inability to read and understand the English language which was the medium of communication (Interview with chief's representative in Pramkese, 10th February, 2015).

Although some women were given the platform to partake in the decision making process, most of them could not influence the decision made. At the FGD, some of the women revealed that even though durbars were held to solicit their views on issues regarding the type and location of facility, most of them could not talk for fear of being silenced by the men or being mocked by other women. Only few educated women who were proactive in the decision making process specifically at the project planning stage but whenever the need for voting arise at that level men always win because they outnumbered the women on the WB. Another FGD respondent claimed that:

All the women in this community were invited to a meeting where we were informed about the water project being sponsored by DANIDA. We gave our view as to how we wanted it and where it should be sited. Some of the views were taken whilst others were completely disregarded for no specific reason. For instance, we requested for tall pipe stands with which we could stand with our basins on our heads while fetching the water but they did not do that because they said that wasn't part of the project design. All the seventeen pipe stands that we have are short ones (FGD respondent, 17th February, 2015).

The finding of this study confirms the observation that, regardless of the role of women as the main users and managers of water resources they keep being ruled out in decision making process (Sanders & Fitts, 2011; Chifamba, 2013; Ladele et al., 2011). Surprisingly, I found out from all the FGDs that the notion that men are wiser than

women in decision making still persist in our rural communities. During the FGDs, participants confirmed that the reason is due to the fact that in the olden days, it was culturally not acceptable for women to make decisions in the community where men were present. This suggests that women tend to be mostly less represented, and most often barred, from environmental decision-making processes, especially in areas that appear significantly related to their wellbeing (Figueiredo & Perkins, 2013). The involvement of women in the RWSPs at this stage could be described as the representative form of participation by White (1996) as women were involved as a leverage to secure the water facility. In the same light it could be viewed as the collaborative form of participation by Vernooy (2005) where men and women on decision-making platform share knowledge and ideas on the management of the facility. However, at this stage the level of knowledge sharing is unequal as men often dominate the process due to their number and ability to influence decision making.

4.2.2 Implementation Stage

An interview with the District chief engineer revealed that the project was backed by the Ghana procurement law; therefore the projects were given to qualified contractors. Even though the district engineer could suggest to the contractors to include women in their operations he did not have the power to dictate to the contractor, the number of women to be incorporated at the implementation stage. That will amount to a breach of contract. But in most cases the people employed by the contractors are mostly men from the communities who get paid for their services.

However, there were times that the contractors liaise with elders of the communities for assistance from community members as and when the need arise due to time or resource constrain and also as a means of embedding sense of ownership in the community members. At this stage, almost everybody participated except those who were sick, very old or pregnant or had travelled out of town. While women fetched water, stones and provided food, the men did the weeding and digging of trenches. One of the respondents who was a stand pipe attendant (SPA) in Otumi recounted that:

We participated in the form of a communal labour by fetching water, weeding the sites and sometimes providing food for the labourers whilst the men were weeding most of the times. Those who deliberately boycotted the communal labour were fined with an amount of Gh₵ 10.00 by the chief (FDG respondent, February, 2015).

This confirms the findings of Boateng et al. (2013a) and Hicks (2011) that the only aspect of the project where women show appreciable level of participation has been through the contribution of physical labour mostly at the implementation stage. It was also confirmed that most of the women did not show any interest in the monitoring of ongoing projects.

Occasionally we do have site meeting in the course of the project and this takes place once every month. Here the regional water team, district water team, district water and sanitation team, district engineer, NGO rep, District Chief Executive (DCE) and the community's planning team, go to the site and look at the progress of the work, what has come up in the course of the project which was not initially envisaged. At this meeting we invite everybody in the community unfortunately most women did not show up (District Engineer, February, 2015).

With regards to why the women refused to show up at the monitoring stage, the FGD respondents claimed that they did not see monitoring as women's affair.

At that stage, the engineers monitor the progress of work to find out if the ongoing work is in accordance with time schedules and whether what is being constructed was according to project specifications. These are

technical issues and we were not in the position to determine that (FGD respondent, February, 2015).

The argument was that the contract was awarded by the DA and so it was only prudent that the DA monitors the project. This implies that even though women were not barred from monitoring, they were more comfortable participating at the implementation stage by providing their labour than monitoring the progress of work. Participation of women at this stage of the project could be likened to the instrumental form of participation by White (1996) as women are used as a means to constructing the facility, for the purposes of cost reduction and ensuring efficiency.

4.2.3 Post-Implementation/ Management Stage

This stage was characterized by the monitoring, supervision and management of the water facility. The DA officials together with the community planning committee see to the monitoring and supervision of the project due to its technicalities with assistance from other community members. For instance, the Chairperson of the Otumi WB (a woman) confirmed that: “...the DCE and the District engineers came around periodically to inspect the ongoing project and made recommendations and adjustments where necessary” (Interview with Otumi WB chairperson, March, 2015).

The interview further revealed that at the completion of the project, community members were urged to select their own committee that will manage and maintain the water system. Afterwards, the selected people were interviewed. Subsequently, successful candidates elected their own chairperson, secretary, treasurer, account officer and organizer for the WB. The WB members were then taken through an intensive training sections. The WB was thereafter inaugurated to commence work for four years after which another set of people would be elected. The WB is solely in charge of water facility maintenance with the support of the pipe stand vendors, technical operators, the

water sanitation team and the revenue collector most of whom are women except the technical operators. The Abaam Chairman claimed that: *“We normally do not allow men to sell the water at the pipe stand because of fear of embezzlement of funds because it has happened to us before”* (Abaam WB Chairman, March, 2015).

Throughout the project cycle, major involvement of women is actually felt after the construction of the project. This is because apart from two technical operators of the facilities, all the SPAs and the sanitation officers are all women. One of the sanitation officers in Pramkese asserted that:

Women are those who fetch (buy) the water most and therefore report any breakdown of pipes or changes in color or taste of the water. With regards to the technical aspect, men are the ones who handle technical operation because they have the skills (FGD respondent, February, 2015).

Aside the collection of money, women are also responsible for the maintenance of the stand pipe and its surroundings by weeding and scrubbing the floors at the pipe stands. Since women are the major water users, they are the first to notice any change in the taste or color of the water and draws the attention of the board members for appropriate action to be carried out. This confirms that women in many part of the world especially in Africa are often not effective in decision making regarding RWSPs but rather active in the collection of payments, cleaning and greasing hand pumps (Boateng et al., 2013a). This immeasurable role of women at this stage of the project is confirmed by several studies all over Africa (see for instance Boateng et al., 2013b; Tigabu et al., 2013; Tam, 2013; Bakalian and Wakeman, 2009). At the FGDs, women showed so much excitement concerning their role as major managers of the water facility and the role of men as major decision makers since money collection was viewed as ‘women affair’ and decision

making as an activity for men. Despite the dominance of men at the decision making process, the role of women at the implementation stage make them the major care takers of the water facility in the Kbd. The involvement of women at this phase is perceived as instrumental form of participation according to White (1996). The perception that women are good money-keepers and better caretakers of the facility explains why women are being used as means of cost reduction in implementation of RWSPs and for effective management of the water facility.

4.3 Underlying Drivers of Women's Participation in Rural Water Supply Project in Kwaebirem District

Water is a very essential commodity, without which life would be almost impossible. (Kevany et al., 2013). Despite the fact that water usage is very common among women due to their domestic, productive and reproductive roles such as cooking, washing, cleaning and farming, available literature suggests that their involvement in water projects is minimal compared to that of men (Ladele et al., 2011; Marks et al., 2014 and Agarwal, 2010). This assertion presupposes however that at least some women participate in these RWSPs processes regardless of the fact that majority do not. It is for this reason that this section seeks to find out the underlying drivers of participation for the few women who engaged themselves in RWSPs processes. It is assumed that when these drivers are identified, it will inform stakeholders on measures to adopt to bring other women on board to enhance women participation in rural developments.

The data gathered with regards to women's participation throughout the life cycle of the water supply project in the district indicate that the underlining drivers for women's

participation in the RWSPs varied from one woman to another. These different drives inherently influence the level/phase at which a woman's involvement is more pronounced. In other words, the factors that drive some women to be involved at the planning stage, appear different from factors that drive other women to participate at the implementation and post-implementation stages. The findings of this study revealed the following drivers for women's participation in RWSPs in the KbDA: future aspiration, the need to give back to their community, the pride of leaving in a developed community, nomination, and fear of being punished.

The study identified that women who were driven by future aspiration and the need to give back to community appeared more active at the decision-making and planning stages of the RWSPs. Meanwhile, women who were driven by fear of punishment, need for the water and by nomination were mostly active at the implementation and post-implementation stages of the projects.

4.3.1 Future aspirations

The findings of the research indicate that only few women participated in the entire planning process and that the few who participated are self-motivated women. These women are not forced by anyone to participate but they came out of their own free will to engage in the decision-making process of the water project. This confirms the argument that women's participation in public affairs especially in the rural areas is a crucial step to achieving their prospective ambitions (Hemson, 2001 as cited in Hicks, 2011: 46).

It was however revealed that these women believe that their participation in such a platform will open up avenues for them to lead their people and build social networks

with others. They therefore view such platforms as a stepping stone to climbing to higher podiums such as contesting for an Assembly or unit committee membership elections.

I have always had the desire to lead my people to achieve success. I am a retired head mistress and I have acquired a lot of skills as a result of my profession and at that time I was also aspiring to be an assembly member in my area so I saw serving on the planning board and subsequently on the WB as an opportunity for me to show my capabilities to my people (Prankese WB secretary, February, 2015)

Another woman (WB member) affirmed that:

At that time, I was on a mission of organizing women for 'Aglow International' a network of dedicated and praying women dedicated to promoting women's welfare in Ghana. So I needed a platform where I could easily interact with women often. That was why I joined the planning committee and it was really helpful (WB member, February, 2015).

The planning stage is the decision making stage where decisions regarding where to mount the facility, the type of facility, how to raise the 5% requirement of the total cost of the project are determined. If a woman feels that she has a future ambition such as contesting for a political or any leadership role in the future, she is likely to be active at the decision making stage so that community members can identify with her. The women who were motivated by this drive are prominent at the decision-making and planning stages of the RWSPs.

4.3.2 The need to give back to the community/ love for community

Another personal motivation drive is the sense of duty and love for the community. The study revealed that another driver for some women to participate in the RWSPs is the need to give back to their community. These women feel that the society has helped in shaping their lives and making them what they are. Therefore the society expects them to answer when duty calls. The treasurer of the Otumi WB (a woman) proclaimed that:

Even though I grew up here, I spent most of my life as a teacher serving outside this community. I am 66 years old now. I left this town when I was only 22 years and came back eight years ago. I feel I need to be beneficial to my community as well so I opted to serve on the WB (Otumi WB treasurer, February, 2015).

The study revealed that the push factor for some women to participate in the RWSPs is out of love and duty to serve their community, which is a personal motivation. These women affirmed that the community members have confidence in them as a result of their background and experience and they cannot afford to fail them. These women however are predominantly active at the planning stage of the water project or serving on the WB at the time of this study.

I came out on my own to be the chairperson because I am the traditional women's organizer and a very successful business woman. I am proud of this community because it has made me into who I am today. I love bringing people together so I want to be beneficial to my community. The community members know my worth and my character so when I stood up, nobody contested with me, the people accepted me and I became the chairperson of the Otumi WB (March, 2015).

This implies that women who feel they have benefited from the community, felt the need to give back to their community in the form of serving their communities by contributing to decision making in RWSPs. It was observed that women who cited this factor as a driver were those who were active at both the planning and management stages of the facility.

4.3.3 The pride of living in a developed community

Water is a basic necessity of which any human community should not be deprived of. Therefore any community which lacks this basic need is seen as less developed (Kevany et al., 2013). Hence, some women in the KbDA believe that without the availability of

certain basic social amenities such as water, their communities would not have been as it is today. The FGD held at Pramkese for instance, revealed that before the advent of the project, the only means of regular water supply was from a small river called river 'Pram' which had become a source of Bilharzia for the community members as a result of contamination by animals coupled with the activities of illegal miners. However, since the provision of the facility, there has not been any outbreak of Bilharzia in the community. In addition, the predominant economic activity in the district is farming and other related activities such as Oil Palm extraction which involves the use of a lot of water. The availability of water is therefore necessary to produce in large quantities and attract investors and other civil servants into the district. The Abaam WB secretary disclosed in an interview that:

Before the advent of the water facility, most teachers and health service personnel who were posted here either do not accept the postings here or leave after some few weeks. So when I heard about the water project, I was so happy and gave my all to support the project. Now I am happy to tell all my friends in Accra that I drink piped borne water and not from that dirty river anymore (WB secretary, February, 2015).

This shows that some women actually participated in the project out of pride which is generated by the urgent need of clean and accessible water supply which confirms the findings of Jacques Moraes and Rocha (2013), in Brazil where they observed that women who showed much interest in a rain water harvest project were those who did it out of pride and not solely for financial gains. The FGDs also confirmed that most of those who contributed to the construction of the project especially at the implementation stage, through their physical labour and time out of their own free will because they knew the implication of having a water facility in their community since they had suffered for a long time in this community without a regular source of water supply. Here also, it was

realized that women who were motivated by this factor were the ones who were mostly active during both implementation and management stages of the facility. This however is not to say that those active at the planning stages do not pride themselves with the availability of water in their community but then for them, the pride of availability of water was not the actual driver of their participation.

4.3.4 Nomination

The District Assembly's bye-law requires that at least 40% of the composition of the WB should be women. However, in Otumi for instance, only two women showed up on their own to be members of the WB subject to the approval of the community members. The other two members of the WB were nominated by some community members. A similar study in Ghana also shows that whilst men were elected to the WB women were nominated to serve on the board (Boateng et al., 2013b). Even though the nomination of these two women on the WBs, was subject to the approval of other women, they would not have shown up on their own to be part of the WB though they willingly participated at the implementation stage. These women are only on the WB because the community members deemed them fit to be on board but not because they wanted to be there. In an interview with one of them, she confirmed that:

I was at home when one of the elders from the palace came to inform me that I have been chosen to represent the women group (water users) on the WB. I was a bit surprised because I thought there were other equally good women in the community they could have chosen. But I accepted the nomination because I did not want to turn down the offer of my elders. On my own I would not have stood up to occupy such a position, because I know how people in this community can insult people in leadership positions. But you see I was right, they insult us every day especially when

we increased the amount charged for a bucket of water or when the water ceases to flow as a result of maintenance work. I do not think I will be nominated again but in case I am, I will gladly decline the offer (Interview with WB member in Otumi, February, 2015).

This revelation was also backed by the fact that members of the WB are not paid but are only given monthly allowances of an amount which should not exceed Gh¢ 30.00. Some of the women therefore do not see any reason why they should remain on the WB in the face of insults and mockery. Those who were motivated by nomination appear to be women whose levels of education were low and either did not contribute or contributed less in the decision making process. It was also observed that those nominated on the WB, hardly make any suggestion or influence any decision made on the board. Therefore, their involvement on the WB could qualify for the kind of participation White (1996) termed ‘representative’ participation.

4.3.5 Fear of being punished

Compulsion is another driver of women’s participation in RWSPs. One would have thought that women, being the most affected in the face of unavailability of regular supply of water, would happily embrace any project that seeks to lessen their plight in the form of provision of water facility. This study discovered that some of the women only engaged themselves in the project because of the fear of being punished. At the FGDs, one respondent stated that:

Those who refused to participate at the implementation stage (in the form of communal labour) without a genuine cause such as being pregnancy, sick or out of town were fined an amount of Gh¢ 10.00. Since most people like myself could not afford that amount, we had no option than to partake

in the communal labour which involved fetching of water and stones to aid the construction of the project (FGD respondent, March, 2015).

At the FGD, it was confirmed that those who exempted themselves from the communal labour without genuine reasons were not only fined an amount of Gh₵10.00 but were also insulted and mocked by the other women who participated. In order to avoid being insulted and mocked, some women reluctantly engaged in the project specifically at the implementation stage of the project. In all the three FGDs conducted some women confirmed that the fear of being punished in the form of fine and insults were the reason for their participation in the RWSPs in their communities.

This assertion presupposes that the driving force for women to participate at the decision making stage was quite different from that of those who engaged at the other levels of the project cycle such as implementation and post implementation.

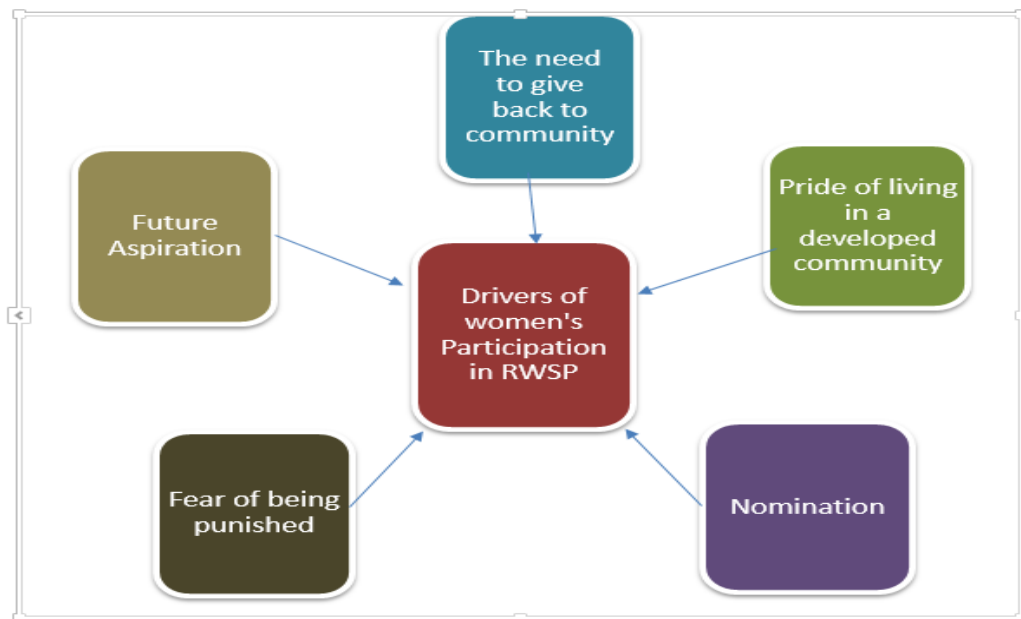


Figure 4: Representative summary of the drivers of women's participation in RWSPs

Source: Author's own construct

4.3.6 Summary

Various studies have indicated that a lot of reasons drive people to participate in local development projects. Among this drivers are economic and environmental reasons (Jakariya, 2000; Boateng et al., 2013a). Others also argue that participation is driven by a reward systems. For instance, a study conducted in Nigeria by Deji (2007) revealed that the provision of some sort of reward in forms of cash and kind propelled the women to engage in development projects. He argued that reward systems will not only encourage women to participate but also boost project sustainability. This current study revealed that other factors different from reward systems motivate women to participate in RWSPs. Based on the above findings, this study argues that rather than relying on remuneration or nominations, participation should be driven by self-initiative since this study prove that the level of participation of those who came out of their own self-initiative performed better than those nominated. This argument is further supported by Sanders & Fitts (2011).

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN THE MANAGEMENT OF RURAL WATER SUPPLY PROJECTS

5.1.0 Introduction

Regardless of the general consensus among researchers that the participation of women in RWSPs is low, some factors have been identified as the salient characteristics of women who show appreciable level of participation in water projects delivery processes (Ladele et al., 2011; Tigabu et al., 2013; Hemson, 2002; and Boateng et al., 2013a). This chapter presents the findings and analysis of the characteristics of women who demonstrated considerable level of involvement in RWSPs in the Kbd. The characteristics identified by the study are: level of education, courage /boldness, age, noble character and marital status. This observation indicates that women who participate at a particular phase of the projects have certain characteristics or qualities that differentiate them from others who did not participate. It was assumed that women with these qualities would perform better than those without it. These characteristics appear important in determining and explaining the reasons why certain caliber of women engaged in the RWSPs at a particular stage than others.

5.1.1 Level of education

Level of women's education is a very key determinant of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd. Educational level does not only determine whether a woman would partake in the project or not but also determines the stages of the projects at which their participation would be more pronounced. The findings of the study showed that women

who had level of education up to secondary and above, and could read, write or speak the English language were more proactive at the planning stages of the project and subsequently served on the WB. These women also held positions such as treasurer, secretary or even chairperson on the WB. Meanwhile, women who had low level of education (below secondary level) and could not read, speak or write in English were found to be more active at the construction stages and post-construction stages such as in the case of SPAs but not at the decision making front. This confirms the assertion that *“The women were mostly illiterate and were only there to fulfill the quota of 30% expected by the policy on water supply and the requirements of the funding agencies.”* (Hemson 2002: 9). By implication, the level of education is instrumental in determining the level of women’s participation in RWSPs. Studies by Ladele et al., 2011, Boateng et al., 2013a & 2013b; Tigabu et al., 2013; Marks et al., 2014 and Hicks, 2011 have shown the extent to which level of education affect women’s participation in RWSPs. Not only does this study support the findings of the aforementioned studies; it also reveals the level at which these women will be active in the water supply processes as well as the strength of their engagement at these stages.

There is evidence that educated women in the KbD contribute better at the planning stages through their ideas, suggestions, recommendations and devotion because they can better understand the concept of women’s participation and the need for their voices to be heard. On the other hand, the less-educated were more active at the implementation and post implementation stages as in the collection of money and cleaning of the pipe stands.

The planning stage involves a lot of brain storming, discussions and deliberations and the few educated elites were mostly relied on to explain the issues to the less educated ones who do not seem to get the concept on the importance of their participation to the facility we were bringing to the community. These are women who have read a lot and so have knowledge in most issues confronting women. Besides, where the level of education of women is low we find it very difficult to bring them on board since they have been traditionally taught to believe that men should be leaders in decision making at all times (Interview with District Head of WSDT, 2nd March, 2015).

This statement confirms that women in patriarchal societies view themselves ‘weak’ in terms of their ability to contribute to decision making especially in the midst of men (Hemson, 2002). Interviews with WB members as well as the FGDs affirmed this assertion, and added that it is only the educated ones who are able to break away from this norm even though there are very few of such people in the communities. A chief’s representative on the Otumi WB admitted that there were very few educated women in the community for the reason being that, most of the educated people work outside the communities because of absence of ‘White Collar Jobs’ in these communities. Hence most of the community residents are either illiterates or have low levels of education and viewed themselves as people who could not make useful contributions on the planning committee due to their inability to speak, read or write the English language. The only few educated women left in the communities are mostly retired civil servants who are more active at the planning stage and on the WB. This further confirms the report of the 2010 HPS census result by Ghana Statistical Service (2014) which revealed that even though 51% of the district population are women, the proportion of the literate women (41.3%) is lower than that of men (43.3%). It is important to state that per the communities’ standards, an educated person is someone with a secondary level of education or above and has the ability to at least read, write and speak simple

understandable English language (Abaam Chief's rep, March, 2015). This is as a result of the fact that most of the women on the WB have the ability to talk in public and express themselves even better than their male counterparts who are uneducated. Meanwhile, the other women on the board with little or no formal educational background, only show up at meeting to either second other people's motion or contribute little or nothing at all. A respondent disclosed that:

I am the only woman on the WB with the highest level of education (Tertiary level). When I cannot make it to meetings for any reason, the meeting cannot come off, because I play a very important role as a secretary on the WB as a result of my educational level. The other women only have up to the secondary level. We all come together to form the Board so it is okay since they add up to make the number complete (Otumi WB secretary, 2nd March, 2015).

This study contrasts the findings of Kariuki et al. (2013) which revealed that the levels of women's education in Kenya did not determine the nature of their participation in RWSPs. Almost all the women at the various FGDs admitted that the popular notion that 'the role of the woman is in the kitchen' still persist in the community. Education can therefore be said to be a very key characteristic of women who are proactive especially in the decision making stage.

5.1.2 Courage/Boldness

Another characteristic of women who exhibited meaningful participation is courage and boldness. Almost all the female respondents identifies courage as a factor that can influence their meaningful involvement in the project especially at the decision making stage. A female respondent at the FGD (a sanitation officer who has a primary level of education and very bold and outspoken) revealed that:

In our setting it takes a lot of courage for a woman to rub shoulders with her male counterparts even if she is educated. This is because sometimes other women even mock an out-spoken woman and call her names such as 'Akoko nene' (a Cock) which is very discouraging because most women do not have the 'heart' for such insults (FGD respondent, 23rd February, 2015)

Another woman an ex-planning committee member and a retired nurse disclosed in an interview that:

I only participated out of self-sacrifice and love for the community because we were not paid. So when people start to mock and call me names, it becomes very irritating and it takes only courage to stand that (ex-planning committee member, 3rd March, 2015)

Consistently, most women on the WB admitted that even if one has a high level of education but cannot express herself in the public or among men, she can never influence decision making on any platform. The woman Chairperson in one of the studied communities claimed that: "...in a male controlled community like ours, a woman needs to be bold and courageous in order to be able to rub shoulders with the men due to the negative ideas that women are naturally timid, reserved and weak." This assertion confirms a previous finding by Hemson (2002).

I must admit that I am not only educated but also very bold. I talk very much on the board and they all believe in me. For instance, if someone, refuses to pay his or her water bill, I can single handedly make sure that his/her water supply is disconnected. I also represent the WB at the district level and make decisions on behalf of the Abaam WB (Abaam WB secretary, 1st February, 2015).

Although one can argue that education plays a role in making one bold and courageous, courage, for this rural women, is more of an innate quality rather than a learnt behaviour. The FGD revealed that not all the Women on the WB have the courage to challenge the men at meetings because it takes boldness for women to be able to voice out their plight in the midst of men without the fear of being silenced, mocked or insulted by other

women since most of the men on the WB are equally educated and outspoken. They explained that if a woman is not courageous she will feel shy to express herself in the midst of men especially in communities such as theirs where men are seen as major decision makers.

This finding however contradicts the findings of Ladele et al. (2011) where she observed in other parts of Eastern Ghana that the women who actively participated in RWSPs admitted that they have had their self-esteem boosted and have now become more courageous. So this raises the question as to whether participation leads to courage or otherwise. This study argues that it is rather those who are courageous who appear more active in the decision making processes and they only end up as same people.

5.1.3 Marital status

This study identified marital status as a very important characteristic of participants. For instance marital status to a large extent determines whether or not a woman will be active at decision making, implementation or management stages. This study revealed that unmarried women participate more at the decision-making and planning stage than married women. This study observed that almost all the women on the WBs with the exception of only two were unmarried at the time of the study. Majority of these women were either widowed or divorced. The reason most of them gave was that they decided to participate at that level on their own. They did not have to consult their husbands who were likely to stop them or discourage them from climbing any decision making ladder. Besides, they had little or no domestic duties to perform because all their children were grownups.

Men are very jealous. We normally will not want to see our wives mingle with other men because we are afraid that we might lose them. Also, most women become disrespectful to their husbands when they climb up academic or decision making ladder. We have seen a lot of such instances. Even though those on the WB are performing, I would not encourage my wife to be there (chairman of Pramkese WB, 7th February, 2015).

Another woman on the WB who said:

I am a widow and all my children are grown and even married. I am not under any pressure of child birth or taking care of children or husband. I am free to go anywhere and do anything I want to do at any time unlike those who are married and raising a family (Otumi WB member, 9th February, 2015).

These two statements imply that not only do men have certain perceptions about women in top positions but also exert some form of control over their wives. They can either encourage the participation of their wives in development programme or otherwise. The FGDs reveal that the community members consider whether a woman is married or not and whether or not her husband will allow her to occupy a certain position before she is nominated to join any committee. One of the assembly members narrated an instance where a woman was nominated by her group members but later went to the chief to decline the offer because her husband was against the idea of her being on the planning committee even though she willingly accepted the nomination initially. Similarly, during the FGD in Otumi, a woman made a comment that due to her dependence on her husband for everything if he tells her not to accept any nomination, she will respectfully obey him. Most of the women present supported this argument and even added that submitting to one's husband is a biblical commandment which must be obeyed as a sign of obedience to God. This finding deviates from earlier finding which indicated that most women who occupied positions of trust such as treasurers, were married so that in the event of mismanagement their husbands will be held responsible (Boateng et al., 2013a, 2013b and Marks et al., 2014). The findings of this study is probably different because almost all the women who held executive positions were retired civil servants who probably could afford to foot their own bills in the event of any misappropriation of funds.

5.1.4 Age

Another factor discovered to be a prominent characteristic of women participants in the RWSPs is age. It was observed that the youth were mostly not involved in decision making neither were they interested in aspects of its maintenance or management. In Pramkese for instance, apart from the two technical operators who were in their early forties, all the SPAs, WB members and the sanitation officers were all between the ages of 50years to 70years and had free time to participate in meetings and other activities. This contrasts the findings of Dawlati et al. (2012), where they observed in Kurdistan that majority of the women who participated in RWSPs were young and active between the ages of 18 and 50. This study identified older people as more active than the youth in the RWSPs processes in the Kbd. The reason for this is probably because most of the educated youth work outside these communities due to lack of employment opportunity for the educated youth in their area. Besides, other young ones who stay in the communities were found to be busily working to sustain their families. One of the female respondents affirmed that:

....the youth have little time for activities such as being on the WB. They are not motivated because it is not a salaried work, we are only given allowances which are not enough to motivate a youngster to participate. Besides, older women have grown beyond childbearing stages. They do not have any responsibility of caring for babies (WB member, 4th February, 2015).

Another respondent had this to say:

I guess the young ones feel being on the WB is a job for the older people since it does not consume much energy and pays very little such as in the case of the pipe stand operators. So age is really a factor (WB Chairman, 11th February, 2015).

Regardless of the fact that youths do not find themselves participating at the decision-making stage, they were very proactive during the implementation stage of the project.

Activities such as digging of trenches and fetching of stones demands a lot of energy and so it was not surprising that the youth dominated in this stage. Most FGD respondents confirmed that domestic pressure kept most of the youth away from availing themselves to participate at decision making forums. However, the unmarried and older women appear more active at the planning and decision making stage and at the management stages of the project. The female chairperson at Otumi affirmed that:

Those who participated at the planning and decision making stage are mostly those who are grown-ups around 50yrs and above. The reason is simple; these women are passed child bearing stage and therefore have little or no major domestic role to play in terms of home making and child nurturing I am a typical example of such women (WB Chairperson, 4th March, 2015).

This implies that domestic activities play a major role in determining the extent of women's participation in RWSPs. For instance, almost all WB members, revenue collectors, and pipe-stand operators were women between the ages of 48 to 70 years. Those below fifty years were the SPAs and sanitation officers. None of the women on the WB was below 50 years at the time of the study. The youngsters are not attracted to participate in RWSPs except for the communal labour that was held in aid of the construction of the facility. With the exception of the implementation stage, all the women who participated at the planning and post planning stages of the project were women of 50 years and above. Another reason for the absence of the youth in decision-making was attributed to the traditional ideology that old age is attributed to wisdom. For instance, the chiefs did not use a young person to represent them on the WB. This observation differs from the findings of some earlier researchers where women between age 18 and 50 participate actively throughout the entire stages of the projects than those beyond 50 years. (Dawlati et al., 2012; Tigabu et al., 2013; Ladele et al., 2011; Boateng et

al., 2013). This current study however contrasts the findings of Kariuki and Misaro (2013) in Kenya, where they observed that age did not determine the participation of women in rural development projects. This could probably be due to context difference or differences in nature of project.

5.1.5 Women of Noble Character

The FGDs revealed that even though some of the women on the WB as well as the SPAs were nominated by the various groups within the community, a lot of factors were taken into consideration before such women were nominated. Even after nomination, the planning committee also considered the characters of the people before they were given the nod to be part of the management team of the water project. A female respondent and a member of the WB asserted that:

Most of the nominated women are those who are either committed Christians or Muslims whose character is good in the community. This is a small community and so we know ourselves and each person's capability and history. For instance, anybody who is known for theft or prostitution or has ever been disrespectful to the elders of this community will not be nominated to the WB. Similarly the background of all the SPAs was investigated to be sure that they will not misappropriate the money they collect from the sale of the water (WB member, 20th February, 2015).

This assertion implies that certain characters such as humility, respect for elders, sociability, trustworthiness, are some of the qualities that the community members look out for before they nominate or appoint any woman to any position related to the water facility management. In the event of misappropriation of funds, especially in the case of a treasurer or SPA she is dismissed and quickly replaced with a more qualified person. This observations confirms the findings of Chifamba (2013) in Zimbabwe, where he found

that elected women on the water planning committee were those who commanded some sort of respect from the community members, or a woman with a certain level of resources such as bicycle or cash (Chifamba, 2013; Omorede, 2014; Marks et al., 2013).

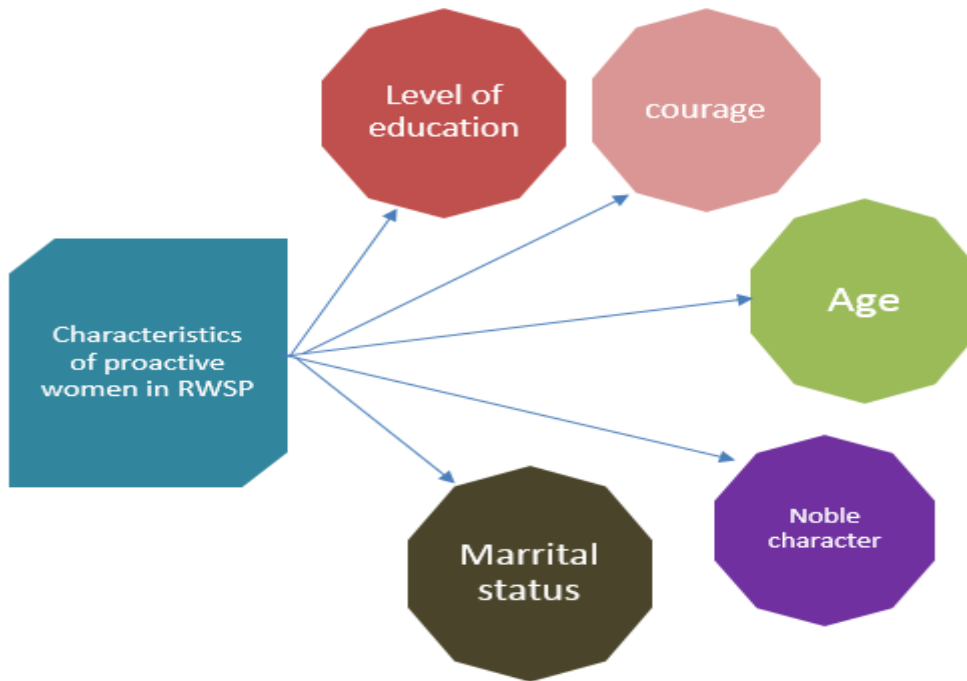


Figure 5: Representative summary of characteristics of proactive women in RWSPs.

Source: Author's own construct

5.1.6 Summary

The above analysis of the characteristics of women in the Kbd revealed that, old age, marital status, courage/boldness, level of education, and character were the major characteristics of women who actively participated in the RWSPs. Whilst those on the decision making platform were characterized by old-age, courage, high level of education and singlehood, the implementation stage was dominated by the youth. With the exception of educational level all the characteristics that describe women participants at

the decision making level equally pertains to those at the facility management level. The noble character status refers to women who are humble, trustworthy and respected in the community. The unmarried element represents women who are either divorced widowed or separated. The level of education also symbolizes those who have had at least secondary level education and above. Age also refers to women who are between the ages of 50 and 70 years. Courage refers to women who could speak in public and in the midst of men regardless of critics and mockery from other community members.

5.2 FACTORS THAT OBSTRUCT THE EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN RURAL WATER PROJECTS

All over the world, the social and economic roles of women coupled with their positions in society as major water users make them the mostly affected people in the face of water scarcity and poor water management. Nevertheless, women appear to face a number of difficulties in their effective involvement in water supply management (Boateng et al., 2013b; Figueiredo & Perkins, 2013). This study supports the finding of Kongolo et al., (2002) in South Africa where they observed that low level of education; cultural values and discrimination against rural women were the most important factors contributing to the non-participation of rural women in development. This current study identified: low level of education, domestic workload, and control from family head, cultural values and lack of motivation as major barriers to women's participation in RWSPs in Kbd.

5.2.1 Low Level of Education

Low level of education was identified as a major hindrance to meaningful participation of women in RWSP. Educated women understand the need for their voices to be heard; hence they willingly participate in decision-making without fear. Throughout the district, women have preconceived ideology that men must lead in all stages because they have been made to believe that decision-making is solely the responsibility of men in traditional societies.

One thing I have personally observed is that, without high level of education and the love for one's community, there is no way women can effectively participate in any development project especially on the decision making platform. For instance I represent the Muslim on the WB but because I cannot read and write, I hardly contribute to discussion at meetings. There are times that I depend on other educated women on the WB to explain certain concepts to me after our meetings (WB member, 20th February, 2015).

Another FGD respondent who is a farmer retorted that:

I have never been to school before. What can I possibly contribute in the meetings? Nobody will even nominate me so I did my best at the construction stage by fetching stone and water to aid the project (FGD respondent, 6th February, 2015).

These assertions imply that the mere presence of women on any decision-making platform does not necessarily mean that they are influencing any decision. It also confirms that indeed most rural women are uneducated hence lacking self-reliance and initiative abilities (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002). Therefore for women to be able to have a say in matters that affect them, they should have an appreciable level of education at least up to secondary level where they can exhibit the ability to read, write and understand the language or medium of communication. This is because throughout the interview and FGD sections the women kept referring to their inability to read and write

as a major setback to their engagement in decision-making. This current study supports the findings of Chifamber et al. (2013) and Boateng et al. (2012a&b) in Zimbabwe and Ghana respectfully.

5.2.2 Cultural Values

This study observed that certain acceptable ways of doing things in most rural communities in the Kbd, happens to hinder the effective involvement of women in the decision making process. It was revealed at the FGDs that in the olden days women were not allowed to talk in the midst of men, any woman who talks in the midst of elderly men especially when she has not been permitted to do so would either be disregarded or asked to remain silence. In other words, for a woman to remain silence when men are talking was a value that was highly adhered to. Unfortunately, this sought of behaviour has resulted in the timorous nature of most rural women today. In an interview with the district head of the WSDT, he admitted that one of his major roles is to sensitize the community members on the need to involve women in top decision making platforms:

There was a time we wanted to form a WATSAN committee in one of the villages and the chiefs decided that we hold the meeting at their palace so we had series of meetings but surprisingly the women were not coming. It was only when we made the enquiry that we were told that women were not allowed to come to the Chief's palace when they are in their menstruation period and so even those who were not menstruating at that period were not motivated to come. Similarly, in some communities they don't allow women to talk in public whilst men are there (District head of WSDT, 11th February, 2015).

This implies that where certain cultural values limit the abilities of women to voice out their plight, it will be difficult to get them contribute even if they have fair representation on any decision making body.

Initially, the planning committee was made up of nine members of which eight were men and only one was a woman but when we presented the team, the District Assembly rejected the team and asked that we make women at least 40% of the committee. So we decided to replace three men with other three women. The chief held a durbar and asked the people to nominate three women which they did (Chief's Representative on the WB, 2nd March, 2015).

The reason for the non-inclusion of women at the initial stage according to the respondent was because women will find it difficult to contribute to any suggestion at meetings. From the above quotes women were only included for the purposes of money keeping because they were seen as good money keepers. This acceptable division of labour existing in a particular society has been identified as a factor that could determine the model of women's representation in the community. For instance, Tam (2011) in his study in Southern Asia, observed that in Timor-Leste, the task of planning, organizing and decision making which were seen as more important were the sole responsibility of men whilst financial management, food supply, welfare and other administrative related functions were the tasks of women. The situation in Kbd is not any different from that of Timor-Leste which has also been affirmed by Boateng et al., (2013a) in their study on women's participation in RWSPs in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Some of these cultural values have succeeded in making the women have some pre-conceived ideas that men must lead in all stages by virtue their traditional values.

The men have bigger brains than we the women so we cannot exclude them from any decision making platform even if it directly has to do with us. Even the bible says the husband is the head of the family so we are ordained followers. We also play our role at the implementation and management stages (FGD respondent, 6th February, 2015).

Some women on the WB argued that because women were initially not sent to school, most rural folks see whatever comes from a woman as childish and therefore not

regarded. This mentality has crept into women of today and has made them not interested in decision making where men are present because of fear of critics from other women. An example was given of a woman who was active throughout the entire process of the water project. She was educated (a plumber by profession), courageous and very active. However, she suffered much insults and mockery from the community members especially from women who called her names such as 'Male Cock' but she did not give up because she was bold. This confirms Hemson's (2002) observation in South Africa that even where women show some appreciable level of involvement in leadership positions in RWSPs, they do not enjoy support from other women in the community. Ironically even though the provision of water in the home is a major responsibility of women, the provision of water through projects and programme delivery has been a process championed by men (Ibid, 2002).

Despite series of workshops and conscientization programmes on the need to allow women space for their voices to be heard, according to the district head of WSDT, very little success has been achieved. This assertion was confirmed by the difficulties of some women to talk even in the midst of their fellow women at the FGDs. They either seconded other women or remained silent.

5.2.3 Domestic Responsibilities

Domestic work responsibilities such as childbearing and nurturing, cooking, washing, fetching of water and firewood, cleaning, and caring for the aged appears to take much of women's time and attention such that they have little time left for community

development project especially in the areas of community decision making. The district head of WSDT narrated an instance where a training workshop was organized for community members in rural development projects. The community members were asked to write their daily activities on paper. Interestingly, the men only wrote three items as compared to almost three hundred items written by the women. When the men were asked whether any of them had fetched water that morning, none of them raised their hand but almost all the women present there said they had fetched water that morning before attending the workshop. This shows how much work-load women have as compared to men. It was discovered that those whose nature of work did not demand a lot of time and much domestic responsibility, engaged much in the project than those whose nature of work takes much of their time. It was therefore not surprising that majority of the women on the WB were older and unmarried. Some male respondents were also of the view that it is rather the lack of interest in community development issues that serves as barrier to women's participation, giving the example that whenever the chief calls the entire community for a durbar or a meeting, majority of the women do not show-up using their household chores as an excuse. The women respondents vehemently disagreed with this assertion claiming that their domestic work-load was a major barrier to their involvement in RWSPs.

I believe that the nature of work of the women is a key determinant factor. This is because I am a farmer and have nine children to cater for every morning before leaving to my farm. Therefore it will be extremely difficult for me to combine my domestic responsibilities with community demands such as attending meetings. I believe that there are others who are a bit free to attend such meetings per the nature of their domestic work-load (FGD respondent, 20th February, 2015).

It is evident from the above response that the nature of domestic activities of most women determine the level of their participation in RWSPs. According to Kevany et al. (2013), involvement in political activities will mean interruption from domestic tasks and their gendered roles. This is because while they cited domestic work-load as a hindrance to their participation in decision making, it was not so with their engagement in the project at the implementation stage or management stage. This confirms the findings of Tam that “most women are overloaded with three types of work; reproductive, productive and community work...women in rural areas do various types of hidden work in Liquica, Timor-Leste. They are home makers, agricultural producers and welfare providers for the whole clan or extended family” (Tam, 2011: 165). Similarly, Boateng et al. (2013b) in their study on Gender and Management Practices in the Ashanti region of Ghana, identified domestic and economic activities as major barriers to women’s participation in RWSPs. Domestic work-load therefore seems to be the major reason for the differences in the level of participation of men and women in decision making and planning in RWSPs.

5.2.4 Control from family Head

This current study contradicts the assertion that married women are more proactive in RWSP processes (Tigabu et al., 2013). This study discovered that control from family heads which in most cases happened to be men (husbands), poses threats to women’s engagement in decision-making in the Kbd. In an interview with a district official, he argued that there were times when some women were nominated by other members of the community but their husbands denied them the opportunity to serve on the WB, claiming that their wives will not get time to serve on the water committee due to family issues.

There are times that even the nominated woman will be willing to do the work but their husbands prevent them. They sometimes willingly accept the nomination in public but later come back with the excuse that their husbands say they should not accept the nomination (Otumi WB Chairperson, 1st March, 2015).

In another interview with the Abaam chairman, he claimed that:

My wife cannot take any leadership role without my approval. If I tell her not to do it, she will not do it. And if I tell her to go ahead, she will do it because she is under my control (8th February, 2015).

This means that some women come under certain controls when their husband is strict and this prevent them from any involvement in decision making. This revelation affirms the assertion that the absence of husband supports together with continuous gender bias explain the failure of females to actively participate in outside activities. This has resulted in low female leadership in rural communities (Kevany et al., 2013). It was also surprising to notice that even though most of the male respondents show some excitement over women who boldly came out to make contributions at meetings and community gatherings, the men confirmed their reluctance to allow their wives to take such a bold step in decision making with the reason that they (men) are there on their (wives) behalves. It was therefore not surprising that the majority of the women on the WB were unmarried.

5.2.5 Lack of incentive/ motivation

This current study identified that with the exception of the implementation stage where majority of the youth were active the rest of the processes were dominated by older women. At the FGDs, it was revealed that, majority of the youth who are educated had all left for either the cities or the district's capital town in search of jobs befitting their

qualifications. The rest who are left in the villages did not find engaging in decision-making either by being on the planning committee or the WB lucrative since they seem occupied with farming or mining activities in order to cater for their dependents. There was basically no incentive for the youth to be on the WB or become a SPA. The reason was that those on the WB are not paid salaries but only given allowances of about GH¢ 20.00. Similarly, SPAs are paid on commission basis.

The youth cannot be SPAs because with the money they receive, it will be difficult for them to cater for their children and aged parents. My mother is a SPA and she gets approximately GH¢ 50.00 per month. That amount can only sustain the youth for some few days considering their dependants (WB member, 9th February, 2015).

Similarly, another WB member in Otumi, a retired nurse disclosed that:

Apart from the general benefit of having a clean water to drink, nobody is paid any salary. What I receive on the WB is just a small allowance of Gh.¢ 20.00 per month (2nd March, 2015).

This implies that the youth feel that being on the WB or becoming a SPA is a sacrificial commitment since they would not be given enough incentive to cater for their needs. This discovery confirms the findings of Deji (2007) in Nigeria where he observed that women are only willing to effectively participate in rural development on the condition that they receive some kind of incentives. It is however worthy of note that whilst the youth attribute their lack of participation to disincentives, the older women did not see disincentives as a barrier to their participation in decision-making.

Besides, women on the water committees disclosed that, often the attitude of other women in the community discourages them from being on the WB. They claimed that they are often insulted, mocked, and called all sort of names especially when they inform

community members on the need to increase water usage charges or when they lead any disconnection exercise.

There are times that I endure so much insult from both the young and older women, especially when I go round to educate them on the need to increase charges. They call me names such as Obaa-berema (a male-woman). I sometimes feel discouraged to serve on the WB (WB secretary, 15th February, 2015).

This proves that women who take leading roles in mixed gender platforms frequently lack support from their fellow women in the community. This attitude reinforces the perception that in “the presence of men, women can be divided and that men display a solidarity against women’s ‘intrusion’ into the management of public affairs” (Hemson, 2002:7).

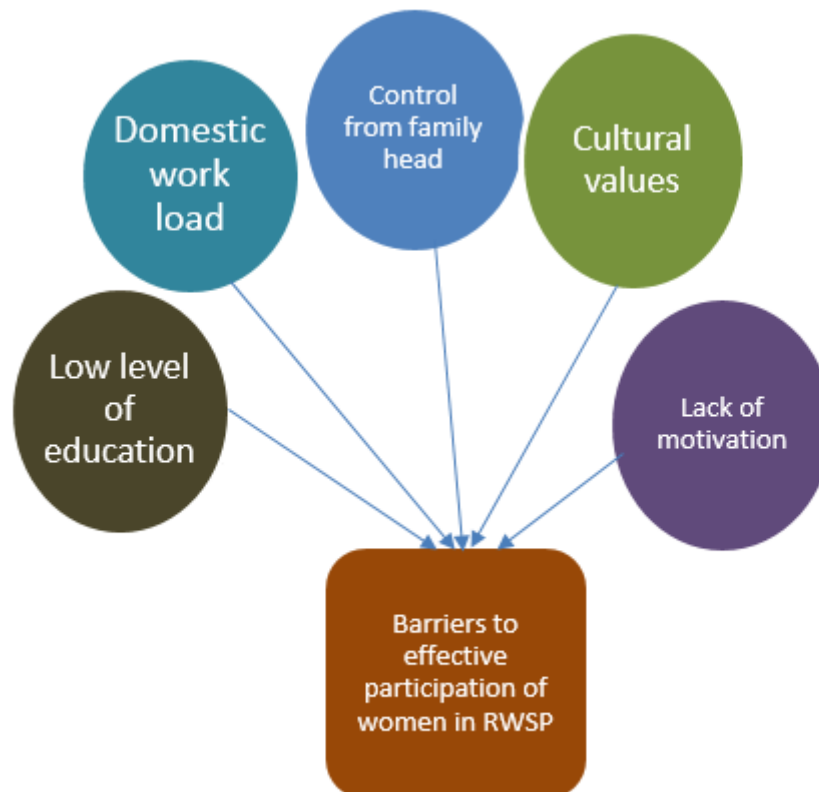


Figure 6: Representative Summary of barriers to effective women’s participation in RWSPs.

Source: Author’s own construct

5.2.6 Summary

Earlier works by Boateng et al. (2013); Tigabu et al. (2011) and Tam (2011) identified low level of education, cultural values and domestic-work load as major challenges of women's participation in RWSPs. This current study, in addition to the already mentioned challenges, identified control from family heads and the absence of motivation for the youth as the major challenges that foil the effective participation of women in RWSPs. These barrier to a larger extent affect the meaningful involvement of women at the decision making and planning stages of RWSPs in the Kbd. Women in the Kbd do not have major difficulty in engaging in the project at the implementation and management stages since the role they play at these stages seem to conform to their traditional gender roles as women in their community. Regardless of the impact of these challenges on women's meaningful engagement in RWSPs, majority of the women (especially the less educated ones) seem to be content with the current trend of male dominance in decision making processes.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

The main focus of this study was to discover the drivers of women's participation in RWSPs, identify the major characteristics of women who appear more proactive in these processes, and the challenges they face in their involvement in the management of water supply projects. It was assumed that if these factors are not discovered and analyzed they are likely to result in unremitting obstruction on the level of women's engagement in major rural developmental projects such as RWSPs. Having already presented and analyzed the findings of this study in the preceding chapters, this chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

There seem to be a general agreement among scholars that the traditional role of women as the collectors and users of water put them in a position to contribute their voice to decision-making in RWSPs (Ladele et al., 2011; Tigabu et al., 2013; Boateng et al., 2013a&b; and Harmon, 2012). The general argument is that "a foundation of female participation in decision-making roles is important to the success of a programme" (Sander & Fitts, 2011:33). However, research indicates that despite the essence of women's contribution to issues that affect them most, their involvement in water supply related issues is generally low and that where their engagement seem encouraging, their contribution have only been in terms of physical labour and in cash but not in decision making. Many reasons have been attributed to the absence of women in decision making arena especially when it directly has to do with their welfare.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The essence of participation in development has been duly recognized in many forums held over the years. There is no doubt that the sustainability of any development project is determined by the collaborative involvement of all the stakeholders in the project delivery. However, participation of stakeholders depends largely on the nature of design, implementation and maintenance of the water facility. Several interventions of successive governments have been undertaken to ensure equal participation of both men and women in community development especially in the provision of basic infrastructure such as water facilities in rural communities. Although these measures succeeded in increasing the representation of women on decision-making platforms, yet these interventions have failed to ensure equitable participation of both sexes in terms of contribution to decision making in the rural communities. Even though greater number of women in Ghana live in rural areas, their voices do not have significant impact on decision that deeply impact their lives in their communities. The argument has been that these interventions only tackled the problem at the surface but did not consider the perpetuating traditional gender roles and values that prevail in most Ghanaian traditional societies which has crept into the decision making arena. This has made it difficult for the less privileged in society to influence decisions at any level regardless of their magnitude of representation on these platforms. As a result, the poor and the marginalized in the society, most of whom happen to be women, remain observers in decision making especially in matters that affect them most. This is in respect of the recognition that a decision making platform which considers the voices of both men and women at all levels is the only guarantee for project sustainability in rural communities (Agarwal, 2010; Kevany et al., 2013).

This research employed the ladder of participation by White (1996) and Vernooy (2005) as a frame to explore the nature of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and FGDs of forty-three respondents. The interviewees were: One (1) institutional respondent at the national level, three (3) district officials (head of project engineer, the district planning officer and the district head of WDST) at the district level, five (15) WB members (three women in key positions and two men) and six (6) planning committee members. The FGD respondents were eighteen (18) in all (six women in each group: four SPAs and two hygiene officers). The study sought out to address three main research questions regarding the underlining drivers of women's participation in RWSP, the characteristics of women who appear more proactive in the processes, and the factors that hinder women's meaningful inclusion in the RWSPs cycle. With regards to the first objective, empirical data revealed that there are five major drivers of women's participation in the Kbd. These are: future aspiration, pride of living in a developed community, nomination, fear of punishment and the need to give back to one's community. However, it was observed that the need to give back to the community and future aspiration were instrumental in driving women to engaged in the decision making and planning stage. On the other hand, nomination and fear of punishment were found to be the major drivers of those who engaged in the project at the implementation and management stages. The pride of living in a developed community is a major driver that cuts across all women who participated in the project at all stages.

On the issue regarding the characteristics of women who were more proactive throughout the stages of RWSPs, I identified certain characteristics such as: old-age, level of

education, noble character, courage and marital-status as the main characteristics of women who engaged in the RWSPs in the KbD. For women who were active at the planning and decision making stages, it was observed that they had at least secondary level education, courageous, of noble character, and mostly singles. With the exception of Otumi where only one woman on the board was a retiree, three out of the four women on the WBs of the other two communities were retired civil servants and therefore had enough time to participate in community developmental activities. It was therefore not surprising that they had the above mentioned characteristics. With the exception of few men who were employed by the contractor and were paid salaries, the implementation stage attracted almost the entire community members since it was organized in the form of a communal labour, where everybody participated or otherwise received punishment in the form of fine and insult from other community members. It is worthy of note that even though the entire community was expected to participate at this stage, the youth did majority of the task whilst the older ones supervised. This is because the nature of the task which involved digging of trenches, fetching of stones and water, and weeding required a lot of energy which the aged did not have. Most of the women who participated at this stage were below the age of 50. At this level, characteristics such as level of education, marital status, courage and character played little or no major function.

The involvement of women at the post-implementation or management stage was very encouraging. This is because even though the technical operators are all males, women are the ones in charge of money collection at the pipe stands, and also ensure that the

surroundings of the stand pipes are hygienic. Women are also the hygiene officers who go round educating both the SPAs and the entire community on important sanitation practices regarding the use of water and its facility. Even though most of these women have little or low level of formal education and old (50years and above), they are women of noble character since one has to have a good record of trust-worthiness before she could be nominated as a SPA.

Despite the appreciable level of women engagement with the water project at the KbD, a lot of factors obstruct their meaningful inclusion and participation at the decision making stage. These factors include: control from family heads, low level of formal education, lack of incentives, pressure from domestic chores and cultural values. It was identified that low level of education (inability to read and write) decrease the courage to participate in discussions at meetings or even make any meaningful suggestion. Whiles the educated ones could easily understand the subject of discussion and contribute to it, it was constantly difficult for the uneducated women to do same despite the fact that the medium of communication was in their local dialect. Similarly, most women agreed that their domestic chores did not permit them to attend meetings to contribute to discussions. Besides, some cultural values have dampened the ability of women to confidently speak-up in the midst of men without being mocked or insulted. Most men do not find it attractive to encourage their wives to hold top-most positions in decision making platforms. These obstructions have succeeded in making many women in rural areas content with their involvement at the implementation and management stages of the water project, leaving the decision-making platform for men and the few educated women.

The theory of women participation in rural projects holds the assumption that the extent of the effective participation of women in RWSPs will determine the sustainability of the water facility (Ladele et al., 2011; Marks et al., 2014, and Mohammed, 2010). However, regardless of the fact that women's involvement in RWSPs is not very encouraging at the decision-making stage, this study identified that after seven years of establishment, and the water facilities were found in a very good shape and as intact as it was provided seven years back. This success could be partially attributed to the LG policy guidelines which ensures that at least 40% of the composition of any committee on water project delivery should be made up of women.

This quota intervention has indeed been instrumental in the inclusion of women in all the cycle of RWSPs delivery in the Kbd. At least two out of the three studied communities had invested their accrued money, made from the sale of the water into other income generating ventures such as construction of toilet facilities. Against this backdrop, this study concludes that the nature of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd could be likened to the collegiate form of participation by Vernooy (2005) and the transformative form by White (1996). The WB is responsible for all the decision making pertaining to the management of the facility which include: how much to charge for a bucket of water, who to be in charge of the sale of water, and how to use the accrued money. Women who appeared active at the decision-making level had a higher sense of ownership of the project than those who only participated at the implementation and management stages.

6.2 Conclusion

The need for equal involvement of both men and women in rural developmental project especially in the RWSPs has been stressed in many major forums such as World Summit on Sustainable Development (1993), Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), Beijing Conference (1995) among others. The ultimate argument has been that both men and women need to have equal participation in RWSPs and that for this to materialize, access to certain basic infrastructure such as education, health and economic facilities should be made available and accessible especially to rural women. Contributions in the form of labor, cash, food and involvement in consultative discussions are the major ways through which women's participate in the RWSPs in the study area. On average, 40% of committees set up for the planning and management of the water facility are women. However, only few of these women willingly stood up to be part of such committees; the rest found themselves on the committees through nominations. It is also worthy of note that only few of these women make significant contribution to decision making at that level. Most nominated women did not show up willingly because of fear of being rejected by their own people. They rather waited for others to nominate them. This means that most women prefer being persuaded or compelled to participate through nomination. Regardless of the fact that the gender mainstreaming in RWSPs has succeeded in increasing women's participation in the planning and decision-making field in the Kbd. Decision making podiums still remain dominated by men while the activities of women remain within the threshold of their traditional gender roles which include collection of money, cleaning, fetching of water and stones, and cooking. Against this backdrop, there

appear to be some sort of division of labour persisting in the communities where men formulate or makes decisions and women implements them.

Assessment made on the drivers of women participation in the water project revealed the need to serve the community, pride of living in a developed community, fear of punishment, nomination and future aspirations as the drivers of women participation in RWSPs in Kbd. These drivers are instrumental in determining the stage of the project at which women were more active. Whilst majority of the women were active at the implementation and management stages, very few effectively participated at the decision making and planning stages due to several factors such as: low level of education, strongly held traditional beliefs, domestic work-load and control from family heads. These factors have contributed to widening the gender gap between men and women resulting in low self-esteem and the inability of women to effectively partake in decision making and planning processes on issues that affect their welfare.

Women who are driven by the need to serve their community, future aspiration and by the pride of living in a developed community appear to be women who have high level of education, are older, unmarried and bold. These women participate better at the decision making and planning stages of the project. Besides, the outcome of the project reflected the ideas and suggestions of these women. These women have higher sense of ownership of the facility as they see the facility as their own and they take practical steps in the maintenance and sustainability of the facility.

On the other hand, women who were driven by fear of punishment and nomination were mostly women who had low levels of education, mostly unmarried, are either old or young, and are more active at the implementation and post implementation stages through their labour or/and cash contributions to the project. These women believe men are good decision makers and therefore endorse the dominance of men at decision making levels. Consequently, they appear to have lower sense of project ownership because they tend to view the facility as available to the community but belonging to the WB members. These women are of the view that their low level of education would make their ideas and suggestions disregarded even if they find themselves on decision making panels. Those driven by the pride of living in a developed community however cut across all the three phases of the water project.

It was also observed that the communities with men as chairpersons had enough funds in their coffers. These communities have accumulated enough funds in their covers such that in the event of a breakdown in the facility, the facilities could easily be replaced. Unfortunately, the only community (Otumi) with female chairperson had been dissolved by some male community members. This community (Otumi) had very little money in their coffers to effect any replacement in the event of a breakdown in the water facility. This shows that some communities view certain political positions as reserved for men and so when women occupy such positions they are not accorded much respect as compared to their male counterparts. The study also exposed that; although men praised women who are bold enough to join them in decision making, they would not encourage their wives to engage in such activities because they feel women do not respect their husbands when they occupy top decision-making platforms.

Even though some scholars (Chifamba et al., 2013; Marks et al., 2014) argue that time of meetings pose a barrier to women participation in decision making, at the time of my data collection, meeting times was not a barrier to women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd. In any case, some women admitted that meetings times indeed used to be a problem as it interrupted their domestic chores and other activities but upon deliberations with the men on the committee the issue was amicably resolved.

With regards to the implementation and post-delivery maintenance, the participation of the women in the district is very effective. However, this was not the case at the decision making stage. Nevertheless, the participation of women throughout the various phases of the RWSPs in the Kbd cannot be underestimated. The involvement of women at all stages of the project and particularly regarding their contribution in terms of buying the water at point sources have gone a long way in sustaining the facilities till today. However, the fact that few women were found to be active at the decision making platforms implies that there is more room for women to increase their contribution at decision-making stages.

The study confirms the argument that government mechanisms and interventions such as the quota system, have failed to appropriately resolve issues of equitable contribution of women on decision making platforms (Hicks, 2011). This current study therefore argue that it is only through a gendered perspective coupled with capacity-building interventions that women's confidence level and skill could be stepped-up to effectively engage in grass root governance.

6.3 Recommendations

The ultimate strife behind the inclusion of women in the decision making arena has been that participation must encompass every segment of the community and at every level of the project cycle (Kevany et al., 2013; Hicks, 2011). These scholars argue that projects that were completed without the significant inclusion of women in all the phases (planning, implementation and management) will most likely fail to achieve their intended objectives. Evidence from several studies both within and outside Ghana have shown that without meaningful engagement of women in RWSPs cycle, significant improvement in the living condition of rural people will only be a mirage (Chifamba et al., 2013, Hicks 2011; Boateng et al., 2013a&b). In the light of the findings of this study, some recommendations have been proposed to make the participation of women in RWSPs more meaningful to ensure effective project delivery and sustainability.

- One major recommendation is that government in partnership with local leaders and development stakeholders should be committed to a continuing revolution of gender traditional roles in our rural communities. This is because regardless of the continuous attempt of government to empower women to enable them make decisions for themselves, the traditional perception that the place of a woman is in the kitchen still persist in most rural Ghanaian communities.
- Secondly, women need to be intensively educated on the need to effectively participate in RWSPs since the unavailability of clean water has a negative bearing on their health and that of their families. They should as well be sensitized into up-hailing or supporting their fellow women when they find themselves on decision making platform to speak on their behalf.

- It is also worthy of note that the contribution of women alone will not be sufficient to ensure project maintenance and sustainability, since most rural women do not believe in their own capacity to effectively manage the facilities without male intervention. There is therefore the need to ensure the joint participation of the both sexes for effective project delivery and sustainability.
- To ensure the absolute engagement of women in decision making women must be evenly represented and treated as interest groups on all platforms. Interventions are needed to establish policy designs and strategies to ensure that women, especially the rural folks are actively engaged in RWSPs through the deployment of their knowledge, skills and experience to ensure pragmatic response to rural development.
- Beside the quota approach, other approaches such as the mode of women involvement, and conducive participatory mechanisms such as places of meeting, incentives for women participants, encouragements from husbands and community elders are equally essential in ensuring effective involvement of women on the decision making stage.
- Steps should be taken by local government to improve rural women's potentials for participating in rural development especially at the decision making levels where issues of choice, assessment and resolutions are made.
- Capacity building and training sections should be organized for rural women especially in communication skills and technical maintenance of the water facility. This is required to get women abreast with the technical knowledge of the

project and the basic skills to repair broken facilities in the absence of their male counterparts.

- Local government in collaboration with local leaders should endeavor to organize series of seminars aiming at educating rural men in building the capacity of their wives, assisting them in domestic chores and encouraging them to be active participants in decision making projects/program. This also mean that men should be the target for reforms. An exclusive focus on women is unlikely to yield any desirable result.

6.4 Scope for Future Research

Having explored the given research questions within the stated scope of this study, it was realized that certain essential issues were not discussed by the study. In an attempt to measure the nature and level of women's participation in RWSPs in the Kbd, this current study only focused on the engagement of women at the planning, implementation and management stages of the project cycle. Minimal attention was devoted to women's engagement at other equally important stages such as the monitoring, and evaluation stages of the water project. Besides, other subjects such as the role of community leaders (especially the men) in ensuring the effective participation of women especially at the decision making levels of the project and women's contribution to project's financial management remained untouched. It is believed that to clearly understand the dynamics of women's participation in RWSPs, future research can look into these relevant and interesting areas.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PROJECT ENGINEERS AND WATSAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS

SECTION A (SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

- Age of respondent
- Level of education
- Marital status
- Number of children
- Number of years stayed in the community
- Occupation of respondent

SECTION B (LEVEL OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN RWSP)

- Respondents understanding of the concept of participation
- What is the level of women's participation in RWS in the KD?
- What accounts for the varied level of women engagement in RWSP?
- Which types of women appear more proactive in the participatory process and what are their characteristics?
- How do women participate in the water project?
- Barriers to women participation in RWSP
- Role of respondent as WSDB/ Project engineer in ensuring the effective participation of women in RWSP

SECTION C

(WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AND RWP MAINTENANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY)

How sustainable are the water projects and why?

Would you say the participation of women in these projects contribute to its maintenance and sustainability? Why?

What are the contribution of women to project maintenance and sustainability?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WOMEN PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A (SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

- Age of respondent
- Level of education
- Marital status
- Number of children
- Number of years stayed in the community
- Occupation of respondent

SECTION B**(LEVEL OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN RURAL WATER PROJECT)**

- Understanding of the concept of participation
- What account for the varied levels of women's participation in RWSP?
- What is the reason for your participation in the water project?
- Which stage of the water project are you more active and why?
- What is the nature of your contribution and why?
- What benefits have you derived from your participation in RWSP?
- Challenges of participation

SECTION C (WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO RWSP MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY)

- How sustainable is the project and why?
- Does women's participation lead to water project sustainability and why?
- How do women contribute to water projects sustainability?