

**SEXUAL HABITS OF LEFT-BEHIND WIVES AND
RELATED COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS IN NIMA,
ACCRA.**



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

CENTRE FOR MIGRATION STUDIES

**SEXUAL HABITS OF LEFT-BEHIND WIVES AND RELATED
COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS IN NIMA, ACCRA.**

BY

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF
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DECLARATION

I, Sahadatu Ali declare that except for references cited which have been duly acknowledged, this dissertation is the product of an independent research conducted under the supervision of Dr. Ebenezer Nikoi and has not been presented in part or in whole for any degree elsewhere.

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DATE

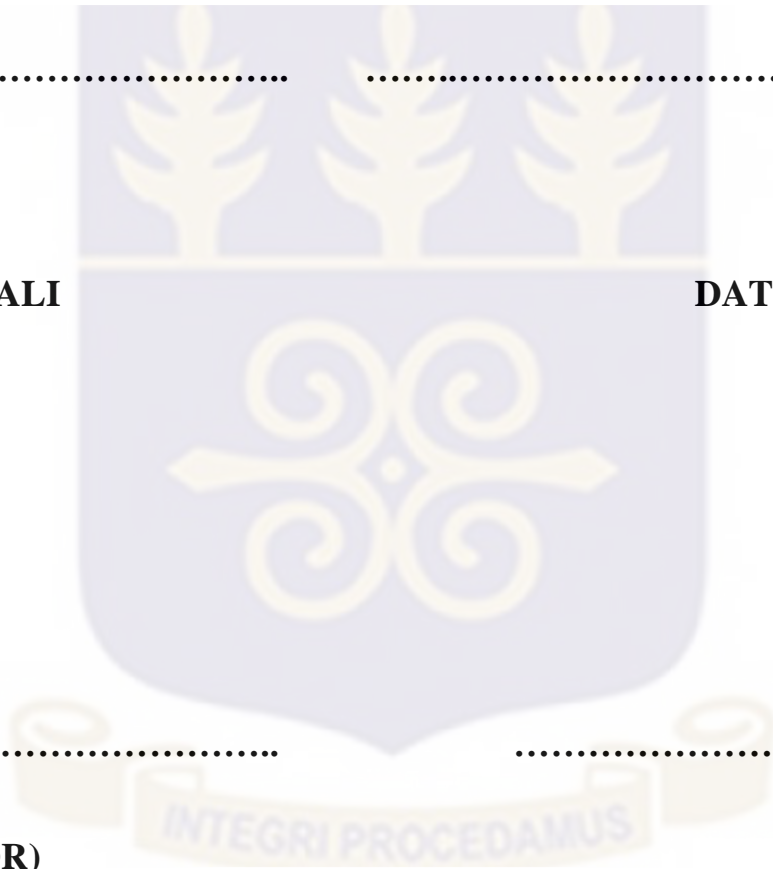
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(SUPERVISOR)

DR. EBENEZER NIKOI

DATE



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family; especially my son Ayman Kowiye Gundona and my parents Alhaji Ali Sambo and Hajia Fatima Ali for their love, support, patience and understanding.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

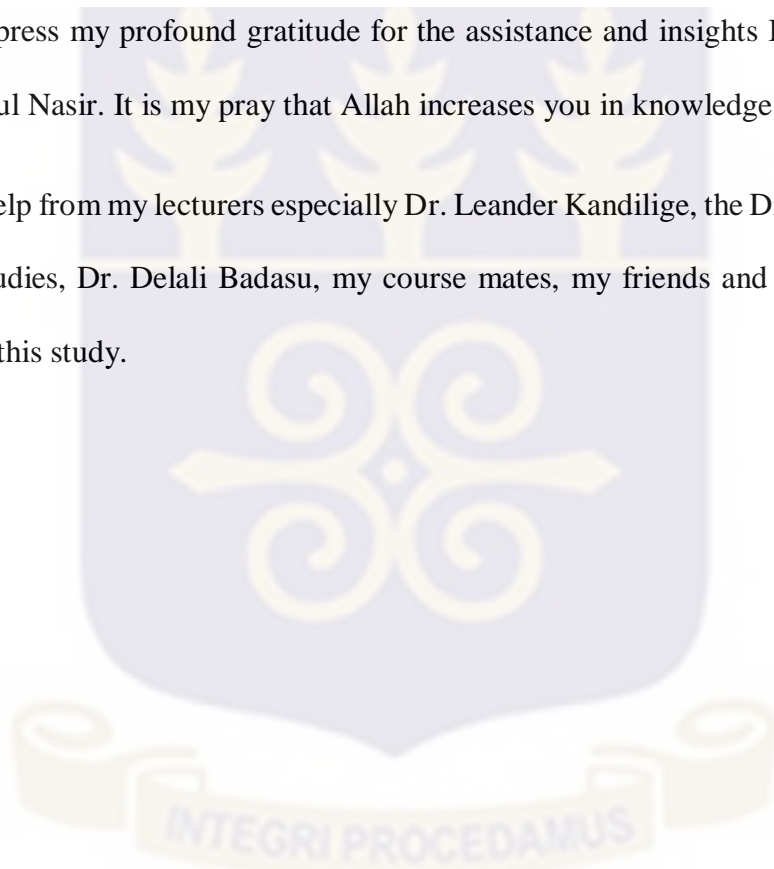
I am grateful to Almighty Allah for my life, His protection and blessings.

To my parents especially my mother for her guidance and sacrifice, I thank Allah for your life.

I am thankful to my supervisor, Dr. Ebenezer Nikoi for the time, patience and encouragement. You were very helpful and I hope to work with you again.

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ABSTRACT

The migration-sexuality nexus has implications for health and spread of disease especially HIV/AIDS, fertility and family size, socio-cultural norms, and sexuality and sexual behaviour at the origin, transit point and destination, for both migrant husbands and left-behind wives. Since experiences and expectations are different for migrant husbands and left-behind wives, their sexual habits even though both go through changes, the changes differ due to social, political, religious, cultural and personal factors. However, for left-behind wives the effects of these factors are more telling on their sexual habits, thus this study focused on the effects of migration on the sexual habits of left-behind wives by gathering information from their real life experiences and from perceptions of community members.

This study adopted the mixed research method approach through the use of questionnaires in a survey and interview guide in in-depth interviews. Data was gathered from a total of fifty-five respondents, comprising eight left-behind wives selected using screener questionnaires to participate in qualitative interviews. And forty-seven community members were also selected through convenience sampling to participate in quantitative interviews.

The study drew on the Social Exchange theory and the Equity Concept. The findings indicated that a left-behind wife's socio-economic status can affect her sexual habits, but as to whether she remains faithful to her husband or not to a large extent depends on religious, cultural and personal factors. There was also evidence that migration of husbands brought about changes in the sexual habits of left-behind wives, however, the forms these changes take differ from the perspective of the wives themselves and the community members. This, the study presumes, could be a case of blame shifting as the left-behind wives seemed to side with community members on the forms of change that occur in the sexual habits of other left-behind wives, but disagreed with them when it relates to the left-behind wives themselves. Generally, perception of sexual habits of left-behind wives is negative as community members perceive left-behind wives to be promiscuous as well as adopt risky sexual habits; hence left-behind wives are cautious and selective in their actions and associations.

TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
CHAPTER ONE	
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Problem Statement	3
1.3 Research questions	5
1.4 Objectives of the study	6
1.5 Rationale of the study	6
1.6 Organisation of the study	7
CHAPTER TWO	
LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Migration trends in Ghana	9
2.3 Reasons for migration	11
2.4 Gender Dimension of Migration in Ghana	13
2.5 Sexuality and sexual expression in light of religious and cultural influences	15
2.6 Theoretical Framework	17
CHAPTER THREE	
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	21
3.1 Introduction	21
3.2 Study Area	21
3.3 Study Population	23
3.4 Research Method	23
3.5 Sampling and sampling technique	25

3.6 Data Collection	28
3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation	29
3.8 Ethical considerations	29
3.9 Limitation of the study	30
CHAPTER FOUR	
ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF	
LEFT-BEHIND WIVES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS	
4.1 Introduction	31
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Left-behind-wives	31
4.2.1 Age	31
4.2.2 Number of years married	32
4.2.3 Religion	32
4.2.4 Level of education	32
4.2.5 Occupation	33
4.2.6 Source(s) of income	33
4.2.7 Number and presence of children	33
4.2.8 Type of accommodation and place of residence	34
4.3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Community Members	36
4.3.1 Sex distribution of community members	36
4.3.2 Age distribution of the community members	36
4.3.3 Marital status distribution of community members	37
4.3.4 Religion of community members	37
4.3.5 Educational level of community members	38
CHAPTER FIVE	
SEXUAL HABITS OF THE LEFT-BEHIND WIVES AND RELATED	
COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS	
5.1 Socio-economic status/wellbeing and its effects on sexual habits	40
5.1.1 Economic status/wellbeing of left-behind wives	40
5.1.2 Social wellbeing of left-behind wives	42
5.2 Important needs of left-behind wives	43
5.3 Changes in Sexual habits; Before, During and After Migration	45
5.3.1 Sexual habits before migration	45
5.3.2 Sexual habits during migration	45
5.3.3 Sexual habits after migration (upon return)	46

5.4 Community Perceptions	47
5.4.1 Community perception of sexual habits of married couples	49
5.4.2 Importance and role of sex in marriage	49
5.4.3 Community perception of needs of left-behind wives	50
5.4.4 Faithfulness of left-behind wives	51
5.4.5 Why left-behind wives remain faithful and why they do not	52
5.4.6 Controlling and Satisfying sexual desires	57
5.4.6a Satisfying sexual desires through sex with other men	58
5.4.6b Other ways of satisfying sexual desires	58
5.4.6c Controlling sexual desires	60
5.4.7 Stereotypes about female sexuality	62
5.4.8 Stereotype about female sexuality against male sexuality	63
5.4.9 Negative repercussions of marrying migrants	67
5.4.10 Why marriage to migrants may be considered	69
5.4.10a Roles migrant husbands played in maintaining marriage	70
5.4.10b Marriage to migrants should not be encouraged	71
5.4.10c Conditions under which marriage to migrants may be encouraged	72
5.4.10d Regular return	73
5.5 Coping Strategies	74
5.5.1 Coping with absence of husbands	74
5.5.2 Coping with negative community perceptions	76
CHPATER SIX	
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	78
6.1 Introduction	78
6.2 Summary of Findings	78
6.2.1 Socio-economic Characteristics and its Effects on Sexual Habits	78
6.2.2 Changes in Sexual Habits of Left-Behind Wives	79
6.2.3 Community Perceptions	79
6.2.4 Coping Strategies	80
6.3 Conclusion	80
6.4 Recommendation	81

REFERENCES	83
Appendix A	91
Appendix B	96



LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of community members	39
Table 5.1 Community members' knowledge of a left-behind wife	47
Table 5.2 Perception about sexual habits of married couples	49
Table 5.3 Perception of whether left-behind wives remain faithful or not	52
Table 5.4 Ways of satisfying sexual desires	60
Table 5.5 Ways by which left-behind wives control their sexual desires	62
Table 5.6 Left-behind wives cannot be unfaithful even when their husbands are not faithful	66
Table 5.7 Conditions under which left-behind wives may be unfaithful	67



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1 Summary of qualitative and quantitative approaches	24
Figure 3.2 Summary of quantitative approach	28
Figure 5.1 Community perception on sources of income of left-behinds	41
Figure 5.2 Activities left-behinds engage in daily (in percentages)	43
Figure 5.3 How long community members have known left-behind wives (in percentages)	48
Figure 5.4 The role of sex in marriage (in percentages)	50
Figure 5.5 Reasons why left-behind wives remain faithful (in percentages)	55
Figure 5.6 Reasons why left-behind wives do not remain faithful	56
Figure 5.7 Reasons why left-behind wives cannot be faithful (in percentages)	63
Figure 5.8 Left-behind wife cannot be unfaithful even if her husband is unfaithful	64
Figure 5.9 Reasons not to marry migrants (in percentages)	68
Figure 5.10 Reasons why marriage to migrants may be considered (in percentages)	69
Figure 5.11 Reasons why marriage to migrants will not encourage (in percentages)	72
Figure 5.12 Reason why marriage to migrants may be encouraged (in percentages)	73
Figure 5.13 Ideal length of time migrant husband should be absent (in percentages)	73



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Migration has been a part of the history of human kind as people have moved from place to place for varied reasons. These reasons included movement in search of food, fertile land, new settlement, to mention a few. The phenomenon has lingered on, adapting with time to meet peculiar needs and agencies. Migration has been on the ascendancy with greater numbers moving year on year as a result of developments in Information Communication Technology (ICT) which has birthed improved transportation systems, making migration easier and faster (Awumbila et al., 2011).

Migration has been a key component of policy formulation and even more so in recent years as governments and policy makers have recognized the need to harness its positive outcomes and minimize the negative outcomes. This is one of the reasons that inform liberalized immigration laws (Zlotnik, 1998:429-430), thus making the subject take on a global look. It is no wonder that migration and its outcomes are making the major headlines lately.

Immigration data from the United Nations (2017) International Migration Report shows that about 258 million people are living in places other than their places of birth (UN International Migration Report, 2017).

Typically, it is believed that international movements are northwards with people from poorer less developed countries in the Global South moving to the richer more developed Global North. These movements may be as a result of, poverty, conflict, persecution, natural disasters, among others.

However, contemporary movements are predominantly for economic reasons due to the disparities in incomes and wages between the regions of the world (World Bank report 2008).

Examples of movements include movements from the Philippines and India to the UK, from Pakistan, Syria, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan to Germany, and from Ghana to Italy (Migration Policy Debates; OECD, No. 7 September 2015).

However, Ratha and Shaw (2007) have indicated that about half of international movements are from South to other developing countries rather than wealthier countries in the North. This is supported by the 2016 World Bank's Migration and Remittances Factbook which points out that 38 percent of the total migrants stock is from South-South and this is more than South-North movements.

With the growing demand for care givers, domestic workers and nurses as the care and domestic work industry thrives, more and more women (49 percent of world's migrants) are taken part in international migration to take up jobs in the industry (ILO, 2008). Even so, the remaining 51 percent of the world's migrants are men, indicating that women are lagging in international migration.

In Ghana, of the 250,623 Ghanaians migrating internationally, 63.95 percent are males and only 36.05 percent are females (GSS 2010); an indication that women form a greater proportion of left-behinds. This is not surprising as men are seen as the ones to provide for the family, thus they migrate as a way of increasing their ability to perform this duty (Adepoju, 2008). This indicates that traditionally women have always been the left-behinds as they have to stay back to care for children and perform household duties.

This state of affairs is exacerbated by restrictive social norms and laws that limit the benefits of migration to women and are more pronounced in mostly patriarchal societies where women's mobility and agency is limited (Fleuny 2016). A World Bank 2014 report indicates that as part of social norms in Niger, a "good wife" does not leave the home and that "women do not migrate" (World Bank 2014, as cited by Fleuny 2016). This encourages male migration as against female migration, specifically, married women.

Not only do these restrictive norms limit the opportunities of migration for women but are built into the very fabric of society such that they influence every aspect of the left-behind woman's life including the impact of migration on her sexuality.

1.2 Problem Statement

According to Fiske (1998), migration affects every aspect of the life of both migrants and non-migrants, and it may be positive or negative for both origin and destination countries. This is a key factor necessitating the efforts by leaders to enact laws and policies to minimize the negative outcomes of migration and maximize the positives for development, at both micro and macro levels.

Traditionally, social norms favor male migration because of their role as heads of the family and bread winners (Adepoju, 2008). When men migrate, they leave behind families who are affected by the outcome of the migration which could be positive or negative. Also culturally, when a man marries a woman, he must have made preparations for accommodation so she can move to live with him or sometimes with his family. As mentioned earlier, a key component of men's socio-economic life is migration, thus in a man's lifetime there is a high probability that he may migrate and when this happens, for a married man he leaves behind a wife (left-behind wife).

Research has shown that migration of husbands has effects on their left-behind wives. Roy and Nangia in their (2005) study, “Impact of Male Out-migration on Health Status of Left behind Wives” in Bihar India, found out that while male migration provides economic relief to their families, left-behind wives have to bear the burden of increasing responsibilities of managing their households, and meet social expectations, which leads to greater mental stress (Roy and Nangia, 2005).

The authors commented on the sexuality of migrant husbands at the destination and how that is linked to the contraction and spread of STIs at the origin, adding that left behind wives of migrants are more likely to have greater stress and report the symptoms of reproductive morbidity. They opined that, “for small economic gains, left-behind wives have to pay a heavy price in terms of physical and mental stress”, indicating that, “they (left-behind wives) accept it as their fate and a must for survival of their families” (Roy and Nangia, 2005).

Jetley (1983) and Bose (2005) have also stated that, in the absence of a husband a woman feels isolated (Jetley, 1983; Bose, 2000).

A study on 'Filipino wives' (Go et al., 1983) and another study on 'gulf wives' in India (Gulati, 1983) found that wives experience a certain amount of emotional stress due to increased responsibilities, safety of husbands and isolation. These studies and more point to the fact that beside the economic effects of migration on left- behind wives, there are also emotional as well as psychological effects, not forgetting the effects on their sexuality too.

There have been several studies on the effects of migration and most of these studies have concentrated on the socio-cultural and economic effects (see Sevoyan, 2011; Anarfi and Owusu, 2010; Cassels et al., 2014; Ikuomola, 2015).

There have also been studies on the nexus between migration and sexuality, but these studies have focused on the spread of disease, particularly HIV/AIDS and STIs among men and women, both migrants and non-migrants. Others have focused on the effects of migration on fertility and reproductive health among women (Awusabo-Asare and Anarfi, 1997).

However, there is scanty literature on the effects of out migration of husband on the sexual habits of their left-behind wives, thus this study, bearing in mind the sensitive nature of the subject of sexuality especially among women in the Ghanaian setting, aimed at collecting evidence on the socio-economic characteristics of left-behind wives and how these characteristics affect their sexual habits, the perceived sexual habits of left-behind wives, the changes, if any, in their sexual habits and then examine the various coping strategies these wives adopt regarding their sexual habits in light of the absence of their husbands as well as how they deal with community perceptions about their sexual habits.

1.3 Research questions

Owing to the aforementioned objectives, the following research questions arise to guide the study:

1. What are the effects of migration of husbands on the sexual habits of their wives left-behind?
2. Does the migration of their husbands bring about changes in their sexual habits?
3. What forms do their sexual habits take and what role does socio-economic status play in forming these habits?
4. What is the community's perception about the sexual habits of these wives; is it positive or negative?

5. How do these wives adapt regarding their sexual habits in the absence of their husbands and in light of community perceptions about their sexual habits?

1.4 Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study was to examine the changes that the migration of husbands bring to bear on the sexual habits of wives left-behind in light of the roles religion and culture as well as economic status play in shaping behavior in Nima, Accra.

Specifically, the objectives of the study were;

- i. To describe the socio-economic characteristics of the left-behind wives and how they may affect their sexual habits.
- ii. To identify the various coping strategies the left-behind wives use to deal with both the absence of their husbands and the perceptions people have about their sexual habits.
- iii. To examine changes, if any in the sexual habits of left-behind wives in the absence of their husbands.
- iv. To examine community perceptions about the sexual habits of left-behind wives.

1.5 Rationale of the study

As stated earlier, migration affects every aspect of social life including sexuality, but most studies have focused on its economic effects (Fiske, 1998).

Data from the Ghana Statistical Service also shows that the population of male emigrants is twice that of females in Ghana (GSS 2010 PHC report). There is also evidence that, a higher percentage

of women (42.9 percent) are married compared to men (37.4 percent) (GSS 2010 PHC report). All these point to the fact that the bulk of left-behinds are females.

Also, studies into the migration-sexuality nexus have focused on the effects from the migrants' perspective; research shows that migrants adopt risky sexual behaviours which make them prone to STIs (Cassels et al. 2014; Anarfi, 1993a; Anarfi and Awusabo-Asare, 1993b; Anarfi et al., 1993c).

Again, studies that looked at left-behind wives rather centred on spread of diseases and reproductive health issues. There is a gap in the literature especially in the Ghanaian context on how emigration of husbands affects the sexual habits of their left-behind wives in light of socio-economic and cultural underpinnings. Hence the need for extensive literary work on the subject and this study contributes by examining the effects of migration on the sexual habits of left-behind wives and related community perceptions of these habits as well as the coping strategies these wives adopt to deal with the absence of their husbands and the perceptions of community members. The study will then make recommendations based on the findings to contribute to literature in this regard.

1.6 Organization of the study

To examine the effects of migration of husbands on the sexual habits of their left-behind wives, the study is organized in six chapters.

The first chapter (chapter one) introduces the study, giving a background of the work, statement of the research problem, rationale of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and organization of the study.

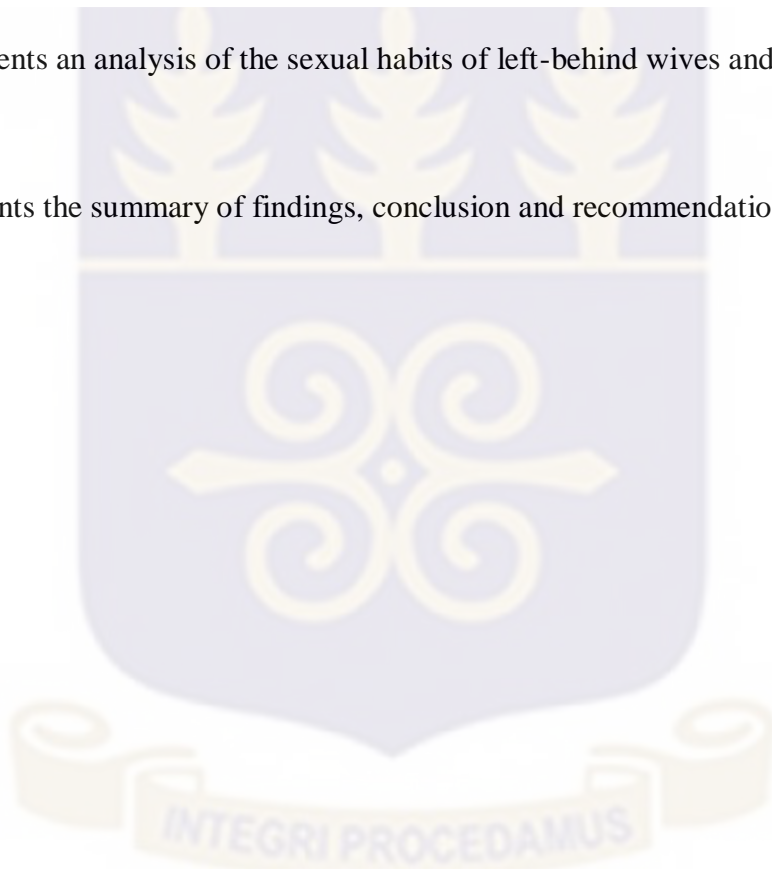
Chapter two reviews literature on migration trends in Ghana, gender dimensions of migration, sexuality and sexual expression in light of religion and culture, migration and sexuality nexus and the theoretical framework adopted to explain concepts in the study.

Chapter three outlines the methodology of the research, presenting the research area, the sample size and technique, the data analysis procedure among others.

Chapter four presents analysis of socio- demographic characteristics of community members and left-behind wives.

Chapter five presents an analysis of the sexual habits of left-behind wives and related community perceptions, and;

Chapter six presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter is on review of the literature on migration trends in Ghana, the motivations and impacts, highlighting the gender dimensions. It also examines sexuality and sexual expression in light of religion and culture. The theoretical framework adopted to explain concepts in the study is then explained.

2.2 Migration trends in Ghana

Migration is the movement of people either individually or in a group across national borders or within a country, over a period of time resulting in long term or permanent change in residence. Goldscheider (1974) asserts that this movement may result in a complete detachment from the ways of life at one place and a total transmission of ways of life to another place (Goldscheider, 1974). This and the resulting experiences, largely depend on the length of stay at the destination. The United Nations classifies the length of time that a person must be in a foreign country to qualify as an international migrant as one year, thus this study will define the migrant husbands as men who have migrated outside Ghana for one year or more, regardless of their destinations and the activities they are engaged in at the destination.

Globally, migration is on the ascendancy with increasing numbers of people moving year by year making the phenomenon take on a global look. This increase has been consistent with 173 million people moving in 2000, 191 million in 2005, 222 million in 2010 and 244 in 2015 (United Nations International Migration Report, 2015). According to the UN International Migration Report 2017, there are 258 million international migrants currently.

On the subject of migration, Ghana is not left out as it has seen its own fair share of immigration and emigration, with the later exceeding the former. This has not always been the case as Ghana used to be a net immigration country where migrants from countries such as Togo, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, among others came to take advantage of the employment opportunities created by the colonial machinery, structures, institutions and administration (Awumbila et al. 2008).

There were internal movements from the northern parts of Ghana to the southern part too. Also, there were cross border movements from Ivory Coast, Benin, Nigeria, Mali and other neighbouring countries into Ghana, to work on cocoa farms, gold mines, road and rail construction sites, lumber plantations, among others (Peil 1974; Busia 1950; Hill 1961; Rhoda 1980; Nukunya 1992). This trend continued through to the independence era where owing to the Pan African ideology of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana adopted a liberal approach to migration allowing for free movement and trade (Awumbila 2008; Benneh 2005).

However, the trend changed in the late 1960s when the country began experiencing economic hardships coupled with the negative sentiment of the monopoly of migrants in certain sectors of the economy. Some 200,000 migrants left as a result of the 1963 Aliens Compliance Order in 1969 (Benneh 2005; Peil 1974; Awumbila et al. 2008). In the 1980s, Ghana recorded high emigration of its highly trained professionals and a number of low or unskilled men and women to seek better opportunities, first to countries within the ECOWAS region and then later to places like Western Europe, North America and Asia (Anarfi et al. 2000, 2003; Adekanye 1999; Dovlo 2003; Twum-Baa et al. 1995; Grivil 1985; Bump 2006).

Currently, emigrants from Ghana are scattered in destinations such as UK, USA, Netherlands, Canada, China, Germany, Italy and Spain (Agyeman, 2011) for the purposes of seeking

employment, furthering education, reuniting with families, business opportunities and even for leisure. Data from the 2010 Population and Housing Census estimates that some 250, 623 Ghanaians have emigrated, representing 1% of the total population (GSS, PHC 2010).

Aside international migration, there is also an active pool of internal migration in Ghana with movements mostly being southwards from the northern part of the countries. The reasons and/ or motivation for moving include educational pursuit, seeking employment, change of residence, family reunification, job transfers etc.

According to data collected from 16,772 households in the 2012-2013 Ghana Living Standard Survey, about 48.6 percent of the population are internal migrants with 51.6 percent living in the rural forest region, followed by Accra (60.3 percent), rural coastal (44.6 percent), other urban (46.7 percent) and rural savanna (37.5 percent) in that order (6th round GSS, GLSS 2014).

2.3 Reasons for migration

The main reason for contemporary migration is wage differentials between sending and receiving countries as well as the individual's desire and expectation of earning a higher wage (Todora, 1969). Dontsov and Zotova (2013) have also argued that the main motivation for migration is to improve living standards.

There is evidence that migration when managed properly can eliminate poverty and gradually bridge the gap between rich and poor countries through both tangible and intangible remittances. These motivations have been grouped into economic, social, political and environmental (International Federation for Human Rights, 2007; William and Hall, 2000; Bhugra, 2001; Hugo, 1996 and Warner, 2009).

A World Bank 2015 report indicates that in 2014 alone, international remittances to developing countries stood at about 436 billion US dollars, exceeding Foreign Direct Investments and Overseas Development Aids except for China (World Bank, 2015). Sorhun, (2011) and Bastyr, (2009) attest to this fact by asserting that the primary motivation for people, whether skilled or unskilled is for economic gains and this is reflected in the international remittance stock data.

In the social context, family and friends are the main factors of migration since when individuals move, they move with or leave behind family and friend who at varying extents are affected by the outcomes of the migration. One of such key players in the social context are the left-behind wives being considered in this study. For example, Rossi (1980) indicates that the need to set up and manage household needs (for example, housing) as a result of change in residence or family composition is a motivation for individuals to migrate.

Governments and policy makers have great influence on migration as they are responsible for making immigration laws. Movements such as the migration of Liberian refugees to Ghana, Iraqis to Germany and Syrians to the UK are all examples of movements motivated by political reasons. According to UNHCR (2010) report, the estimated number of politically displaced persons in 2010 is 15.4 million, 2.3 million of which are from Africa. Again, a study on politically displaced persons in the Dominican Republic by Ugalde, et al., (1979) showed that in the 1960s it was possible for entire households to migrate for political reasons.

Migration due to environmental reasons is as old as man, as people have and continue to move for environment factors such as drought, flood, earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis etc. However, migration resulting from these causes may be permanent or temporal. Though there is not enough understanding of how the migration- environment linkage affects economic development and

social change, there is still yet to be extensive literary work on environmental change as both a cause and/ or a consequence of migration. There have however been increased concerns about migration due to environmental reasons as attested to by the organisation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janirio in 1992. Evidence from a 23 case study scoping studies, partly sponsored by the European Commission confirm that environmental factors are among the factors driving migration currently.

2.4 Gender Dimension of Migration in Ghana

Females have and continue to be key players in both national and international migration for various reasons including livelihood improvement, self development, diversifying risk, and fleeing from poverty. Other reasons are for marriage, but work is becoming an increasingly significant reason why women migrate. This trend in migration can be traced as far back the 19th century as evidenced in Ravenstein's Law of Migration which aptly captures this in his 6th law as follows; "females are more migratory than males, at least over shorter distances; males are a majority in international migration" (Ravenstein, E. G. 1885; 1889).

The above by implication means that more females migrate over short distances than males and even in international migration, females feature prominently notwithstanding the male dominance. Ravenstein's assertion still holds true in contemporary migration trends as recent migration data shows that, of the about 244 million total world population of migrants, females make up 49% (United Nations International Migration Report, 2015), a trend which has pertained for years but may appear to be new with the use of the term "feminization of migration" in recent years (Caritas international "The Female Face of Migration" background paper, www.caritas.org).

In the Ghanaian context, again Ravenstein's law is reflected as more females tend to undertake more internal migration than males, whereas males engage in international migration more than females. Data from the Ghana Living Standards Survey of 2014 shows that of the 48.6 percent of the total Ghanaian population who engage in internal migration, 50.1 percent are females and 46.5 percent are males (GLSS, 2014).

Regarding international migration, the global trend is reflected in the Ghanaian context. Drawing on data from the 2010 Population and Housing Census by the Ghana Statistical Service, there are a total of 250,623 Ghanaian emigrants, 63.95 percent are males and 36.05 percent are females (GSS 2010). The total population of male emigrants is nearly twice that of females in Ghana which means that females make up the bulk of left-behinds.

Some factors accounting for this are social norms and practices that discriminate against women (example restricted access to resources and lower status of women in the familial setting), gendered roles of women as care givers and nurturers, thus the need for them to stay put; and macro level economic factors that affect men and women differently.

Statistics from the 2010 Population and Housing Census in Ghana shows that more women (43.9 percent) than men (41.7 percent) are married, this coupled with the rather lower number of female emigrants as compared to male emigrants suggests that, a chunk of left-behinds are married women, hence the need for extensive literary work on the effects of migration on the lives of these left-behind wives.

2.5 Sexuality and sexual expression in light of religious and cultural influences

Discussions around the subject of sexuality have been treated as ‘taboo’ over the years in many African societies. Conversations about sexuality are seen as a preserve for adults and for that matter married people in most settings (Anarfi, J. K. 1993a). Despite the key role it plays in ensuring the continued existence of the human race, the subject which features prominently in our daily lives is viewed from a conservative perspective. This state of affairs may be attributed to the cultural as well as religious meanings given to the subject of sexuality (Anarfi and Awusabo-Asare, 1993b).

The same cannot be said for recent years as owing to modernization, the myths and taboos surrounding sexuality have been broken to a certain extent or are gradually losing grounds. The above assertion holds true in developed societies where sexuality is freely discussed. In less developed societies however, where religion and culture form the very basis of living, the subject is still treated with some degree of obscurity (Ikuomola 2015).

In almost every setting, sex becomes legitimate with marriage and this way of viewing sexuality again has cultural and religious underpinnings (Brink J. H. 1991), even though this way of stereotyping about sexuality is gradually changing and one key factor fueling this change is migration.

The roles of culture and religion in shaping behaviours and attitudes to sexuality cannot be overemphasized as many scholars have pointed to the fact that what makes up sexuality is more social than biological and that masculinity and femininity are not universally defined. Until recently, Same Sex Marriages (SSMs) were frowned upon even in the United States of America, but with modernization and increased human rights activism as well as a move towards more liberalized societies, several countries have legalized SSMs.

Jenks (1998) in his review points out that in 1970s in the USA, about 2% of married people admitted to having ever had casual sex before marriage. However, Kimberly (2016), in her work indicated that currently in the USA some 8 million people engage in casual sex which could be attributed to the fact that the American society has become more liberal in their beliefs around sexuality. Quite opposite are other equally liberal societies like Poland and United Kingdom where even polygamy is seen as more favorable than casual sex and promiscuity. These societies see infidelity to be negative (Grunt- Mejer and Campbell, 2016; 53(1): 45-53).

Also, worth noting is that, expression of sexuality may vary from culture to culture. And the aspects of sexuality that culture can affect include; norms on what is seen as the appropriate sexual behavior, the right way and condition to express sexuality, who a suitable partner is, among others.

For example, in the Western countries the concept of relationship is embedded in the theory of the Triangle of Love (Sternberg, 1986), where a relationship goes through three stages namely the passion stage, the intimacy stage and finally the commitment stage. The theory explains that at the start of a relationship there is passion which leads to idealization. It then moves to the intimacy stage where the couples become attached and it is at this stage that they learn about and understand each other's sexuality. Then they move to the commitment stage which leads to marriage.

In other cultures, such as the Jewish culture, where sexuality is formed around faith and religion, the intimacy stage in the love triangle is skipped until after marriage which leads to a gap or differences in communication and sexual expectations (Ribner and Rosenbaum, 2005). The situation is not very different for an Iranian woman whose sexual satisfaction is influenced as she is not expected to pursue sexual satisfaction as a way of maintaining her family name (Rashidian et al, 2013). Also, within Islamic cultures, we find that polygamy is legitimate by Sharia Law thus

accepted as the norm. But research shows that level of education can impact rates of polygamy significantly and an example is seen in Southern Ghana (Heinemann et al, 2016)

Existing literature points to the fact that migration has effects on all aspects of social life including sexuality (Fiske S. T. 1998). However, many of the scholarly works that have been done on the nexus between migration and sexuality have focused on the spread of disease, particularly HIV/AIDS and STIs among men and women, both migrants and non-migrants; and others have focused on the effects of migration on fertility and reproductive health issues among women. A few have also concentrated on the socio-cultural and economic effects of migration on migrant women and those left-behind (see Sevoyan, A. 2011, Anarfi, J. K. and Owusu, A. Y. 2010, Cassels et al., 2014, Ikuomola, D. A. 2015).

There is scanty literature on the effects emigration of men has on the sexual habits of their left-behind wives, thus this work, bearing in mind the sensitive nature of the subject of sexuality especially among women in the Ghanaian setting, aims at collecting evidence on the perceived and real sexual habits of left-behind wives and then ascertain the various coping strategies these wives adopt regarding their sexual habits in light of the absence of their husbands.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Migration can have effects on both sending and receiving countries both negatively and positively, thus state actors worldwide have concerned themselves with policy frameworks and decisions to maximize the benefits and minimize the challenges associated with migration. Extensive research has been done in this regard as these benefits and challenges coincide with development prospects of many nations.

Earlier researches have not only focused on the effects of migration at the macro level but have also worked on the effects at the familial level, that is the economic, socio-cultural, psychological and physiological effects on the extended family comprising uncles, cousins etc, and the nuclear family, that is children and spouse(s). Studies that have focused on the effect of migration on left-behind wives mainly look at the economic and socio-cultural dimensions and where they have dwelled on the sexuality of left-behind wives, they look at the migration-sexuality relationship in terms of spread of disease and fertility.

This study aims at bringing to the fore the effect migration has on the sexual habits of left-behind wives by first collecting evidence on the general perception about the sexuality of these left-behind wives, find out from the left-behind wives themselves the sexual habits they adopt as a result of the migration of their husbands and the coping strategies they adopt, first to deal with the absence of their spouses and the perceptions with regard to their sexuality.

Traditional migration theories focus on the economic effects migration has on left-behinds. For example, Structuralist theories such as Wallerstein's World Systems Theory, Gunnar Myrdal's Cumulative Causation Model, and Andre Gunder Frank's Dependency Theory among others, all explain the causes and effects of migration using economic underpinnings either directly or indirectly.

This study attempted to explain the effects of migration on the sexual habits of left-behind wives, by first relying on the social exchange theory (Cook and Rice, 2004). The theory explains that, social relationships can be likened to exchange of goods and services whereby individuals act (incur cost), expecting reward (goods/services), thus the action is reinforced due to the reward. That is, people enter into or stay in a relationship (marriage) expecting profitable outcomes. The

theory continues that individuals in a relationship weigh the costs and rewards; and the profitability level will determine the stability of the relationship.

It is important to note that existing literature as well as the current study show that marriage makes sex legitimate. It serves as the 'license' to freely engage in and express sexuality without fear for the consequences. This is especially true for expression of female sexuality. The importance of sex in marriage cannot be over emphasized as other studies as well as the current study give credence to this assertion. There is evidence that sex in marriage is seen as both a right and a responsibility, thus the important role it plays in maintaining marriage. But to maintain stability in marriage, several other variables which may not be rewards in themselves, work together to bring about stability in marriage. And faithfulness (cost) and sexual gratification (reward) are just a part of those several other factors; this evidence contradicts the assumptions of the Social Exchange Theory (Cook and Rice, 2004).

Again, there is compelling evidence that, for individuals to continue to stay in a social relationship, there may be several other equally important factors other than sexual gratification. These may include economic benefit, presence of children, emotional and psychological stability emanating from trust and assurance of love and care by partners, support systems such as family and community members, and other ways of attaining sexual gratification other than the natural heterosexual means.

According to the Social Exchange Theory (Cook and Rice, 2004), in social relationships (marriage), actions (faithfulness) are reinforced by rewards (sexual gratification). However, sexual gratification, though very important in a social relationship (marriage), is not the only reward sought in marriage. Contrary to the assumption of the Social Exchange Theory (Cook and Rice,

2004), which has a rather simplistic take, reward that may reinforce actions differ from individual to individual and their importance may also not be the same. Again, there is evidence that in social relationships, reward is not the only factor that reinforces actions. But other factors such as beliefs and personal traits play key roles in reinforcing behavior. This is corroborated by Anarfi, 1993, Awusabo and Anarfi, 1997, and Caldwell et al, 1996.

The second theoretical concept this study draws on is the Concept of Equity (Walster et al, 1978) which assumes that there is equity in a relationship when participants believe that the reward they receive is proportional to the cost involved in sustaining the relationship. When the participants find that the cost is more than the reward, the relationship is unstable and participants feel cheated or angry. This is used to explain why individuals in a relationship (marriage) may either stay committed to the relationship or engage in extramarital affairs.

As indicated earlier in the study, left-behind wives suffer psychological and emotional instability because of the absence of their husband (Ikuomola, 2015) which is in line with the Equity Concept (Walster et al., 1978). There is evidence that left-behind wives generally exhibit a sense of dissatisfaction in their marriages. Worth noting is that, this sense of dissatisfaction is not only linked to lack of sexual gratification, but also linked to the lack of other rewards such as economic benefits, presence of children, emotional and psychology stability resulting from trust and sense of care and love from partners, family and community support systems and other means of sexual gratification other than the natural heterosexual means. However, this sense of dissatisfaction among left-behind wives does not necessarily make the marriage unstable or lead to unfaithfulness as some left-behind wives accept their situation as fate and a means for the survival of the family, as evidenced in Ikuomola's 2015 study on left-behind wives in Edo State, Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present the methods adopted to conduct this research. Specifically, the chapter presents the techniques used to collect and analyse data.

The chapter explains why the research collected the data, what data the study collect, where the data was collected and how the data will be analysed to help answer the research question. Thus, this chapter constitutes the study area, the study population, research design, sample and sampling technique, data collection technique and data analysis. It also discusses ethical considerations as well as limitations.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Nima which is one of the biggest slums in Accra. It is located in the East Ayawaso Constituency with a population of about 55, 830(GSS, 2000). It is described as a low-class residential area of migrants with over 20 language groups. The population in the area is made up of 24.6 percent Akans, 16.1 percent Mole-Dagbons, 16.3 percent Ewes, 11.8 percent Ga-Dangmes and other ethnic groups make up 31.2 percent (Agyei-Mensah and Owusu, 2009; Owusu et al., 2008; Yankson, 2000; Essamuah and Tonah, 2004).

The settlement was founded by Malam Amadu Futa, a Fulani migrant in the 1930s when he was entrusted with the land as custodian by the Odai Kwao family from Osu. The land was originally used to pasture cattle but gradually migrants settled there and the influx of migrants led to the settlement being referred to as “Zongo” (a slang term for Muslim dominated settlements in Ghana).

Currently, Nima has become a major economic centre with the increase of economic activities in the area. This was indicated in the 2000 Population and Housing Census which showed that residents are mostly engaged in informal activities hence a high percentage (54 percent) of the people are self-employed (GSS PHC 2000).

The main religions are Islam and Christianity with Islam dominating. A study by Owusu et al. (2008) in Nima revealed that the main element of organisation is religion thus religion is very important to the residents (Owusu et al., 2008) and this may explain why they revere their religious leaders.

The study area is densely populated creating a settlement development problem due to the unplanned nature of settlements. As a result of the overcrowding, settlements are such that several households are collected in one dwelling structure making it difficult to draw a sample using dwelling structures.

Nima was chosen because, growing up as a Muslim associating with peers in “Zongo” communities, I always heard people say that ladies in these communities preferred to marry migrants and it was fashionable to be a wife of a migrant. Thus, when I conceived the idea of the topic, I contacted an opinion leader in Nima in the person of Sheikh Mohammed Abdul-Nasir Biyey. He confirmed the perception and assured me of his assistance to identify the migrant households and subsequently the left-behind wives. This was supported by findings from Owusu et al., (2008). Finding from 50 percent of the households in his study indicated that they received remittances from family members living abroad.

3.3 Study Population

The study focused on left-behind wives in migrant households and community members from non-migrant households but share the same compound with the migrant households. Left-behind wives in the study constitute wives residing in Nima whose husbands have migrated outside Ghana for at least one year, and must be adults, that is above 18 years of every social class and tribe. The definition of wife here covered such statuses gained through the Islamic religious and cultural marriages, the Christian marriages and also traditional marriages ('engagement' as referred to in the slang term in Ghana).

And community members in this study are males and females, resident in Nima who share the same compound with the migrant households but are not related to the migrant husband or the wife left behind. This is to reduce the tendency of biased responses. They are adults of 18 years and above without regard for their socio-economic status, educational level, tribe and marital status. For both left-behind wives and community members, only one individual was selected from each household. However, for some dwelling structures where over ten households share the same compound, more than one non-migrant household was selected and from each, a respondent who was willing to participate in the study was interviewed.

3.4 Research Method

The choice of the approach was to either use the qualitative or quantitative approaches or both in a social based study. This study adopted the mixed method research approach to enable the researcher to use an interview guide to collect information on the real-life experiences of left-behind wives in face to face interviews. And to also use questionnaires to conduct a survey of community perceptions about the sexual habits of left-behind wives. This was done so that both

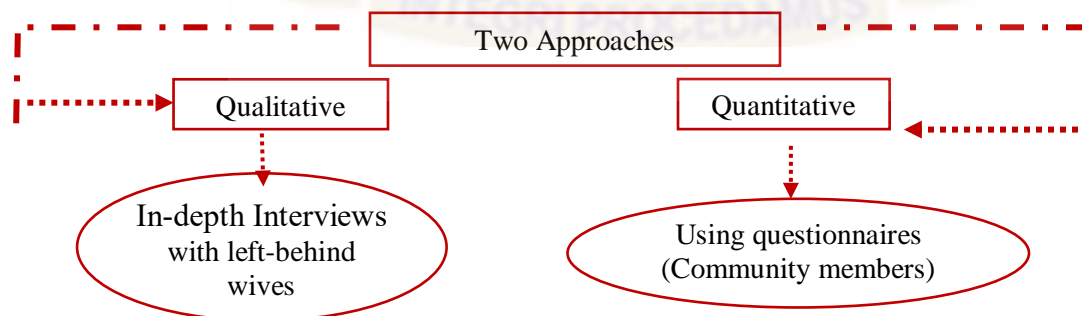
approaches will complement each other for a detailed understanding of the study (Teye, 2012; Cameron, 2011).

The qualitative approach is employed to enrich the quality of data collected because it offers the advantage of gaining understanding into the primary motivations and reasons for attitudes and behaviours and helps to understand how individuals interpret the happenings around them and their experiences. Bryman (2004) asserts that this approach gives insight into the settings of a problem, helping to generate ideas and/or hypothesis (Bryman, 2004). This method was adopted primarily to gain an understanding of the real-life experiences of left-behind wives regarding their sexual habits and also to complement information from community perceptions.

The quantitative method, as the name implies, is to attempt to quantify data so as to generalize results from a sample to a population and it helps to answer questions like ‘how long’ or ‘how many’. This approach measures the frequency of views and responses of a given sample and it was adopted in this study to find out the perceptions of community members in Nima on the sexual habits of left-behind wives.

The quantitative and qualitative approaches are summarized below;

Figure 3.1 Summary of qualitative and quantitative approaches



Source: Self constructed

From Figure 3.1, qualitative method through in-depth interviews was used to collect information on the real-life experiences of left-behind wives through face-to-face interviews in their households. And the quantitative method through questionnaires was used in a survey to collect data from community members on their perceptions about the sexual habits of left-behind wives

3.5 Sampling and sampling technique

Due to the difficulty in identifying left-behind wives, an opinion leader (a 42-year-old Islamic cleric Shiekh Mohammed Abdul-Nasir Biyey who was born in Nima and has lived all his life there, thus has vested knowledge in the socio-cultural, political, economic and religious organisation of the study area) assisted to identify migrant households in Nima. In these migrant households, a screener (a screener is a question or group of questions placed at the beginning of a survey to determine whether participants or households have certain characteristics required to qualify to take part in a study) was used to select left-behind wives by assessing whether the household had a male migrant who is married. Their wives were then selected to participate in the study.

As indicated earlier in the study, not very many people, especially women are comfortable discussing issues pertaining to their sexuality in the African setting and for that matter the study area (Nima) where religion is the main element of organisation. Owing to this and the fact that there was limited time within which the study ought to be completed, after identifying several migrant households which had left-behind wives, only 10 agreed to participate in the study. Appointments were then made with these 10 left-behind wives for the in-depth interviews at their convenience. However, two of the selected wives later declined to participate in the study, thus in all, only eight left-behind wives participated. The interviews were held at places the participants

chose which included for some their households, work places, and some were held at the residence of the opinion leader.

The researcher is aware of the difficulty associated with the transferability of unique qualitative findings and generalizability of particular quantitative findings in studies that have a small sample size like the current study. Nevertheless, in phenomenological studies like the present study, sample sizes are smaller than those in grounded theory and ethnological studies (Russell and Gregory, 2003). Also, worth nothing is that unlike in quantitative studies where spelt out guidelines guide the researcher's decisions on the appropriate sample size to use, in the qualitative method the researcher relies on general principles, reflective judgments and negotiations (Russell and Gregory, 2003).

The justification for the selection of a smaller sample size is captured in Patton's (2002) observation that there are no stipulated rules for sample selection in qualitative approach as the sample will depend on what the researcher wants to find out, his purpose for undertaking the research, what will be useful, what will be credible and what can be done with available time and resources.

The qualitative phase answered the following objectives; to find the socio-economic characteristics of left-behind wives and how it affects their sexual habits; examine changes, if any in the sexual habits of left-behind wives; identify the various coping strategies left-behind wives use to deal with both the absence of their husbands and the perceptions people have about their sexual habits.

The quantitative phase helped with the validation of the qualitative findings from the study. It sought to specifically understand the perceptions of community members about the sexual habits of left-behind wives. To measure people's perception on the sexual habits of left-behind wives, a

questionnaire was used in a survey to collect data from 47 respondents consisting 17 males and 30 females. They were selected using convenience sampling. The respondents were individuals aged eighteen years and above, irrespective of their marital status from the same compounds as the migrant households but were not related to the left behind wives. Questions were asked in English and other local languages.

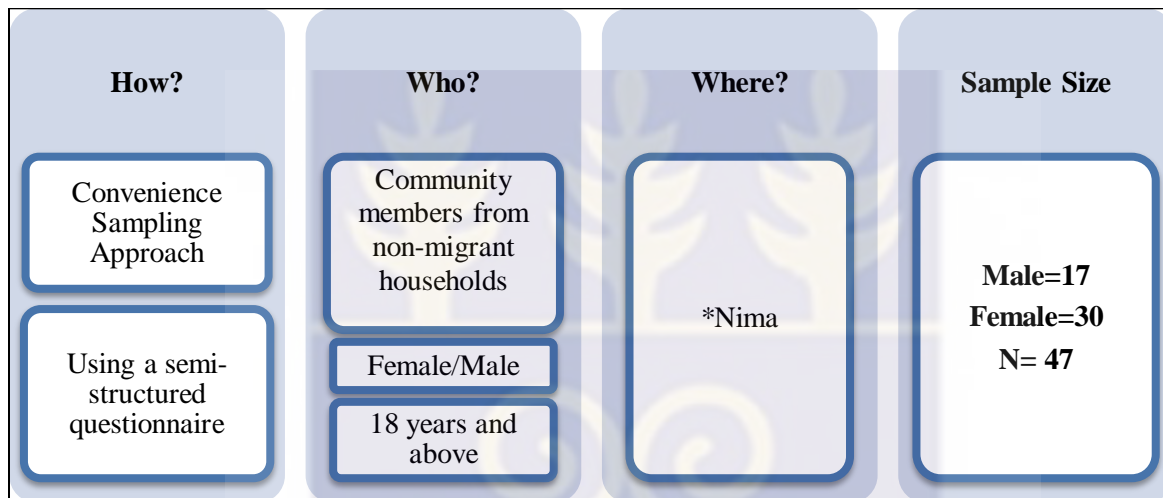
Convenience sampling was used due to time and financial constraints. Another motive for using the technique was that the study sought respondents with distinctive characteristics. That is, individuals who shared the same compounds with migrant households but are not related to the migrant family. This was because the study wanted perceptions from individuals who lived with and observed the daily lives of left-behind wives. Also, due to the sensitive nature of the subject of sexuality and the fact that people shy away from discussing it, the researcher adopted the convenience sampling method to be able to interview any adult member of the non-migrant household in the same compound with the left-behind wife who was available and was willing to participate in the study.

The researcher was aware of the difficulty associated with getting individuals to discuss issues pertaining to sexuality, thus sought to interview any member of a non-migrant household (in a dwelling structure that has a migrant household and a left-behind wife), who was willing to take part in the study, irrespective of sex, provided he/she is an adult (18 years and above). This informed the sample size and the sex distribution obtained in the study.

Again, due to the difficulty in sampling by dwelling structure because of the unplanned nature of the housing system in the study area, it became prudent to use convenience sampling to select a participant considering the limited time available. As indicated earlier in the study, the study area

Nima is one of the biggest slum settlements in Accra. It is densely populated and settlements are unplanned. Due to the overcrowded nature, settlements are such that you find several households in one dwelling structure which makes it difficult to sample using dwelling structure. Below is a figure illustrating the quantitative approach;

Figure 3.2 Summary of quantitative approach



Source: Self constructed

3.6 Data Collection

The study adopted the qualitative and quantitative approaches. For the qualitative phase, an in-depth interview was used to collect the data to gain access to participants' life experiences. The interview guide was designed to contain semi-structured questions and as well as probing questions. (See Appendix A)

The interview guide was in three sections, the demographic section, the sexual habits section and the community perceptions section. A schedule was appropriate as it allows for the interviewer to

the opportunity to probe ambiguous responses by asking follow up questions according to Pilot and Sock (2008).

The quantitative phase used semi-structured questionnaires containing both closed and open-ended questions to collect data on the perceptions about the sexual habits of left-behind wives from community members.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

In the qualitative approach, all responses were transcribed and the transcription was further grouped according to the objectives of the study. The data was then thematically organised to fit the objectives of the study qualitatively.

In the quantitative approach, responses were keyed into data analysis software SPSS. Questions relevant to the study were analysed in frequencies and cross tabulated by demographic characteristics of respondent. These analyses were then grouped to meet the objectives of the study and organised analyses were put in charts and tables on PowerPoint.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The researcher is aware that in studies that border on topics of sensitive nature, ethical clearance should be sought from the Ethics Committee for Humanities at the University of Ghana which sits only twice in a year. However, the Master of Arts in Migration programme at the University of Ghana is a one-year course (two semesters). The preparation and submission of dissertation is time bound and the process begins in the second and last semester at which time the committee is not sitting. Also, a candidate may not be able to meet dissertation submission deadlines should he

or she apply and wait for clearance before resuming data collection. However, the researcher took the following in to consideration to ensure that the study stays within the ethical limits:

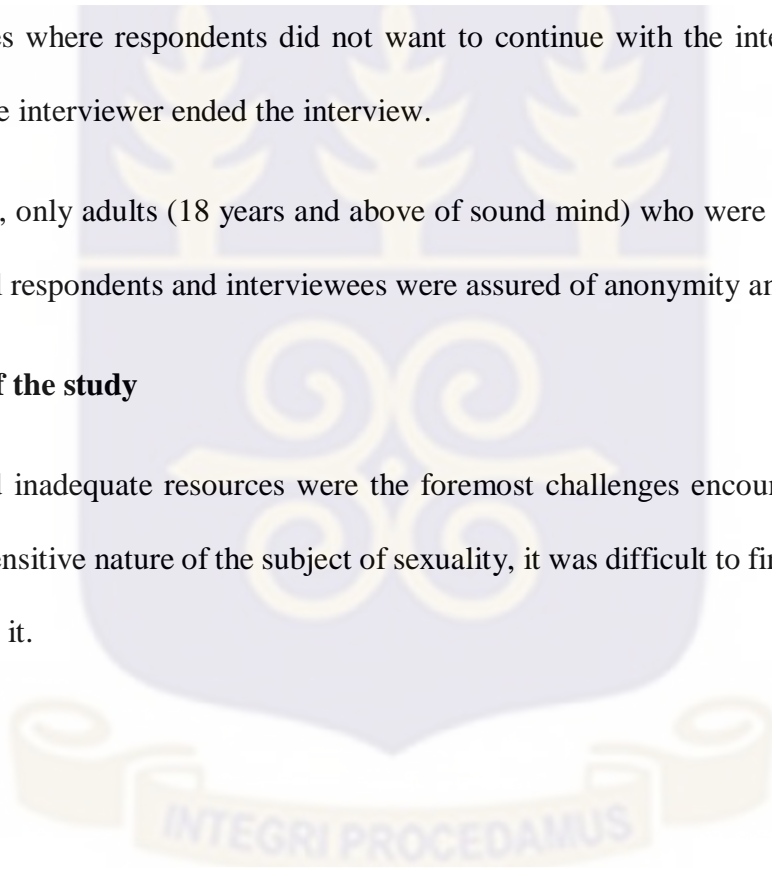
The study took into consideration the rights of the respondents and interviewees to decline to participate in the study and participants were made aware of this right before the interviews commenced.

Also, respondents' consent was sought before the interviews were conducted and recorded. And in a few instances where respondents did not want to continue with the interview when it had already started the interviewer ended the interview.

Most importantly, only adults (18 years and above of sound mind) who were willing took part in the study. And all respondents and interviewees were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

3.9 Limitation of the study

Limited time and inadequate resources were the foremost challenges encountered in the study. Also due to the sensitive nature of the subject of sexuality, it was difficult to find people who were willing to discuss it.



CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF LEFT-BEHIND WIVES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

4.1 Introduction

To gain an understanding on the sort of environment and socialization that influences the notions and attitudes of the participants in this study, giving rise for their responses, there is the need to identify the socio-demographic characteristics and how these inform their ways of behavior and stereotyping in relation to the sexual habits of left-behind wives. Factors such as age, sex, religious orientation, economic status etc all play important roles in how individuals behave, form stereotypes and understand situations around them.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Left-Behind Wives

For the qualitative phase of the study a total of 8 left-behind wives were interviewed using an interview guide to gather data on their real life experiences with regards to their sexual behaviors and related community perceptions.

4.2.1 Age

Of the eight left-behinds interviewed, four were in the 30 and above age bracket, three were in the 25 to 29 age bracket, one was in the 21 to 24 age bracket and none fell within the 18 to 20 age bracket.

4.2.2 Number of Years Married

Most of left-behind wives were within the 30 and above and the 25 to 29 age brackets. This was reflected in the number of years they have been married as all except one left-behind wife have been married for more than four years. Only one left-behind had been married for one year.

4.2.3 Religion

As in the quantitative phase, the qualitative phase also recorded only two main religious affiliations which are Islam and Christianity, with five left-behinds being Muslims and three being Christians. This again is because the study location is a predominantly Muslim community with a substantial number also being Christians as indicated by Owusu et al., (2008). In this study, religion is an important demographic data as the study is based on the premise that sexual behaviors are shaped by religion and culture. This is stressed in Awusabo-Asare and Anarfi's (1997) study, "postpartum sexual abstinence in the era of AIDS in Ghana: Prospects for change".

4.2.4 Level of Education

All the left-behind wives in this study have had some form of formal education as none fell within the "no education" category. Four had tertiary level education, three had Senior High School level education and one had primary level education. This was beneficial to the study in the sense that, the left-behind wives had some degree of assertiveness because they were educated, hence were ready to discuss the subject of sexuality (Soto and Shaver 1982).

4.2.5 Occupation

Six out of the eight left-behind wives were engaged in economic activities outside the home. Three worked as teachers, two as traders and one as a soldier. Only two were housewives, thus were not engaged in any income generating activity outside the home.

4.2.6 Source(s) of Income

Most of the left-behind wives had two sources of income as they worked to generate income and they received remittance from their migrant husbands too. This category of left-behinds claimed they were financially stable. Only one (housewife) relied solely on remittance from her husband, while another (housewife) did not have any source of income because her husband did not remit, thus relied solely on the occasional little giveaways from family members (parents or siblings). This second category (housewives) claimed they were financially challenged.

4.2.7 Number and Presence of Children

Findings which will be discussed later in this study suggest that whether a left-behind wife has children or not played an important role in her emotional as well as psychological wellbeing. The presence of children in the lives of left-behind wives served to minimize the emotional and psychological stress associated with the absence of their husbands. The presence of children to some extent filled the void created as a result of the migration of husbands. Taking care of children and attending to their needs kept left-behind wives busy, hence they had little time to spend on thoughts of their husbands being away.

However, the findings show that the presence of children did not completely eliminate the negative emotional and psychological effects of migration of husbands. The left-behind wives in this study

indicated that familial needs are one of their most important needs and this need was not met because they felt their families were not complete as a result of the absence of their husbands.

4.2.8 Type of Accommodation and Place of Residence

The study also assumed that place of residence has an impact on the socio-psychological state as well as the emotional wellbeing of a left-behind wife which in the long run may influence sexual behavior, thus the study attempted to find out the type of accommodation, place of residence and how these affect their sexual habits.

Most of the left-behinds lived in a “chamber and hall” type of accommodation while one lived in a “single room” and another in a “two bedrooms” type of accommodation. The study location Nima, as mentioned earlier is one of the biggest slums in Accra with a population of about 55, 830 (GSS, 2000) and it is described as a low-class residential area (Agyei-Mensah and Owusu, 2009; Owusu et al., 2008; Yankson, 2000; Essamuah and Tonah, 2004). As a result, one will find several households in one large dwelling structure which is known as the “compound house” and the study targeted such “compound houses” that had migrant households together with other non-migrant households.

The findings indicated that most of the left-behind wives shared compounds with their husbands’ parents and siblings. Others who did not share compounds with their husbands’ family lived within close proximity to either their family homes or to the homes of their husbands’ family.

Most importantly, these left-behind wives lived in the same place they spent their childhood through to adulthood until they got married. This implies that they lived among people who have known them and their families, as well as their husbands and their families. Several studies have indicated that migrants adopt risky sexual behaviours which makes them prone to STIs (Cassels et

al. 2014; Anarfi, 1993a; Anarfi and Awusabo-Asare, 1993b; Anarfi et al., 1993c). This, the studies suggest, is partly as a result of the migrants being in a new environment where they are not known; and the lack of the presence of family and people who will act as checks on their behavior.

In light of this, the study presumes that the fact that these left-behind wives lived in a community where they are known; and the presence of their families and that of their husbands had an effect on their sexual habits (abstinence) during husbands' migration. Indications by some left-behind wives, that they abstain from sex when their husbands migrate to protect their family reputation; and indications that they spend time with their family (parents and siblings) to minimize the negative psychological and emotional effects of migration affirm this presumption that their place of residence and the presence of "known faces" affect their sexual habits. This is in line with findings from Ikuomola's (2015) study on left-behind wives in Edo State, Nigeria where left-behind wives move-in with in-laws as a check to prevent them from engaging in extra-marital affairs.

Worth noting however, is the fact that the left-behind wives in this study gave responses such as "religious belief in faithfulness" and "personal trait of being patient" as the reasons why their sexual habit is abstinence (faithfulness) when their husbands migrate.

From the above findings, it is justifiable to state that contrary to the Social Exchange Theory (Cook and Rice, 2004), which postulates that in a social relationship (marriage), actions (faithfulness) are reinforced by rewards (sexual gratification, economic maintenance through remittance, psychological and emotional wellbeing partly by some effort from husband etc), other factors like environment (place of residence), the presence of family and community members, religious and cultural beliefs and personal traits (for example patience) can reinforce actions. This suggests

that in certain situations or under certain conditions like the marriage-sexuality-migration nexus in this study, actions can and may be perpetuated as precautionary measures and not for the purpose of gaining rewards.

4.3 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Community Members

For the quantitative section of the study a total of 47 respondents were conveniently drawn from Nima in Accra. The study was conducted among both male and female adults aged eighteen and above.

4.3.1 Sex distribution of the community members

The male respondents accounted for 36 percent of the total number of respondents while females accounted for 64 percent. From the above females accounted for the highest number of respondents and this may be because of the time the survey was carried out which was from 10 am to 6pm. During these time periods we realized that males have left their households to work and females were mostly left at home. The male respondents were mostly men who had their businesses or workshops at home. Another reason can be attributed to the fact the location Nima is a commercial area with predominantly women selling wares from food stuffs to fashions goods. Another possible reason may be that because the study focused on women, females felt more comfortable sharing their views about their fellow women.

4.3.2 Age distribution of community members

From the three age groups presented in the questionnaire, less than a tenth (7 percent) of the respondents were within the 21 to 24 age bracket. The 25 to 29 age bracket accounted for more than a quarter (38 percent) of the total number of respondents. And the 30 and above age bracket

constituted the highest percentage (55 percent). The above information affirms earlier assertions that conversations about sexuality are a preserve of adults and for that matter married people (Anarfi, 1993a). Additionally, individuals (especially females) within this age bracket were likely to be married and had some level of experience regarding issues of sexuality and therefore were willing to discuss the subject.

4.3.3 Marital status distribution of community members

Data from the study shows that the marital status distribution of respondents was made up of 34 percent single, 49 percent married, divorced 13 percent and cohabiting 4 percent respectively. Almost half of the respondents in this study were married and one reason for this percentage maybe the notion that sex is for married people, thus their forthcoming attitude towards the subject. A substantial number (34 percent) of respondents were also single and may presumably be that people are mostly willing to share their opinions about others as long as they are not the subjects of the discussion.

4.3.4 Religion of community members

The study recorded only two religious affiliations which are Islam and Christianity, and the distributions are 79 percent and 21 percent respectively. The location, Nima is a predominantly Muslim community, thus the high percentage of respondents being Muslim. Literature also shows that the location is not an all Muslim community (Owusu et al., 2008) and this may explain why a significant number of the respondents (21 percent) were Christian even though the Muslims were more.

4.3.5 Educational level of community members

The dominant educational levels of respondents in this study were; Junior High School accounted for 17 percent, Senior High School accounted for 26 percent and tertiary accounted for 32 percent. Post graduate accounted for six percent. Those with tertiary education accounted for the highest number followed by those with senior high school education. This information gives an indication that education coupled with modernization has the ability to change old myths and stereotypes surrounding sex and sexuality as shown in Anarfi's (1993c) "Sexuality, Migration and AID in Ghana" study. This juxtaposition is due to the fact that with education people are more comfortable discussing sexuality as they have gained some level of knowledge. Table 4.1 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of community members;

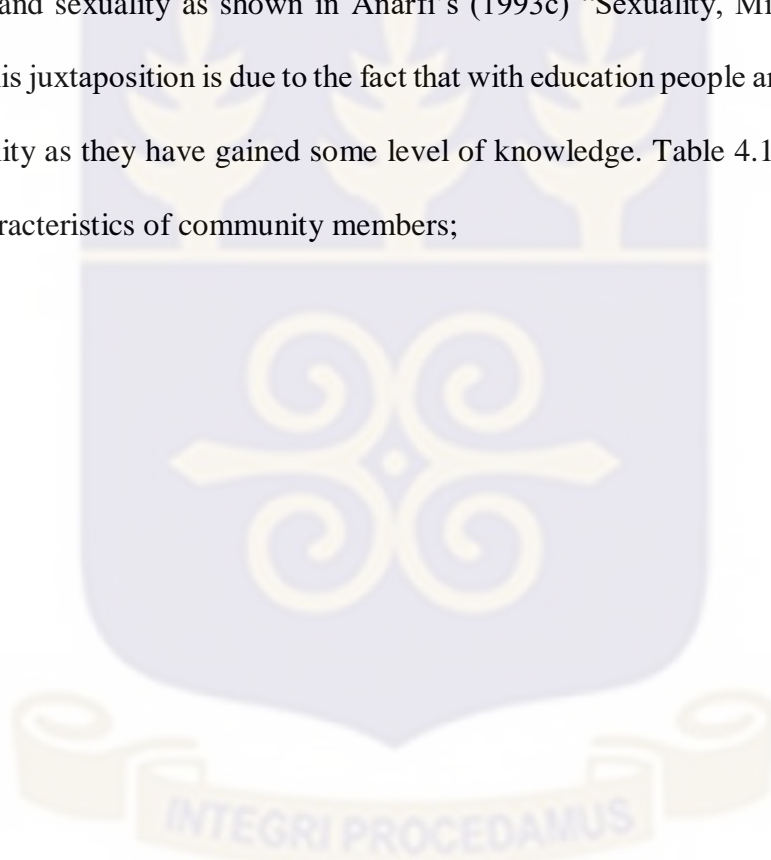


Table 4.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of community members

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	17	36
Female	30	64
Age		
21-24 years	3	7
25-29 years	18	38
30 years and above	26	55
Marital Status		
Single	16	34
Married	23	49
Divorced	6	13
Cohabiting	2	4
Religion		
Islam	37	79
Christianity	10	21
Educational level		
None	3	6
Primary	5	11
JHS	8	17
SHS	12	26
Voc/Tech	1	2
Tertiary	15	32

Post graduate	3	6
Total	47	100



CHAPTER FIVE

SEXUAL HABITS OF LEFT-BEHIND WIVES AND RELATED COMMUNITY

PERCEPTIONS

5.1 Socio-economic Status/Wellbeing and its Effects on Sexual Habits

The main problem that necessitated this study was the general impression that the sexual habits of left-behind wives undergo some changes due to migration and that these changes may be influenced by their socio-economic status. Thus, the first objective of this study was to find out the socio-economic wellbeing of left-behind wives and how this influences their sexual habits.

5.1.1 Economic Status/Wellbeing of Left-behind Wives

Data from both survey (community perception) and in-depth interview (left-behind wives) show that the main source of income for left-behind wives is remittances received from husbands. This source was supplemented by proceeds and/or salaries from businesses and/or jobs for the left behind wives who were employed. This information was reflected in the quantitative data gathered as 48 percent reported remittance and 32 percent reported business/job earnings as the main sources of income for left-behind wives.

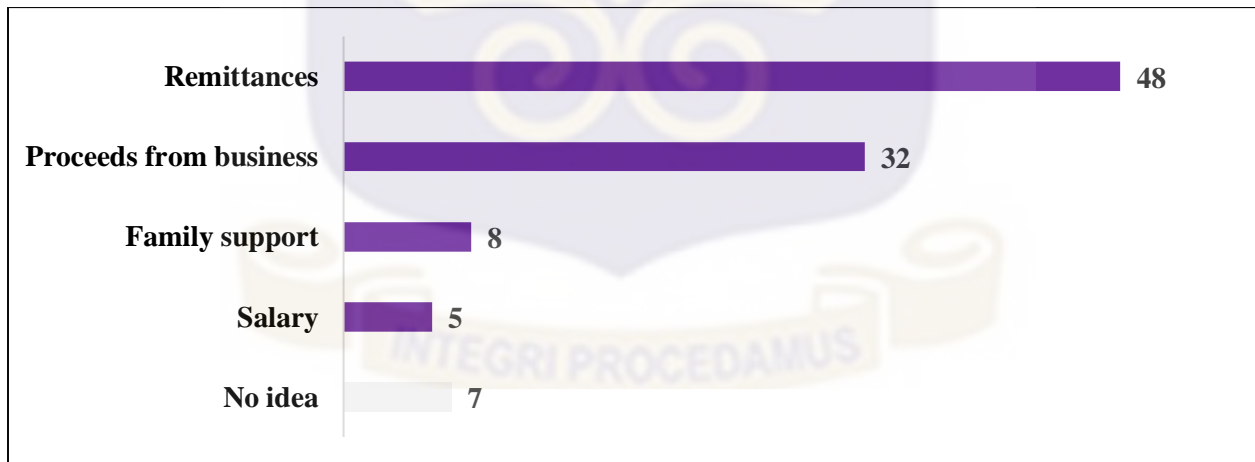
In the qualitative data, six of the eight left-behind wives fell within this category as their husbands remitted and they worked to supplement what they received from their husbands, hence indicated they are financially stable even in the absence of their spouses.

As to whether this state of being financially stable affected sexual habits, both community members and the left-behind wives agreed that it did. However, left-behind wives agreed to this assertion when it is related to other left-behind wives but disagreed when related to them.

Another category of left-behind wives was those whose husbands remitted inadequate amounts or did not remit regularly and those whose husbands did not remit at all due to joblessness at the destination. This group were housewives who did not have other regular sources of income, thus indicated that they are financially challenged with few cash in-flows which fail to meet all their needs. Just like the first category who are financially stable, this group of financially challenged left-behind wives agree with community members that economic status affects sexual habits but disagree that these assertions applied to them.

These two categories of left-behind wives indicated that regardless of their current economic states, they did not engage in extra-marital affairs citing reasons such as religious belief in faithfulness, personal characteristics of being “chaste” and protecting family reputation. An illustration of the sources of income for left-behind wives is presented in Figure 5.1;

Figure 5.1 Community perception on sources of income of left-behind (in percentages)



Source: Field data (July 2017)

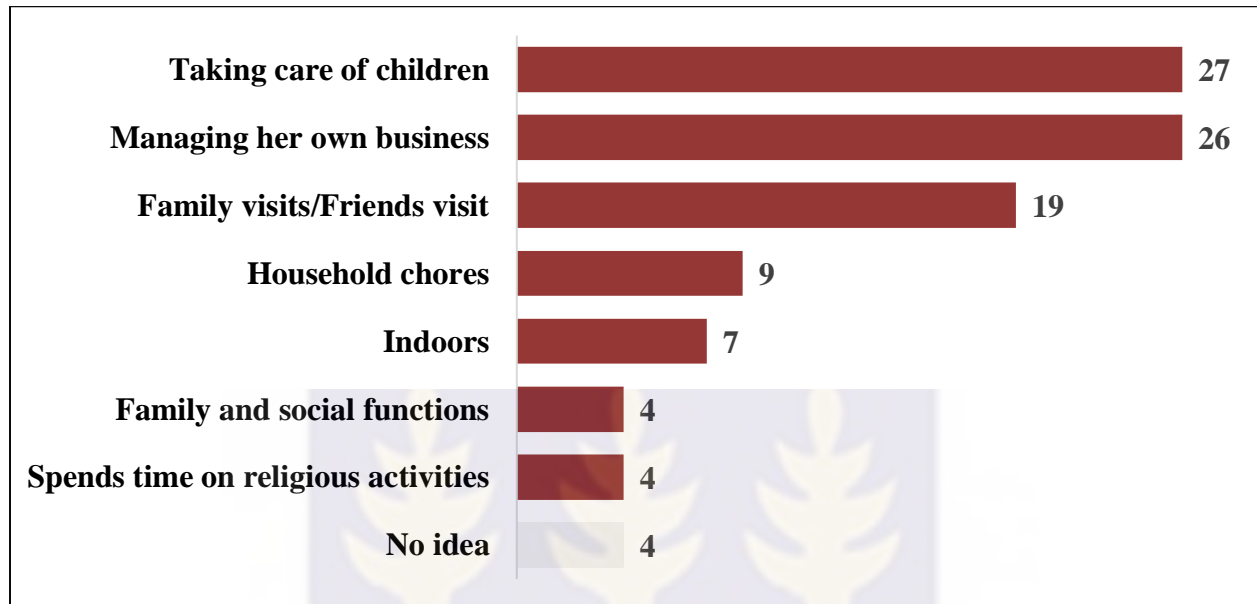
5.1.2 Social Wellbeing of Left-behind Wives

By social wellbeing, the study sought to find out activities these left-behind wives spent most of their time on daily and how engaging in these activities affected their sexual habits in light of the absence of their husbands. The study also sought to find out the effect of the emigration of husbands on the psychological as well as emotional wellbeing of left-behind wives and how this in turn influenced their sexual habits.

Generally, left-behind wives were believed to spend most of their time caring for their children, managing their businesses or working, visiting family and friends, doing household chores, attending social functions and engaging in religious activities. The first three activities were reported most, specifically 27 percent, 26 percent and 19 percent respectively. Community members are of the view that the above daily activities to some extent kept left-behind wives occupied most part of the day.

Qualitative data indicated that the migration of husbands had a negative emotional/psychological effect as most left-behind wives. There were indications that they felt lonely and bored as a result of the absence of their husbands. Even so, the left-behind wives indicated that this negative emotional and psychological state did not make them engage in extra-marital affairs, again citing religious beliefs in faithfulness and personal trait of being patient/chaste as reasons why they stay faithful.

Worth noting is that, just like their economic status/wellbeing, left-behind wives sided with community members that social wellbeing which includes psychological and emotional state can influence the sexual habits of left-behind wives when referring to other left-behind wives. Activities left-behind wives spend most of their time on are illustrated in Figure 5.2;

Figure 5.2 Activities left-behind engage in daily (in percentages)

Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.2 Important Needs of Left-Behind Wives

There seem to be an inconsistency between the indication by left-behind wives that their socio-economic status/wellbeing did not affect their sexual habits and their responses to the question about their most important needs as married women. All participants indicated that, sexual, economic and emotional needs are their most important needs. ‘Familial needs’ was also mentioned among participants.

Findings from the study indicated that due to migration of husbands, these important needs are not being met. The important question here is how these voids are filled. The main focus of this study is the sexual needs of left-behind wives and how they are able to satisfy or control it in the absence of their husbands.

The theory this study drew on is the Social Exchange Theory (Cook and Rice, 2004), which postulates that actions are reinforced by reward in a social relationship. In this work, the action under consideration is whether left-behind wives are faithful; and rewards here are those needs that are most important to them. Thus, per the social exchange theory (Cook and Rice, 2004), faithfulness by left-behind wives is reinforced by their sexual, economic, emotional and familial needs being met. However, due to the migration of their husbands these needs are not being met. But findings point to the fact that these left-behind wives remain faithful. It appears that in a social relationship, an action may be reinforced by several rewards and these rewards may differ in level of importance depending on the individual involved.

Findings show that for some of the left-behinds, their economic needs were being met but all other needs were lacking and for others all the needs were not being met. Yet for all these left-behinds, abstinence (faithfulness for the purpose of this study) was their sexual habit. This suggests that other things other than rewards may reinforce actions contrary to what the social exchange theory (Cook and Rice, 2004) postulates. These may include religious beliefs and personal traits which in this work are religious belief in faithfulness and personal trait of patience as indicated by findings from the study. This finding further confirms arguments that religion and culture play very important roles in shaping sexual behavior. There is also evidence that, where a left-behind wife stays and the presence of family may cause her to remain faithful. These findings are consistent with findings from Ikuomola, (2015); Cassels et al. (2014); Anarfi, 1993a; Anarfi and Awusabo-Asare, (1993b); Anarfi et al., (1993c); and Awusabo and Anarfi, (1997).

5.3 Changes in Sexual Habits; Before, During and After Migration

The second objective of this study was to find out if, owing to the emigration of husbands, the sexual habits of left-behind wives changed and if so what form these sexual habits take. To gather information on this, the study attempted to first find out sexual habits before migration, during migration and after migration of husbands.

5.3.1 Sexual habits before migration

Qualitative findings indicated that the main form of sex practiced was the natural heterosexual form which is with husbands. There was also the indication that left-behind wives had only one sexual partner and most indicated they had regular sex ranging from three times a week to four times a day. This is what a 30-year-old housewife had to say when asked about her sexual habits before migration;

“We had sex almost every day when he requests for it. He is my husband and I cannot say no to him. I do not want him to go out. It is also my religious obligation to have sexual intercourse with him”. (30 years old housewife)

5.3.2 Sexual habits during migration

Secondly, the study tried to find out their sexual habits during migration (that is when husbands have migrated) and findings show that for all the left-behind wives who participated in the study, abstinence was the form their sexual habits took. This is what a 28-year-old teacher had to say about her sexual habits during her husband’s migration;

“I try to control myself in my own ways. It is a combination of mental and physical exercise. I just put my palm in-between my lap while I sit quietly and tell myself to be patient till he comes back.

When he comes back I will have more sex than I am even expecting because he misses me too, I know that for sure". (28 years old teacher)

Interestingly however, when asked about their perception on the sexual habits of other left-behind wives when their husband have migrated, participants (left-behind wives) mentioned phone sex, masturbation, sex with other sexual partners (other than their husbands) and use of sex toys as the forms of sexual habits adopted.

5.3.3 Sexual habits after migration (upon return)

The study assumed that migration has an effect on the sexual habits of migrants, who in this study are husbands of the left-behind wives interviewed. Research has shown that migrants adopt risky sexual behaviours which makes them prone to STIs (Cassels et al. 2014; Anarfi, 1993a; Anarfi and Awusabo-Asare, 1993b; Anarfi et al., 1993c). Consequently, this study attempted to find out if there were any changes in the sexual habits of husbands upon return and how these changes if any affected the sexual habits of the left-behind wives.

Findings from this study confirmed assertions that migration affected the sexual habits of the migrants (Cassels et al. 2014) (husbands) as all the left-behind wives who participated in the study indicated that their husbands become more sexually active upon return, that is they (husbands) demanded sex more. On the effect of this change on the sexual habits of left-behind wives, they (left-behind wives) indicated that they also became more sexually active. This is because their husbands demanded sex more which in most cases they adjusted to satisfy their husbands' needs. Worth noting is the general sense from the study that, sex in marriage is seen as both a right and a responsibility for couples. Below is what a 35 years old trader had to say when asked about her sexual habits when her husband returns;

‘I have to change to meet his needs because I am his wife and it is my duty, but it is usually against my will because I am not someone who likes sex so much. But if I refuse he may go after other women and I don’t want that. So, I try to satisfy him when he needs me even if I am not in the mood’. (35 years old trader)

5.4 Community Perceptions

The third objective of this study was to find out what community members thought about the sexual habits of left-behind wives. This was necessary as perceptions from people who lived with and observed the lifestyles of these left-behind wives will help to identify the gaps if any between what is said and what is actually practiced. The study sought to find out how community members organized and interpreted what they hear and see with regards to the sexual habits of left-behind wives. Information on perception of sexual habits was collected using questionnaires in a survey from community members.

To ensure that respondents had some degree of knowledge on the subject under study, they were first asked if they knew someone who is a left-behind wife and 91 percent of the 47 respondents answered ‘yes’. See Table 5.1;

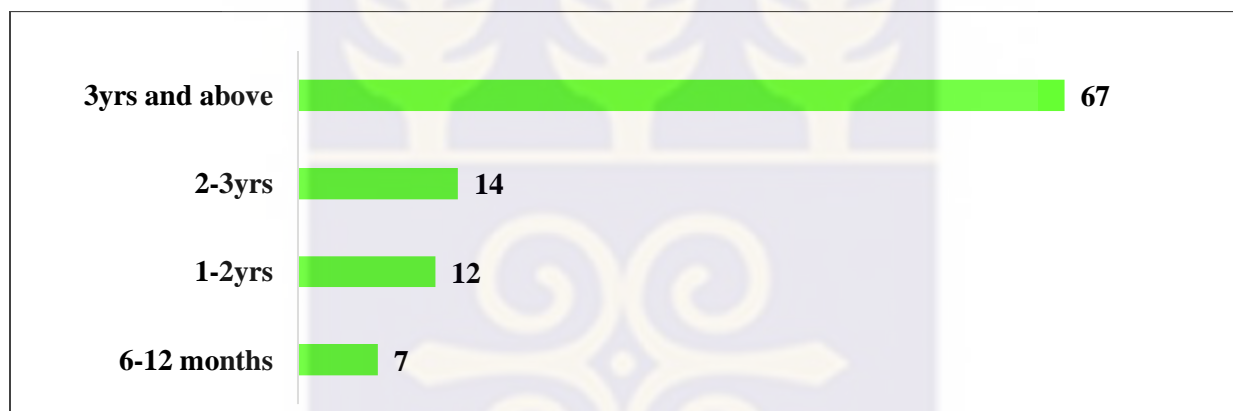
Table 5.1 Community members’ knowledge of a left-behind wife

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	43	91
No	4	9
Total	47	100

Source: Field data (July 2017)

Respondents were further asked how long they have known the left-behind wife in question. This was to ensure that respondents have known the left-behind wife long enough to have some knowledge about her lifestyle. However, steps were taken to ensure that respondents were not related to the left-behind wife. Findings indicated that majority (67 percent) of respondents have known the left-behind wives for 3 years and more. See Figure 5.3;

Figure 5.3 How long community members have known left-behind wives (in percentages)



Source: Field data (July 2017)

Migration mainly takes two broad forms, internal, that is within the borders of a country and international which is across the borders of a country (Awumbila et al., 2011). Findings from this study suggests that generally, people tend to think that migration only refers to travelling across borders and this was reflected in the responses provided when respondents were asked where the husbands of the left-behind wives they knew have travelled to.

The highest percentage (41 percent) reported Europe (UK, Spain, Germany, Netherland, Sweden and ‘Europe’), 33 percent reported North America (United States of America and Canada), and

seven reported Asia (Saudi Arabia and Japan) as the destination of migrant husbands. 19 percent were not aware of the destination of the migrant husbands.

5.4.1 Community perception of sexual habits of married couples

For the study to assume that migration can have an effect on the sexual habits of left-behind wives, it implied that there must be an ideal sexual habit in marriage when there is no migration, thus study attempted to find out people’s perception about sexual habits in marriage where the husband and wife live together. Two main sexual habits emerged from this question as 54 percent thought that married people had regular sex (three times a week to four a day) and 46 percent reported “one sexual partner” as the sexual habit of married people. This information is presented in the table 5.2;

Table 5.2 Perception about sexual habits of married couples

Sexual Habits	Frequency	Percentage %
One sexual partner	25	54
Regular sex	22	46
Total	47	100

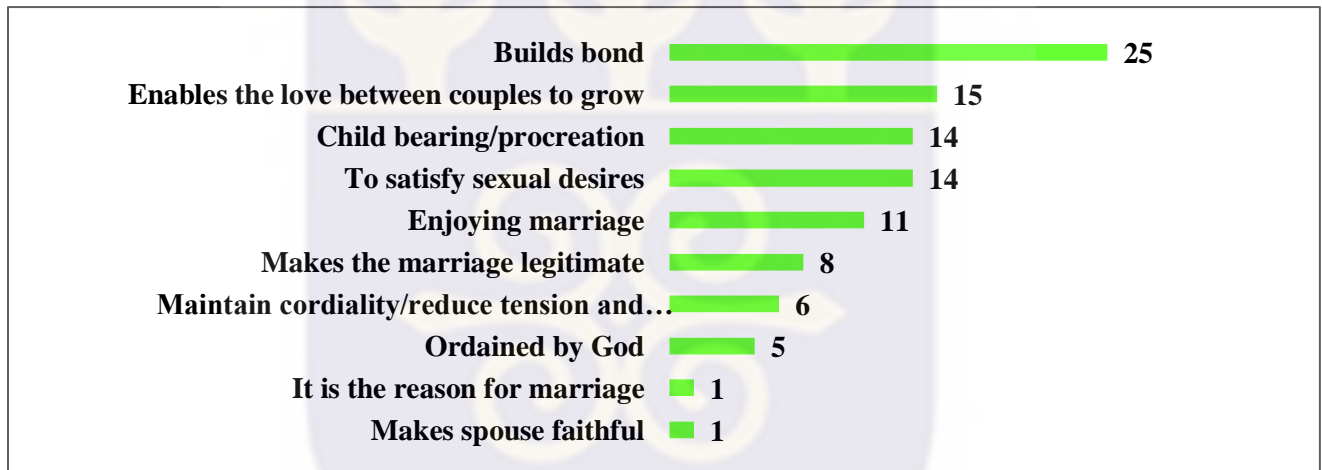
Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.4.2 Importance and role of sex in marriage

To ascertain whether sex is important in marriage and what roles it played in ensuring its stability, the absence of which will lead to the instability of marriage, respondents were asked to give their perception about whether or not sex was important in marriage and the role (s) it played in

maintaining it. Findings show that about 97 percent of the respondents thought that sex is important in marriage. Giving reasons such as ‘sex in marriage builds bond between the couple’, ‘it enables love to grow between the couple’, ‘it is a means of procreation’ to mention a few. Respondents’ perception that sex is important in marriage for the reason of procreation is consistent with Azu (1974), that it is a common believe among the Ga that marriage and for that matter sex is basically for procreation (Azu, 1974; as cited by Atobrah and Awedoba, 2017). The roles sex plays in marriage and the the percentage distribution of responses are presented in the figure Figure 5.4;

Figure 5.4 The role of sex in marriage (in percentages)



Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.4.3 Community perception of needs of left-behind wives

The above perception about the important role of sex in marital relation was based on the usual marital setting where husband and wife live together. But this study wanted to look at the important role sex played in cases where the husband has migrated. This study assumed that the absence of husbands will have effects on the individuals in such unions, particularly the sexual habits of the wife who is left-behind. Thus, respondents were asked to indicate what they perceived to be the

most important needs of left-behind wives. 31 percent reported ‘sexual needs’, 27 percent reported ‘economic needs’, 26 percent indicated ‘emotional needs’ and 14 percent indicated ‘familial needs’. Other needs like security had two percent response rate.

This data correlates with the 97 percent “yes” response for sex playing an important role in marriage. It is also clear that economic and emotional needs are also very important to left-behind wives. These findings from community perceptions also validate indications by left-behind wives about their most important needs. The degree of importance of sexual needs especially, is evident from this study, thus the need to understand the effect of their lack on the sexual behavior of left-behind wives.

5.4.4 Faithfulness of left-behind wives

As indicated earlier in the discussion, all left-behind wives in this study reported that their sexual habit during migration of husbands is abstinence, which implies that they remained faithful. However, community perceptions were not consistent with the above indication. Majority of the community members (68 percent) answered “No” when they were asked “Do left-behind wives remain faithful?” and 32 percent answered “Yes” to the question. The question of faithfulness or unfaithfulness was introduced to find out the other forms of sexual habits besides abstinence as indicated by the left-behind wives.

The above responses were cross tabulated by sex and a higher percentage of females tend to perceive left-behind wives to be unfaithful. When asked whether left-behind wives remained faithful or not, 73 percent females answered “no” and 27 percent answered “yes”. On the other hand, 59 percent males answered “no” and 41 percent answered “yes”. It is not clear why more females than males thought that these women were not faithful. But the study presumes that as

women, they know and understand their fellow women better; or probably, as women they were in a better position to know what it takes to remain faithful in a union with a migrant. However, Imam (1997) has indicated that women are perceived to have nine times greater potential for sexual desire and pleasure than men, adding that women's sexuality is naturally greater but passive compared to male sexuality which is less but more active (Boudhiba, 1977; Mernissi, 1975; Al-Hibri, 1982; Sabbah, 1984; as cited by Imam 1997). Hence, as females they may know this about themselves and for that reason are better placed to understand female sexuality. See illustration of percentage distribution of “yes” and “no” responses cross tabulated by gender in Table 5.3;

Table 5.3 Perceptions of whether left-behind wives remain faithful or not

Response	Male (N= 17)	Female (N= 30)
Yes	41%	27%
No	59%	73%

Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.4.5 Why left-behind wives remain faithful and why they do not

Also related to the question of whether left-behind wives remained faithful or not were the reasons why respondents gave the “yes” or “no” answers, thus the they were asked to state reasons why they thought left-behind wives would be faithful and why they will not. The reasons for remaining faithful include religious belief in faithfulness (26 percent), regular communication with husband (22 percent), place of residence (13 percent), money or economic maintenance (13 percent), presence of and support from husband's family (9 percent), presence of and support from the left-behind's family (8 percent) and other reasons (9 percent).

The highest percentage (26 percent) of community members thought that religious belief in faithfulness is a reason why left-behind wives will remain faithful. This information is consistent with reports by left-behind wives themselves, thus the study asserts that religion plays an important role in shaping sexual behaviour. It has been acknowledged by for example Awusabo-Asare and Anarfi (1997), Atobrah and Awedoba, (2017) and Imam (1997) among others, the valuable role of religion and culture in shaping behaviour. What these studies have failed to acknowledge however, is the equally important role an individual's personal traits plays in forming behaviour.

According to Ryckman, (1982), personality is the total of biologically formed and learnt behaviour that influences the individual's unique responses to environmental stimuli. Heinstrom, (2003) has pointed out that personality is an important psychological mechanism that guides behaviour, adding that since personality tends to drive people towards certain characteristic reactions in any given situation, so does it influence attitudes and behaviours (Heinstrom, 2003).

Phares, (1991) has also opined that all individuals have their peculiar thoughts, feelings and behaviours which are formed by somewhat stable combination of personality traits. These observations were brought forth in the findings of this study. Even though the study findings are consistent with evidences that religion and culture are key in forming behaviour (Awusabo-Asare and Anarfi, 1997; Imam, 1997; and Atobrah and Awedoba, 2017), the current study also observed the equally important role personality trait plays in forming the sexual habits of the left-behind wives.

A substantial number (22 percent) also perceived that regular and constant communication with husbands is one of the reasons why left-behind wives will remain faithful. This may be because of the bond that regular communication can create even though the husband has migrated. Wiley,

2007 has opined that, communication is key to couple intimate relationships, partly because it is a tool for knowing as well as connecting with each other (Wiley, 2007). This is confirmed by findings in this study where left-behind wives reported that regular communication with their husbands is one of the key ways by which they deal with the void created by the migration of husbands. This finding will be discussed in detail later on in the study.

As mentioned earlier in this study, living arrangement to some extent plays a role in influencing sexual habits of left-behind wives. Also, several studies have indicated that migrants adopt risky sexual behaviour, which is partly as a result of being in a new environment where they are not known and the absence of family or people who will act as checks on their behavior (see Sevoyan, 2011; Anarfi and Owusu, 2010; Cassels et al., 2014; Ikuomola, 2015).

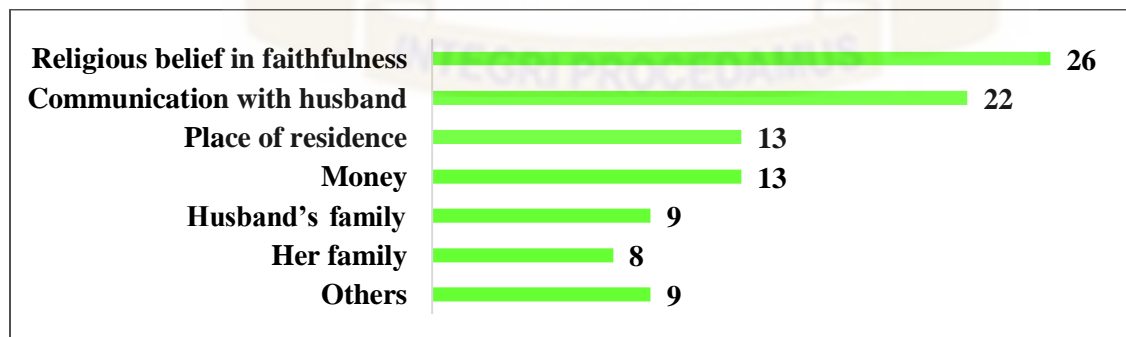
The above is confirmed by 13 percent community members, who thought that ‘place of residence’ is a reason why left-behind wives remained faithful, thus has an influence on their sexual habits. Earlier findings show that in the absence of husbands, left-behind wives may adopt sexual habits such as masturbation, use of sex toys, phone sex (that is sex with husband via phone), sex with other sexual partners and bestiality (sex with animals). These sexual habits are considered to be harmful because they pose a risk to the health of left-behind wives according to community members.

Therefore, if living arrangement plays a role in the kind of sexual habits the wives adopt, then it is acceptable to infer that, in the likely event that the left-behind wives’ living arrangements resemble that of migrant husbands at the destination (where there is absence of family and “known faces”), these wives may also adopt risky sexual behaviours just like their migrant husbands.

It can also be argued that, even if their living arrangement is such that it gives room to adopt risky sexual behaviour, whether or not a left-behind wife adopts such behaviour to some extent depends on her beliefs and personality. Consequently, it should be acceptable to say that, even though the situation of migrants may be such that family and “known faces” are absent, that may not necessarily make them adopt risky sexual behaviours as suggested by Cassels et al., (2014), Sevoyan, (2011), Anarfi and Owusu, (2010), Anarfi, (1993a), Anarfi and Awusabo-Asare, (1993b), and Anarfi et al., (1993c).

Again, the study assumed that the economic wellbeing of a left-behind wife as a result of economic maintenance by her husband through remittance played a role in forming her sexual habits. But findings from the study show that some left-behind wives are faithful for reasons other than economic wellbeing. Even so, community members thought that economic maintenance through regular remittance from husbands is a reason why these wives will be faithful and the left-behind wives in the study corroborated this perception when referring to other left-behind wives. Figure 5.5 is an illustration of the percentage distribution of reasons why left-behind wives remain faithful;

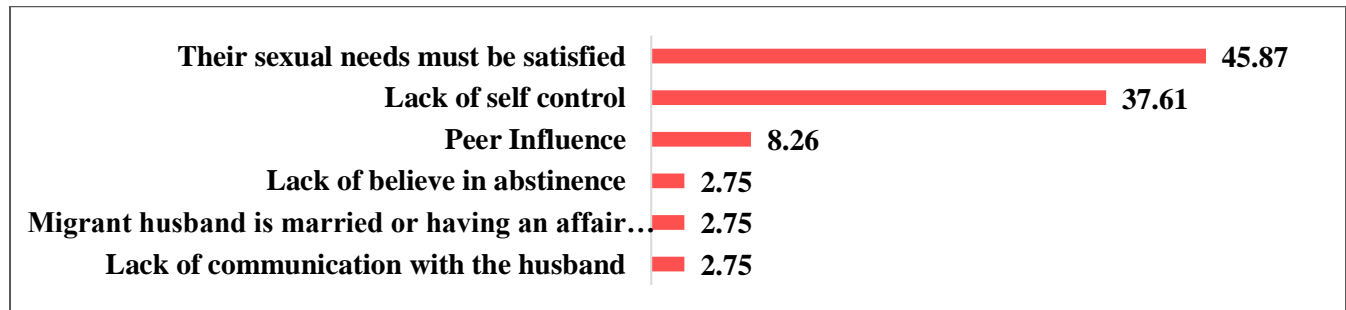
Figure 5.5 Reasons why left-behind wives remain faithful (in percentages)



Source: Field data (July 2017)

As indicated earlier, majority of the community members perceive left-behind wives to be unfaithful and gave the following reasons; 45.87 percent reported the reason that “left-behind wives had sexual needs that have to be satisfied”, and this may be explained by the first part of Imam’s (1997) assertion that women are seen to have a greater potential for sexual desire and pleasure than men (Boudhiba, 1977; Mernissi, 1975; Al-Hibri, 1982; Sabbah, 1984; as cited by Imam 1997). Deffering in view, are perspectives by Fleuny, (2016) and Rashidian et al., (2013) on the fact that restrictive social norms tend to condition females to become passive participants in sexual relations. Thus, though they may have a greater potential for sexual desire and pleasure, years of inhibition may make them indifferent to their sexual needs (Fleuny, 2016 and Rashidian et al., 2013).

There was a 37.61 percent report for the reason that “some left-behind wives lacked control over their sexual desires”, thus they are inclined to engaging in extra marital affairs when their husbands migrate. Contrary to this finding is Imam’s (1997) indication that even though women are seen to have greater potential for sexual desire and pleasure, they are passive about it (Boudhiba, 1977; Mernissi, 1975; Al-Hibri, 1982; Sabbah, 1984; as cited by Imam 1997). This may imply their ability to put it under control as indicated by Fleuny, (2016) and Rashidian et al., (2013). See illustration of percentage distribution for reasons why left-behind wives do not remain faithful in Figure 5.6;

Figure 5.6 Reasons why left-behind wives do not remain faithful (in percentages)

Source: Field data (July 2017)

There appears to be a general impression that left-behind wives are unfaithful and this was confirmed by findings from community perceptions as majority (68 percent) of the community members who participated in the study answered “no” to the question on whether left-behind wives were faithful. Thus, in the qualitative phase left-behind wives were asked about what they thought the community’s perception is about their sexual habits and generally left behind wives are aware of the negative perceptions about their sexual habits as they claimed they are faced with ‘finger pointing’ and ‘unnecessary’ allegations of infidelity within the community. This is what a 44 year old housewife had to say on the question of what she thought was the community’s perception about the sexual habits of left behind wives;

“I hear people say wives of ‘Borgas’ sleep around. I once heard a guy say “he has travelled and we are sleeping with wife for him”. I was very hurt, is it not a nice thing to say about someone’s wife. I am not disputing the fact some left-behind wives may do that under certain circumstances. Personally I don’t know anyone who is doing that and I have never done that too, but I hear people say it. What I don’t like is when they assume we are all doing that. It is not fair to some of us”. (44 years old housewife)

5.4.6 Controlling and Satisfying sexual desires

From the discussions so far, it is evident that when it comes to faithfulness in marriage with regards to left-behind wives, both qualitative and quantitative findings point to the fact that there are those left-behind wives who remain faithful and others who do not. By implication from the kinds of responses given, it can be said that left-behind wives are in two categories; those that control their sexual desires and those that find ways to satisfy their desires. This means that apart from the sexual habit of abstinence mentioned so far, there is another form or there are other forms of sexual habit(s) adopted by left-behind wives when their husbands migrate.

5.4.6a Satisfying sexual desires through sex with other men

A key objective of the study was to find out the sexual habits of left-behind wives, therefore in the quantitative phase, community members were asked about their perception on how left-behind wives controlled or satisfied their sexual habits. For responses on how left-behind wives satisfied their sexual desires, “**sex with other men**” or in this case extra marital affairs was the most reported at 32.9 percent , indicating that a high number of the community members thought since left-behind wives had sexual needs that need to be satisfied, they resort to having sex with other men to satisfy that need since their husbands have migrated.

5.4.6b Other ways of satisfying sexual desires

Perceptions from community members show other ways by which left-behind wives satisfied their sexual desires. However, these were not considered to be acts of infidelity as these forms, either involved the husbands, or did not involve them or any other person for that matter. There were 25.85 percent reports that left-behind wives engaged in phone sex with husbands. This is where via phone call either voice or video, the couple when the husband is at the destination engage in

sexually stimulating conversation while the husband or the wife or both of them self stimulate their bodies for sexual pleasure. Because this involves the husband, community members do not consider it as having extra marital affair. But there was a general disapproval of this sexual habit as community members thought that it did not serve the purpose of sex in marriage. A few respondents recounted incidences, where because these sexual acts were recorded, they resulted in scandals when third parties had access to the recordings. According to them, these scandals mostly resulted in divorce.

Another way of by which left-behind wives satisfied their sexual desires as reported by community members is use of sex toys at 24.91 percent. This is where left-behind wives use objects like vibrators, dummy penises and others to self stimulate their bodies for sexual pleasure. Some community members claimed that these sex toys in some instances are given to the left-behind wives by their husbands and again they expressed their disapproval of the use of sex toys as they perceive that it may cause harm to the left-behind wives.

Other ways of satisfying sexual desires had 7.05 percent response rate, with community members giving responses such as masturbation; where they reported that left-behind wives stimulate (touch) themselves for sexual pleasure. They also indicated that some left-behind wives watch pornography as a way of gaining sexual pleasure. And others mentioned bestiality, that is sexual intercourse with animals. See illustration of percentage distribution of response for ways of satisfying sexual desires in Table 5.4;

Table 5.4 Ways of satisfying sexual desires

Sexual Habits	Percentage %
Sex with other men	32.9
Phone sex	25.85
Use of sex toys	24.91
Others (masturbation, bestiality and pornography)	7.05
No idea	9.29

Source: Field data (July 2017)

As indicated earlier, findings from both quantitative and qualitative phases show that even though left-behind wives have sexual needs that have to be met, there are those left-behind wives who adopt abstinence as a sexual habit for reasons such as religious belief in faithfulness, personal characteristic of patience and as a way of protecting family reputation. Worth noting is the finding that all left-behind wives in this study indicated that they miss sexual relations with their husbands. Also, earlier findings show that sexual need is the most important need of left-behind wives. These, coupled with the perception that women have greater potential for sexual desire and pleasure (Boudhiba, 1977; Mernissi, 1975; Al-Hibri, 1982; Sabbah, 1984; as cited by Imam 1997), meant that these left-behind wives had sexual desires and needs but they find ways to control them, thus the study attempted to find out the means adopted to control sexual desires.

5.4.6c Controlling sexual desires

Community members were of the view that religious activities are important means by which left-behind wives used to control their sexual desires with a 23 percent response rate. This finding is supported by earlier community perception that religious belief in faithfulness is one of the reasons why left-behind wives remain faithful. It is also in line with indications by the left-behind wives that religious belief in faithfulness is one of the key reasons why they remain faithful. This is consistent with assertions by Imam, (2007); Rashidian et al, (2013); and Anarfi et al., (1993c) among others.

Another way that community members thought left-behind wives controlled their sexual desires is busy work schedule at 23 percent. Community members perceive that, left-behind wives who were engaged in some form of economic activity that kept them busy for most part of the day, were less likely to spend a lot of time by themselves which led to the feeling of loneliness and boredom. They (community members) claimed that keeping themselves busy with work reduces the likelihood of entertaining thoughts of seeking sexual intimacy.

Another 16 percent reported child care as a way of controlling sexual desires as community members felt left-behind wives who had children were less likely to engage in extra marital affairs. They indicated that the presence of children served to fill the void the migration of husbands have created to some extent, and child care kept them busy thus decreasing the likelihood of extra marital affairs.

Community members also perceived that family and friends played important roles in left-behind wives being able to remain faithful. They indicated that, attending family functions like weddings, naming ceremonies and funerals were ways by which some left-behind wives spent their time,

thereby keeping themselves busy. This is especially true for left-behind wives who have very large extended family and belonged to women clubs (“meeting”) and associations. Attending family functions had 11 percent response rate. And there was 6 percent response rate for educational pursuit as a way by which left behind wives kept themselves busy. See illustration of percentage distribution of ways by which left-behind wives control their sexual desires Table 5.5;

Table 5.5 Ways by which left-behind wives control their sexual desires

Controlling Sexual Desires	Percentage %
Religious activities	23
Busy work schedules	23
Child care	16
Family functions	11
Activities with peers	11
educational pursuit	6
Others (entertainment, chores etc)	10

Source: Field data (July 2017)

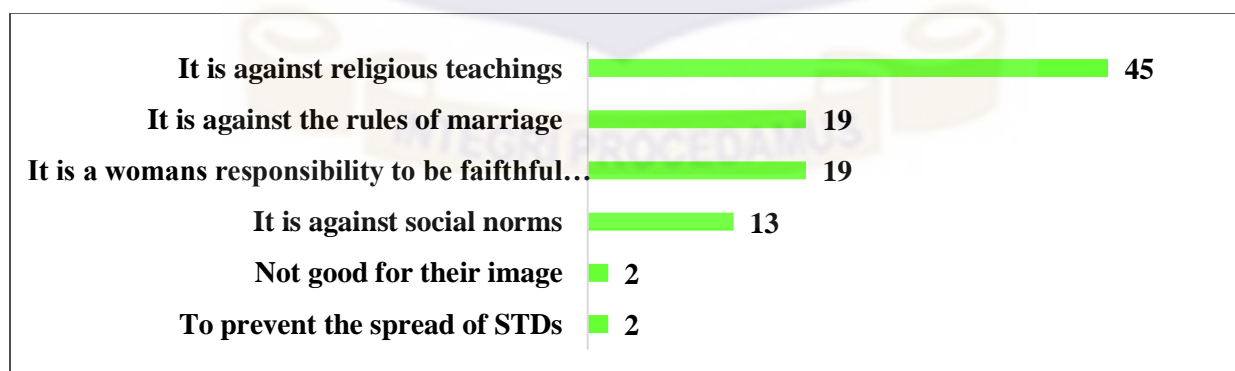
5.4.7 Stereotypes about female sexuality

Literature shows that in many societies especially African societies, views are that women’s sexuality threaten social order and therefore the need to protect their virtues through cultural rules on sexuality that aim to suppress and control the female sexuality (Toubia and An-Na’im, 1993). This has had a great influence on stereotypes about female sexuality such that female expression of sexuality is seen as waywardness and is frowned upon (Atobrah and Awedoba, 2017). With the proliferation of the media and the increased exposure to the somewhat hypersexual images in the

media, coupled with the easy access to pornographic material on the internet, views are that, the culture of protecting the virtue of the woman is gradually waning (Kwankye and Augustt, 2013; Dankwa, 2009; and Nagaddya et al., 2017). This creates the impression that old stereotypes about female sexuality are also gradually changing. The study therefore tried to find out if these stereotypes have changed. Community members were asked if they thought that it was right for left-behind wives to be unfaithful and their responses suggested that old stereotypes about female sexuality have not changed and it appeared that religion is still playing a key role in maintaining this way of thinking. Majority (89 percent) of the community members thought that it was not right for left-behind wives to have extra marital affairs.

When asked reasons why they thought left-behind wives must not engage in extra marital affairs, community members responded that it was against religious teachings (45 percent), it is against the rules of marriage (19 percent), it is a woman’s responsibility to be faithful (19 percent), it is against social norms (13 percent), it is not good for her image (2 percent) and to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (2 percent). See Figure 5.7;

Figure 5.7 Reasons why left-behind wives can not be faithful (in percentages)



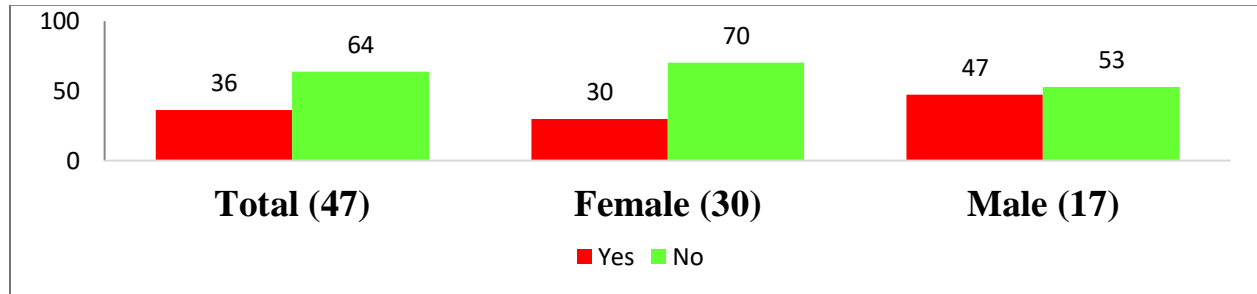
Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.4.8 Stereotypes about female sexuality against male sexuality

Female and male sexuality are defined differently, thus are expected to be expressed differently and this explains why for example in an Islamic society men can marry upto four wives but a woman can marry only one man at a time (Heinemann et al, 2016). This differences were evident in Atobrah and Awedoba's (2017) study on the Ga, which indicated that promiscuous men are referred to usings expressions that connote being playful which may result in injury, but a promiscuous woman is referred to as a town breaker connoting a serious breach of traditional norms (Atobrah and Awedoba, 2017). In many societies, womanhood is expressed by a woman's ability to suppress her sexual desires where as manhood is expressed by a man's sexual abilities (Rashidian et al., 2013).

Owing to the above, community members were asked if they thought that it was right for the left-behind wives to engage in extra marital affairs in the case that their husbands had other wives or were engaged in extramarital affairs while abroad. 64 percent said "No" and 34 percent said "Yes". The findings, to some extent are consistent with the assertion that male and female sexuality are defined differently with social norms favouring male sexuality more than that of females. See Figure 5.8 for percentage distribution of responses;

Figure 5.8 Left-behind wives can not be unfaithful even if her husband is unfaithful (in percentage)



Source: Field data (July 2017)

A cross tabulation of responses by gender shows that females (70 percent) more than males (53 percent) thought that left-behind wives cannot be unfaithful even in the case that their husbands were unfaithful or had wives while abroad. In the qualitative phase of the study, left-behind wives were also asked if they were likely to have extra marital affairs if their husbands had wives or were unfaithful while abroad. All eight left-behind wives answered “no” to the question, indicating that they would rather opt for divorce than be unfaithful and go against their religious teachings. This is what a 44-year-old housewife had to say;

“The decision to be faithful has nothing to do with my husband having an affair or not. It is because I do not want God to punish me...God hurts a promiscuous woman. He can do it because he is a man and he can marry up to four women, but for a woman it is an abomination. As for me I don’t really care if he marries over there. I am even praying that he gets married to a white woman so that he can send me money. I will be happy if he builds a house for me here and pays for a trip to Mecca to perform my ‘hajj’. That is my prayer”. (44 years old housewife).

Source: Field data (July 2017)

For the community members who thought that left-behind wives cannot be unfaithful even when their husbands are unfaithful while abroad, the reasons they gave included; ‘it is against social norms for women to have multiple sexual partners but men could’ (73 percent for female and 57 percent for males); ‘marriage is a sacred union and it is the woman’s fidelity that maintains the sanctity of marriage’ (5 percent for females and none for males); ‘if the husband provided financial support’ (5 percent for female and none for males); ‘a woman must be faithful even if her husband is not’ (11 percent for female and 43 percent for males); and ‘to protect her dignity as a woman’(5 percent for females and 0 percent for males). For some of the responses males recorded no response (0 percent). See Table 5.6;

Table 5.6 Left-behind wives cannot be unfaithful even when their husbands are not faithful

Reasons	Females	Males
Women cannot have multiple sex partners but men can	73%	57%
Marriage is sacred and it is a woman’s duty to maintain it	5%	-
If husband support financially	5%	-
It is a woman’s duty to be faithful	11%	43%
To protect her dignity	5%	-

Source: Field data (July 2017) *Base: females (21) males (9)

However, some community members thought that a left-behind wife can have extra marital affairs in the case that her husband is married or having extra marital affairs while abroad giving the following reasons; ‘lack of care from the husband’ (37 percent for female and 20 percent for males); ‘agreement between couple that the left-behind wife can seek sexual satisfaction

elsewhere’ (no response for females and 20 percent for males); ‘the left-behind wife can satisfy her sexual desires if the migrant husband satisfies his desires’ (27 percent for females and 40 percent for males); and ‘when the left-behind wife feels jealous or cheated when her husband is having extra marital affairs or married abroad’ (36 percent for females and 20 percent for males).

See Table 5.7;

Table 5.7 Conditions under which left-behind wives may be unfaithful

Reasons for saying 'Yes'	Female	Male
	%	%
Lack of concern and care from the husband	37	20
If the couple agree that she can seek sexual satisfaction elsewhere	-	20
They both have sexual desires so she can satisfy hers when he satisfies his	27	40
Out of jealousy or the feeling of being cheated	36	20

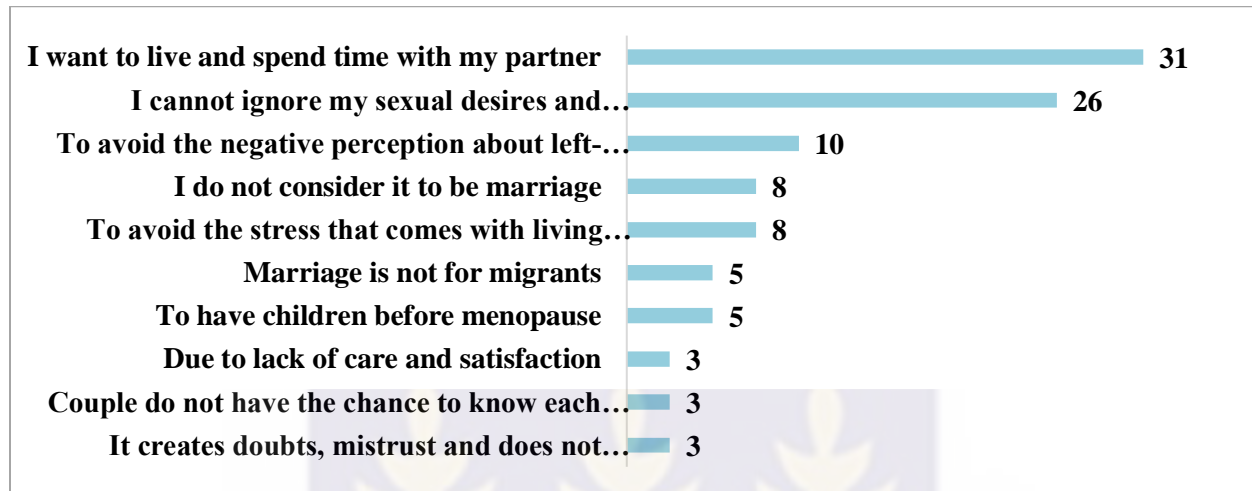
Source: Field data (July 2017) *Base: females (9) males (8)

5.4.9 Negative repercussions of marrying migrants

There seemed to be a general perception that marrying migrants mostly had negative repercussions. The participants in the study reported that these marriages usually ended up in divorce. Others were of the view that marriage to migrants most of the time led to promiscuity and that the absence of a partner together with the emotional, psychological and sexual void, made it more likely for a partner to seek ways to fill the void. Owing to this perception, community members were asked if they would consider marriage to migrants and majority (72 percent) responded in the negative citing various reasons.

Respondents gave reasons such as; ‘preferring to live and spend time with their partners’ and their ‘inability to ignore or suppress their sexual desires’ (reported mostly by the males). This may be attributed to the perception that males are active sexual beings, as well as cultural norms that allow males to express their sexuality. Other reasons were ‘avoidance of the negative perceptions about left-behind wives’ (reported mostly by the females), and ‘avoidance of the emotional and psychological stress that comes with marriage to migrants’.

Some respondents thought that marriage (normal/permanent marriage) is not for migrants, proposing the contract marriage system. This type of marriage, ‘Mut’ah’ as is referred to among the Shia Muslim sect, is where the partners agree on a specific duration for the union after which the marriage comes to an end, except the parties agree to extend the duration (Mahdavi, 1987; Meldrum et al., 2014; Fisher, 1983; and Al Hibri, 2005). These respondents were of the view that since marriage to migrants usually ended up in divorce and/or promiscuity, the contract marriage should be adopted so that when a migrant returns (to the origin), he enters into the union for the time period that he will be staying so that by the time he is ready to re-migrate the contract must have come to an end. This they believe will reduce the incidence of extra marital affairs among left-behinds. Figure 5.9 is an illustration of reasons why respondent will not consider marriage to migrants;

Figure 5.9 Reasons not to marry migrants (in percentages)

Source: Field data (July 2017)

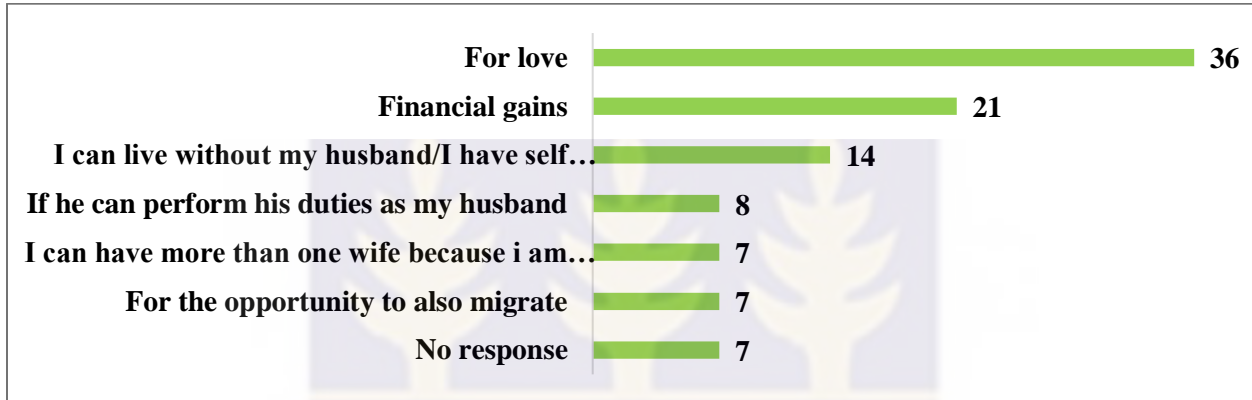
Another interesting perception is that marriage to migrants has negative effects on childbirth. For most cultures especially in Africa, a key motivation for marriage is for procreation (Azu, 1974; as cited by Atobrah and Awedoba, 2017) and this is achieved through sex, thus absence of the husband for long periods affected childbirth (Lindstrom and Saucedo, 2002; Krieger, 2004). Community members recounted instance where husbands of some of the left-behinds wives they know have been gone for years and for some of these left-behind wives they either have one child or none at all.

5.4.10 Why marriage to migrants may be considered

For the minority (28 percent) who answered that they would consider marriage to migrants, the reasons giving for the decision indicated that the main motivations were love and financial gains. Other motivations were the opportunity to travel abroad, the ability to live without their spouse (that is they have control over their sexual desires), and the ability of the migrant husband to perform his duties as a husband (that is show concern about her welfare and provide her financial

needs). For some male respondents who were Muslims, their ability to marry more than one wife was their motivation for considering marriage to a migrant. See detailed reasons why respondents may marry migrants in Figure 5.10;

Figure 5.10 Reasons why marriage to migrants may be considered (in percentages)



Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.4.10a Roles migrant husbands play in maintaining marriage

The above finding from community perceptions is corroborated by left-behind wives when they were asked about the roles their husbands played in sustaining the marriage. They indicated that regular and long calls from husbands, monitoring of their daily routines by their husbands and fulfillment of financial obligations are some of the ways by which migrant husbands contributed to maintaining their marriages. It is clear from the findings that regular calls and remittances played very important roles in maintaining the relationships as regular calls and remittances were mentioned by most of the left-behind wives in the study. This is what a 42-year-old soldier had to say when asked what role her husband played in maintaining their marriage;

“He calls me to check on me and the children almost every day, so I don’t become lonely because I always hear his voice. He also sends money every month.... he provides for our up-keep so I am never cash-strapped. I can confidently say that he cares about our welfare”. (42 years old soldier)

Source: Field data (July 2017)

Community members were also of the view that if giving the chance to remarry, left-behind wives would opt to marry non-migrants as they (community members) are of the believe that unions with migrants were more problematic compared to unions where the couple stay together. They perceive that left-behind wives themselves were aware of the negative emotional and psychological effects of their husbands’ absence thus will rather opt for marriage to non-migrants if giving the chance. See table below for percentage distribution for responses on whether left-behind wives will marry non- migrants if giving the chance;

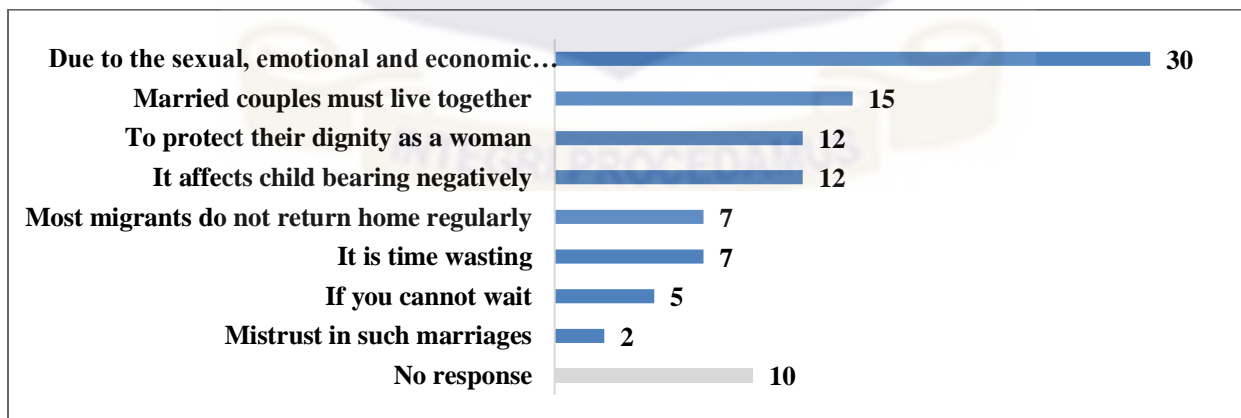
5.4.10b Marriage to migrants should not be encouraged

There appeared to be a general sense of discontentment with the episodes of divorce, both real and alleged acts of promiscuity, scandals of leaked sexual or nude videos/pictures of married women that are meant for their migrant husbands, disputes stemming from long waits by left behind wives and isolated incidences of neglect by migrant husbands. All of which are social ills, perceived to be associated with marriage to migrants. This sense of discontentment was reflected in responses to the question of whether community members will encourage other people to marry migrants. Majority (80 percent), mainly respondents who were parents, will not encourage other people to marry migrants and will not give their daughters’ hands into marriage to migrants. These

respondents claim they would encourage it only under the conditions that the couple will migrate together after the marriage.

Among the reasons given for not encouraging marriage to migrants are that; it brought about emotional as well as psychological stress which may be avoided if married to non-migrants. Other reasons are that, married people must live together to provide companionship and support for each other. It is believed that, marriage to migrants has a great likelihood of leading women into promiscuity, thus it must be avoided to protect their dignity. Others felt that it had a negative effect on childbirth (that is it delays childbirth sometimes causing some women to reach menopause without children). This response is linked to the notion that most migrants took too long to return making their wives wait for long periods of time. A detailed illustration of responses on why community members will not encourage marriage to migrants is presented in Figure 5.11;

Figure 5.11 Reasons why marriage to migrants will not be encourage (in percentages)

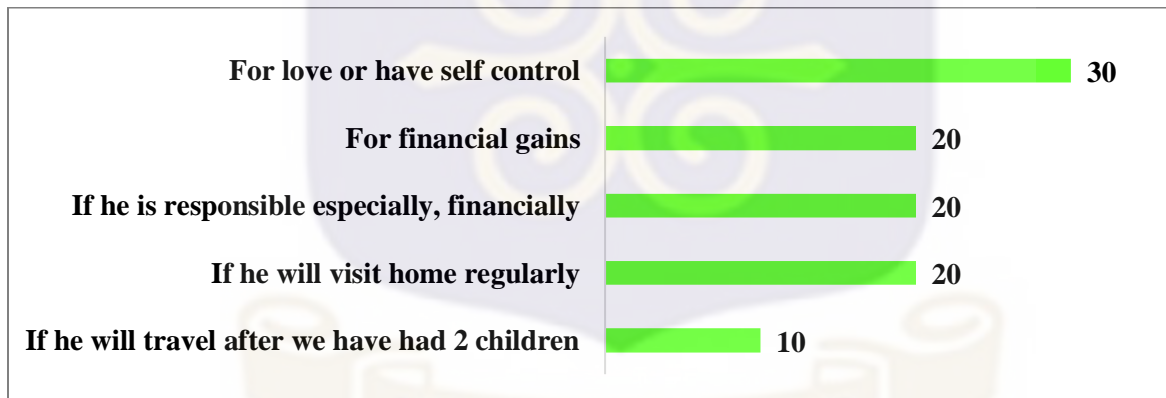


Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.4.10c Conditions under which marriage to migrants may be encouraged

For the 20 percent who responded “yes” meaning they will encourage marriage to migrants gave reasons, some of which are in line with earlier findings from left-behind wives on the roles their migrant husbands play in maintaining their marriages. These reasons included; ‘if the migrant husband will be financially responsible’. Other reasons were; ‘for love’, that is if they love each other and the prospective left-behind wife can control her sexual desires. Some gave conditions under which they will encourage such marriage as; ‘if the migrant husband will return regularly’, ‘if he will stay till they have two or more children before leaving’; and others will encourage it for financial gains. Percentage distribution of reasons to encourage marriage to migrants is presented in Figure 5.12;

Figure 5.12 Reason why marriage to migrants may be encouraged (in percentages)



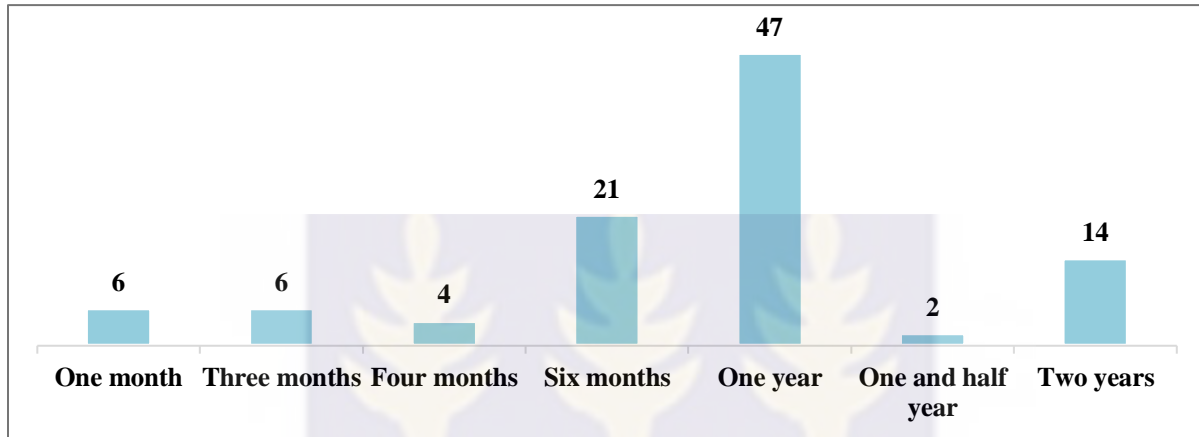
Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.4.10d Regular return

With regards to migrant husbands staying too long at the destination before returning, community members were asked what they thought was the ideal time length a migrant husband should spend

at the destination and majority (68 percent) thought that it should be from six months to one year. Detailed responses are presented in Figure 5.13;

Figure 5.13 Ideal length of time migrant husband should absent (in percentages)



Source: Field data (July 2017)

5.5 Coping Strategies

The final objective of the study was to find out the various coping strategies these left behind wives used to first, deal with the absence of their husbands; and also, how they dealt with the negative community perceptions about their sexual habits. This objective was answered in the qualitative phase of the study where left-behind wives shared their lived experiences regarding how they cope with their sexual habits when their husbands migrate and also how the community perceived their sexual habits affected them.

5.5.1 Coping with absence of husbands

As indicated in the discussion earlier, sex is an important need for left-behind wives and is considered a right and a responsibility for couples. It has been established, also that the migration of their husbands deprived them of this important need, yet qualitative findings show that these

left-behind wives abstain for various reasons. There are indications that these unions are stable for reasons other than those that can be attributed to what these left-behind wives claimed to be their most important need.

The second theoretical concept of this study is the Equity Concept (Walster et al., 1978) which assumes that there is equity in a relationship when participants believe that the reward they receive is proportional to the cost involved in sustaining the relationship. The concept asserts that when the participants find that the cost incurred is more than the reward earned, the relationship is unstable and participants feel cheated or angry. This is used to explain why individuals in a relationship (marriage) may either stay committed to the relationship or engage in extramarital affairs.

Findings from this study show that the migration of husbands has negative effects on the left-behind wives thus the feeling of dissatisfaction in their marriages. But contrary to the assumption of the equity concept (Walster et al., 1978), that this feeling of dissatisfaction will lead to the union being unstable, data gathered for the objective of finding out the coping strategies of left-behind wives indicated that these wives adopted certain habits or engaged in certain activities to deal with the absence of their husbands, thereby making their marriages stable.

Some of the left-behind wives seemed unconcerned about satisfying their sexual desires in the absence of their husbands. On the other hand, some get worried about their unfulfilled sexual needs since sex is generally important to them. The following ways are adopted to deal with the vacuum created. This is what a 28-year-old teacher had to say about how she controls her sexual desires;

“I try to control myself in my own ways. It is a combination of mental and physical exercise. I just put my palm in-between my lap while I sit quietly and tell myself to be patient till he comes back”.

(28 years old teacher)

Generally, left-behind wives adopted various ways to deal with the vacuum created by the migration of their husbands; the following ways are adopted to deal with the vacuum (in no particular order); ‘getting busy with house chores’, ‘communication and interaction with children and the family of the left-behind wives’, ‘engaging in self soothing talks and long chats with husbands’, ‘engaging in religious activities (for example fasting)’, ‘visiting and going out with friends’ and ‘listening to music and watching movies’. **Source: Field data (July 2017)**

The above findings show that religion, family (children, parents, siblings and sometimes family of husband) and friends are key support systems for left-behind wives who abstain. Also, there is evidence that the migrant husbands’ show of love, care and concern through regular communication, remittance and regular returns helped left-behind wives to cope with the void created by their migration. Further, engaging in activities that will keep them busy such as engaging in economic activities or even performing household chores are a way left-behind wives deal with the absence of their husbands.

5.5.2 Coping with negative community perceptions

On the subject of dealing with community perceptions about their sexual habits, generally left behind wives are aware of the negative perceptions about their sexual habits as they are faced with ‘finger pointing’ and ‘unnecessary’ allegations of infidelity within the community.

Considering how the community perceives their sexual habits, left-behind wives are divided over this matter. Majority are rather concerned about what people think about them. Therefore, they are

cautious with the kind of associations and activities they engage in. this is what a 30-year-old housewife had to say;

“I do not want them have negative thoughts and suspicions about me so I avoid actions that will make them think I am cheating. I don’t stay out late and I don’t entertain male friends. I am also careful about the female friends I choose. Their behavior can give me a bad name”. (30 years old housewife)

Source: Field data (2017)

The few left-behind wives who are unconcerned about the negative community perceptions claimed that their habit of abstinence is not as a result of the negative community perceptions, but their religious believe and conviction about “God being aware of the actions and will judge them”.

This is what a 35-year-old trader had to say;

“Personally, I do not care about what people say. I do not listen to people. I just try to feel free and do what will make me happy. They like to gossip and say things they have not seen. It is so annoying but I don’t pay attention to them. God sees me and He will be the judge”. (35 years old trader)

Source: Field data (2017)

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The current study looked at the sexual habits of left-behind wives and related community perceptions in Nima, Accra. The mixed method approach, consisting the qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to collect data from 8 left-behind wives using an interview guide, and 47 community members using questionnaires in Nima. The study sought to measure the following objectives; to find out the socio-economic characteristics of left-behind wives and how it affects their sexual habits; to examine changes, if any in the sexual habits of left-behind wives; to ascertain community perceptions about the sexual habits of left-behind wives and; to identify the various coping strategies left-behind wives use to deal with both the absence of their husbands and the perceptions people have about their sexual habits.

6.2 Summary of Findings

6.2.1 Socio-economic Characteristics and its Effects on Sexual Habits

As introduced in earlier discussions, sexual habits in this case of left-behind wives undergo changes which may be as a result of socio-economic status. This assertion is confirmed by findings in this study as both community members and left-behind wives agree that socio-economic status affects sexual habits. However, left-behind wives do not admit that this assertion applies to them and this presents a possible case of blame shifting (Freud, 1987) in that, these left-behind wives may be defending themselves against their own attributes (that is the fact that their sexual behaviours are as a result of the socio-economic status) by blaming it on other left-behind wives.

In relation to the Social Exchange Theory (Cook and Rice, 2004), the study asserts that rewards that reinforce actions are several and may differ in importance from one individual to another. Findings also show that other factors which are not rewards in themselves reinforce actions and these may include religious beliefs and cultural norms. Personal characteristics may also reinforce actions in individuals.

6.2.2 Changes in Sexual Habits of Left-behind Wives

Another key objective of this study was to examine, if any, the changes in the sexual habits of left-behind wives. Research has shown that migration affects the sexual habits of migrants and evidence from this study suggests that migration also affects/changes the sexual habits of left-behind wives. However, community members and left-behind wives differ on the kind of change that occurs. Left-behind wives indicate that their sexual habits change from regular sex to abstinence and become more sexual active when their husbands return. By change in sexual habits, community members on the other hand are referring to sex with other men, phone sex, masturbation, pornography and bestially.

6.2.3 Community Perceptions

Generally, community members perceive left-behind wives to be promiscuous and left-behind wives are aware of this negative perception about their sexual habits. Left-behind wives are categorized into two; those who control their sexual desires and those who find ways to satisfy their desires. Community perceptions are that majority of left-behind wives are unfaithful due to their sexual needs that have to be satisfied, lack of communication with husbands, lack of religious belief in faithfulness, lack of self control, peer influence and their husbands being married or having extra marital affairs abroad. Minority are perceived to be faithful due to constant

communication with their husbands, financial maintenance, religious belief in faithfulness, place of residence, and family.

6.2.4 Coping Strategies

There is some sense of dissatisfaction among left-behind wives as their most important needs are not being adequately met. However, contrary to the Concept of Equity (Walster et al., 1978), this sense of dissatisfaction does not make their marriages unstable as they adopt some strategies to deal with the absence of husbands and these may include; spending time with family and friends, engaging in religious activities, constant communication with husbands and busy work schedules.

With regards to community perceptions, left-behind wives are aware of the negative perception about their sexual habits and they are divided in how these perceptions affect them. Some are concerned, thus they become cautious. Others are however unconcerned, citing religious implications about their actions.

6.3 Conclusion

There have been studies on the nexus between migration and sexuality (Awusabo-Asare and Anarfi, 1997; Fiske, 1998) which have pointed to the fact that migration affects every aspect of social life including sexuality. These studies have mainly focused on the role migration plays in the spread of disease such as HIV AIDS, as migrants are said to adopt risky sexual behaviours due to the change in environment where religious as well as cultural norms may be different from that of the migrant's origin (Cassels et al. 2014; Anarfi, 1993a; Anarfi and Awusabo-Asare, 1993b; Anarfi et al., 1993c).

In Ghana, data from the Ghana Statistical Service indicates that men mostly undertake international migration while women move internally (GSS 2010). There is also evidence that the number of women who are married far exceeds that of men (GSS 2010 PHC report). This indicates that, when migration takes place majority of the left-behinds may be women, and several studies have investigated the impact that migration has on women who are left behind (for example Ikuomola, 2015). A lot of these studies focused on the economic impacts and the fact that these lead to changes in gender roles and household dynamics have been pointed out.

This study has evidence that, not only does migration affect the socio-economic lives of left-behinds, but also affects their sexual behaviours. It is therefore justified to say that, just as studies have shown that migration affects the sexual habits of migrants, so does it affect that of left-behinds too. The difference however, is in how this impact is manifested, so that due to religious and cultural definitions and expectations of how sexuality should be expressed, the impact is manifested accordingly where a breach may mean serious consequences for a member of a society.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

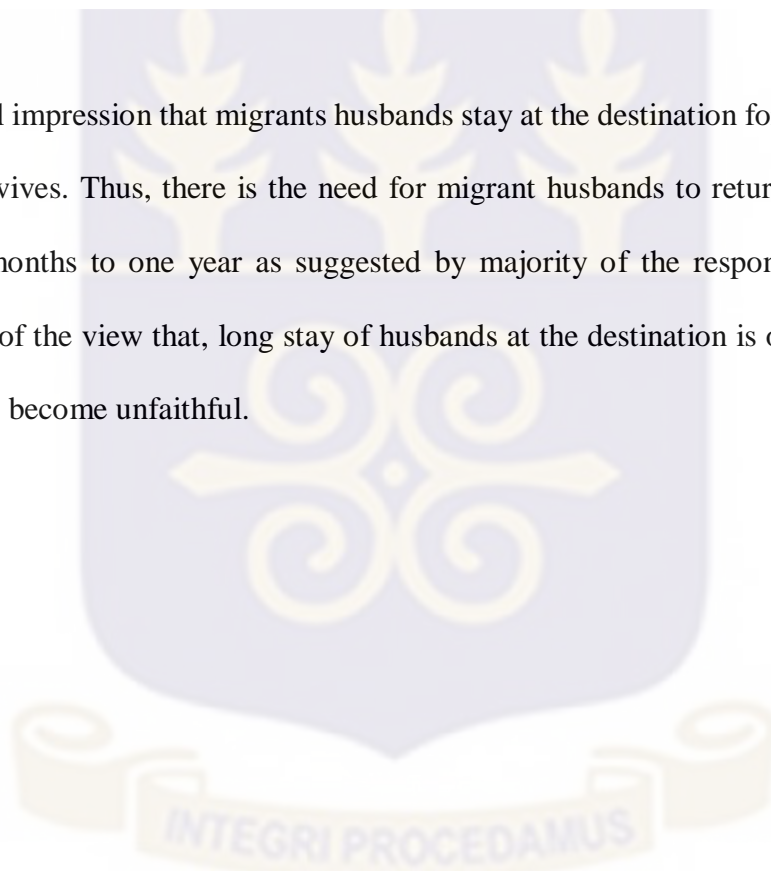
When making migration decisions, married males should consider moving with their wives where possible. This will significantly minimize the negative emotional and psychological effects of migration on wives left behind and also reduce the incidence of infidelity reported among left-behind wives.

Also, migrants, particularly those who belong to the Shia Muslims sect should consider the ‘contract marriage’ system (MUT’AH) as proposed by some respondents in the study. This has the potential to reduce the incidence of divorce as respondents believe migration mostly leads to

divorce. This may also reduce the incidence of extra marital affairs perceived among left-behind wives.

Owing to the important role the family plays in the life of a left-behind wife, there is the need for education and advocacy for society to relook at the family system. There seem to be a shift from the extended family system to more nuclear family system. Findings from the study show that the main support system for left-behind wives is the extended family, thus the need for more attention on the subject

There is a general impression that migrants husbands stay at the destination for long periods at the neglect of their wives. Thus, there is the need for migrant husbands to return regularly, at least after every six months to one year as suggested by majority of the respondents in the study. Respondents are of the view that, long stay of husbands at the destination is one key reason why left-behind wives become unfaithful.



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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON



CENTRE FOR MIGRATION STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE (COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS)

Hello, I am Sahadatu Ali, a Student at the Centre for Migration Studies of the University of Ghana, Legon. I am conducting a research on the sexual habits of left-behind wives and related community perceptions in Nima, Accra as part of my dissertation leading to the award of Master of Art in Migration Studies.

I would therefore be grateful for your assistance in completing the following questions to the best of your knowledge. The responses that you will provide in this research will be treated with confidentiality and are only meant for academic purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Date of interview.....

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age: 18- 20yrs [] 21- 24 yrs [] 25-29 yrs [] Above 30 yrs (please state) []
2. Marital status: Single [] Married [] Cohabiting [] Separated [] Divorced []
Widowed []
3. Religion: Christian [] Muslim [] Traditionalist [] Other (specify)
4. Level of education: None [] Primary [] JHS [] SHS [] Voc/Tech [] Tertiary []
Post Graduate []
5. Income (GHC): 100-500 [] 500-1000 [] 1000 and above (specify).....
6. Average monthly expenses (GHC): 100-500 [] 500-1000 [] 1000 and above (specify)....

SECTION B: COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

7. Do you know someone whose husband is a migrant? YES [] NO []
8. How long have you known the left-behind wife? 0-6 mns [] 6mns-1yr [] 1yr +
(specify).....
9. How long has her husband been a migrant? 1yr-2yrs [] 2yrs-3yrs [] 3yrs +.....
10. Where has he travelled to?
11. In your opinion, how does this left-behind wife manage her social life?
12. In your opinion, how does this left-behind wife manage her economic life?

13. the following needs of left-behind wives? (Multiple) Sexual needs [] Emotional needs []
 Economic needs [] Familial needs []
 Others(specify).....

14

NEEDS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

15. In your opinion, does sex play a role in maintaining marital relations? YES [] NO []

16. If yes to question 16, how?

17. If no to question 16, why?

18. What is your perception about the sexual habits of married couples?

19. What in your opinion are the ways by which left behind wives satisfy their sexual needs?

Use of sex toys [] Engage in phone sex with husband [] Sex with boyfriends []

Others (specify).....

20. What do you think are the ways by which left-behind wives control their sexual desires?

Busy work schedule [] Child care [] Family functions [] Church activities [] Educational pursuit [] Activities with peers [] Others (specify).....

21. Do you think left-behind wives remain faithful? YES [] NO []

22. If yes, why?

23. If no, why?

24. Do you think it is right for left-behind wives to engage in extra marital affairs? YES [] NO []

25. If yes, why?

26. If no, why?

27. Can a left-behind wife be unfaithful in the case that her husband abroad has a wife or he is being unfaithful? YES [] NO []. Please explain your answer

28. What in your opinion are the reasons why a left-behind wife will remain faithful? Her family [] Husband's family [] Money [] Place of residence [] Communication with husband [] Religious belief in faithfulness [] Others (specify)..... (Please explain your answer)

29. Are you aware of a situation where a left-behind wife has been accused of infidelity? YES [] NO []

30. If yes to Question (29), what is your opinion about the situation?

31. Will you consider marrying a migrant? YES [] NO []

32. If yes, why?

33. If no, why?

34. If yes to question (31), how will you manage your sexual habits in the absence of your spouse?

35. In your opinion, what will be some the reasons why you will be unfaithful if you were married to a migrant?

36. Do you think if given the chance, left-behind wives will prefer marriage to non-migrants?

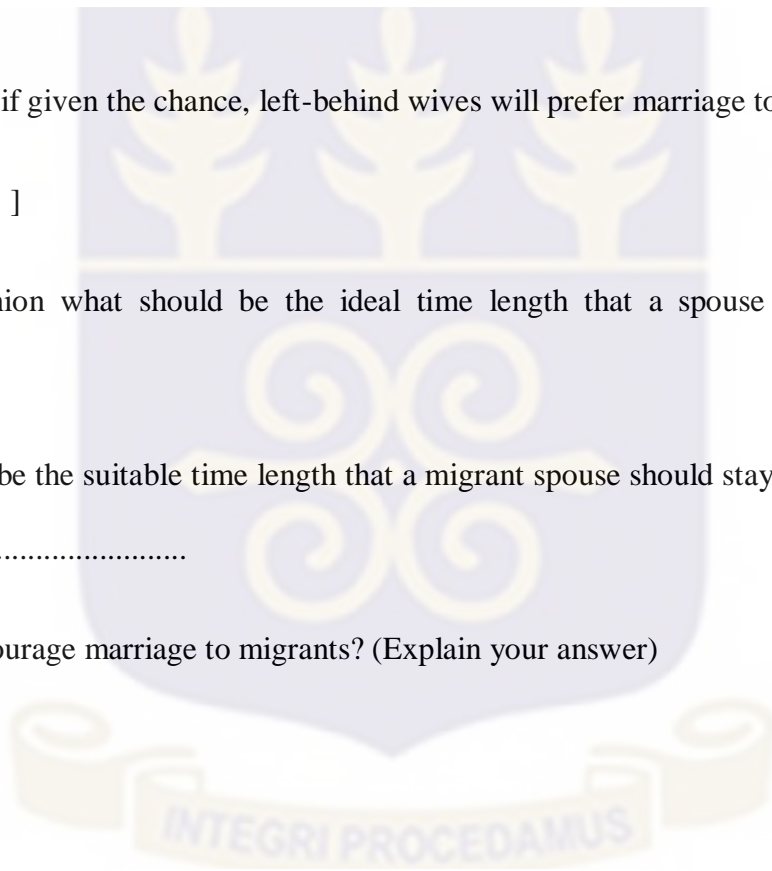
YES [] NO []

37. In your opinion what should be the ideal time length that a spouse should be absent?

.....

38. What should be the suitable time length that a migrant spouse should stay upon return before remigration?

39. Will you encourage marriage to migrants? (Explain your answer)



APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON



CENTRE FOR MIGRATION STUDIES

INTERVIEW GUIDE (LEFT-BEHIND WIVES)

Hello, I am Sahadatu Ali, a student at the Centre for of the University of Ghana, Legon. I am conducting a research on the sexual habits of left-behind wives and community perceptions in Nima, Accra as part of my dissertation leading to the award of Master of Arts in Migration Studies. I would be grateful complete the following questions to the best of your knowledge. The responses you provide will be treated with confidentiality and only for academic purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Date of interview.....

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1.Age: 18- 20yrs [] 21- 24 yrs [] 25-29 yrs [] Above 30 yrs (please state) []

2. Religion: Christian [] Muslim [] Traditionalist [] Other (specify)

3. Education: None [] Primary [] JHS [] SHS [] Voc/Tech [] Tertiary [] Post Graduate []

4. Occupation (Please state)

5. Monthly Income: 100-500 [] 500-1000 [] 1000 and above (specify).....

6. Average monthly expenses (GHC): 100-500 [] 500-1000 [] 1000 and above (specify)....

7. Number of children (Please state)

8. Type of accommodation: Single room [] Chamber and hall [] Two bedrooms apartment []

Others (Please specify)

9. Access to toilet/bathroom facility: Share with other tenants [] Not shared [] Public bath/toilet []

10. Access to healthcare: NHIS [] Private health insurance [] Pay from pocket []

11. Ownership of household items (tick accordingly): Television [] Air-condition [] Car [] Mobile phone [] Microwave oven [] Gas/electric stove [] Others (specify).....

SECTION B

12. How long have you been married? (Please state).....

13. How long was your husband with you before he migrated? (Please state).....

14. Can you please describe your social wellbeing as a wife of a migrant? (Probe further)

15. Can you please describe your economic wellbeing as a wife of a migrant? (Probe further)

16. Which of the following are needs that are important to you? (Multiple) Sexual needs [] Emotional needs [] Economic needs [] Familial needs [] Others (specify).....

17. Question (16)

NEEDS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

18. Do you think sex plays a role in maintaining marital relations? YES [] NO []

19. If yes to Question (18), why?

20. If no to Question (18), why?

21. What was your perception about the sexual habits of married couples before marriage?

22. Can you please describe your sexual habits before marriage?

23. What is your perception about the sexual habits of married couples now?

24. Between you and your husband, who is more sexually active?

25. How often do you have sexual relations when your husband is around?

26. Will you describe yourself as sexually demanding?

27. Has there been any change in how sexually active your husband is upon return?

28. If yes, has he become more active or less active?

29. How does that affect you?

30. In what ways do you miss your husband?

31. Do you miss sexual relations with your husband in his absence? YES [] NO []

32. Are you concerned about how your sexual desires will be satisfied in your husband's absence?

(Please explain)

33. Are there instances where you crave sexual intimacy in your husband's absence? YES []

NO []

34. If yes to Question (33), how do you control these desires?

35. What are some of the ways you think left-behind wives satisfy their sexual desires?

36. In your opinion, what are the reasons why left-behind wives may engage in extra marital affairs?

37. Do you see yourself engaging in an extra marital affair should your most important needs be lacking?

38. If yes to Question (37), why?

39. If no to Question (37), why?

40. What role does your husband play in how you manage your sexual habit?

41. Which of the following helps to control your sexual habit? Your Family [] Husband's Family [] Communication with husband [] Children [] Place of residence [] Others (Please specify).....

COPING WITH COMMUNITY PERCEPTION

42. What is your perception about how people perceive the sexual habits of left-behind wives?

43. Does the perception of people on the sexual habits of left-behind wives affect you in any way?

YES [] NO []

44. If yes, in what way(s)?

45. If no, why?

46. Do these perceptions play a role in how you manage your sexual habits?

47. Are you aware of a situation where a left-behind wife has been accused of infidelity? YES []

NO []

48. If yes, what is/was your reaction to the situation?

49. Have you ever been accused of infidelity? YES [] NO []

50. If yes, what were the circumstances?

51. Do you think your husband is having extra marital affairs while abroad? YES [] NO []

52. How does that influence your sexual habits?

53. In the case that your husband has a wife abroad, how would that affect your sexual habits?

54. Please do you have any comments? (State)

THANK YOU



