



Communication through popular culture: Analyzing a googi performance on early marriage among the Kusaas of Ghana

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ABSTRACT

This work investigates the use of a popular cultural performance called *googi*, to advocate against early marriage and its associated cases of adolescent pregnancies in Kusaal speaking communities in Ghana. It highlights how a local cultural artist employs the power of an indigenous language to skillfully address a significant socio-cultural issue. This research analyses the literary techniques employed by the artist in her didactic performance which challenges cultural norms that endorse early marriage. The artist advocates for social transformation through education underscoring the causes of early marriage as including socio-economic and cultural factor. The findings demonstrate that the persuasive use of indigenous language in popular cultural performances serves as great instruments for communication, advocacy and entertainment in rural communities.

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1. Introduction

The *googi* musical performance among the Kusaal speakers of Ghana is a major indigenous medium that has transcended generations and served as a useful approach for social criticism, cultural education and entertainment. Nonetheless, it has received little attention in the literature. (Abubakari et al., 2020). This study explores the themes and literary techniques of a popular *googi* musical performance by Alembood Akidaug Akologo of the Upper East Region of Ghana on the topic of early marriage.

Early marriage remains a national problem in Ghana because its prevalence remain statistically high as one in every five girls marries before her 18th birthday (20.7%) and one in every 20 girls (4.9%) marries before her 15th birthday. The highest prevalence rates are observed in the three northern regions of Ghana where more than one in three girls get married before the age of 18 (de Groot et al., 2018: 2). Ahonsi et al. (2019) cite the Greater Accra, the Central and the Northern regions of Ghana as the regions with highest prevalence of teenage pregnancies. Findings on their study reveal socio-economic and cultural factors such as education, teenage pregnancy and poverty as contributors to early marriage in Ghana.

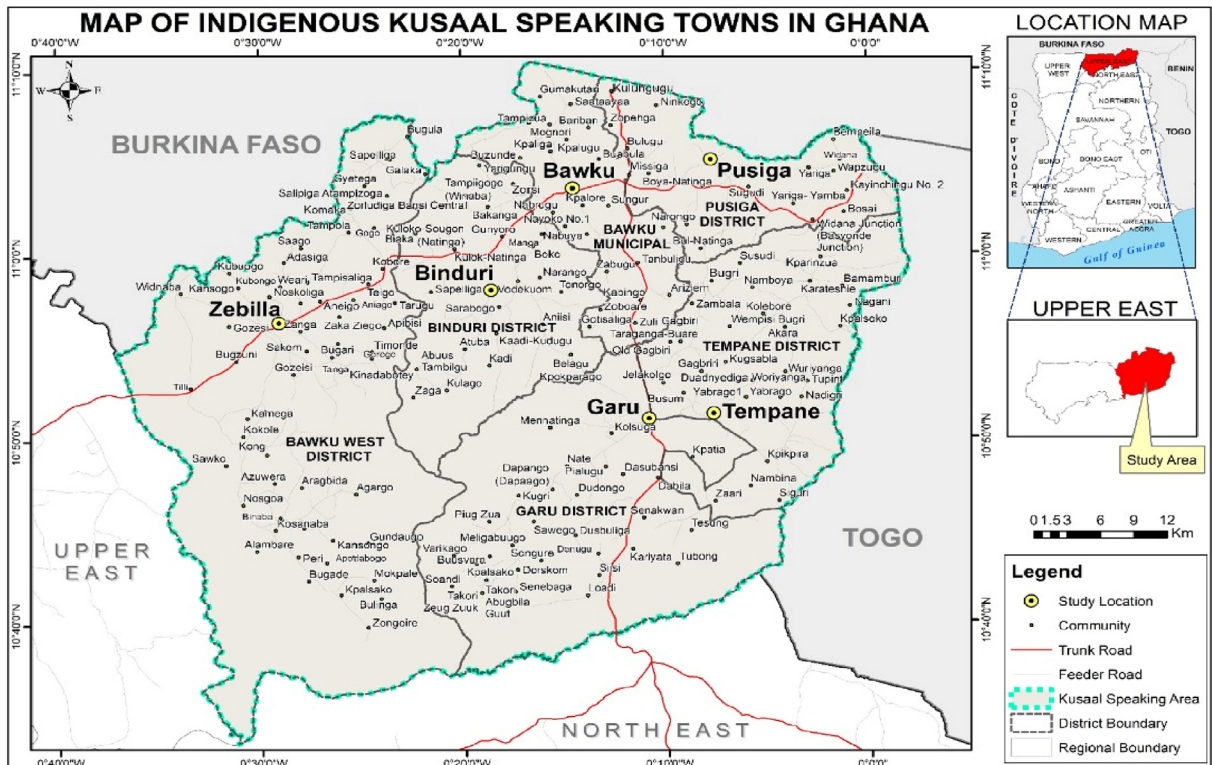
Early marriage referred to as *Pua Sauk* in Kusaal, is a culturally permitted customary practice which has outlived its usefulness and has currently been abused with various ramifications including sexual abuse of teenage girls and its accompanying teenage pregnancies. Culturally, early marriage among the Kusaas is either for religious reasons or in appreciation of a long-standing friendship between two families. A son-in-law can also be offered a young girl after an exceptional show of generosity in the performance of a late father-in-law's funeral (Abass-Abaah, 2024).

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This research examines a local popular song, a *googi* performance by a local artist on the core socio-cultural causes of early marriage in Kusaug¹ and the possible interventions for redress. In what appears to support these statistics, the singer, in this study, identifies that children aged between 10 and 18 years get pregnant in Kusaal-speaking communities and are mostly given out in marriage by their parents. Although early marriage is illegal under the Children's Act of 1998 in Ghana, poverty and cultural norms are identified by the singer as part of the major causes of early marriage among people living in the study area. The significance of the content of this song is that it gives first-hand information to researchers, government and non-government organisations that intend to conduct any research or implement advocacy interventions on this subject matter in Kusaug.

The Kusaug traditional area has six-districts: Bawku, Garu, Tempani, Pusiga, Zebilla, and Binduri (see map taken from Abubakari, 2018, 2022).



Map of the Kusaug Traditional Area, Upper East Region, Ghana (Abubakari, 2018, 2022).

Information obtained from the Ghana Statistical Service Department based on the 2010 population and housing census indicates that there are 534,681 speakers of Kusaal in the various regions and districts of Ghana. With a total population of Ghana being 24658823 (PHC, 2010:1, Ghana Statistical Service, 2012, 2016), the Kusaas make approximately 2.2% of the population of Ghana as of 2010. Whilst Ethnologue (Simons and Fenning, 2017) estimates around 420,000 Kusaas in Ghana alone, Bodomo (2020) estimates around 500,000 speaker population of Kusaas across Ghana. Abubakari and Musah (2024), on their part, indicate that Ghana houses only about a quarter of the population of Kusaas while the rest are scattered across West Africa and the diaspora.

2. Marriage practices in Ghana and among the Kusaas

In Ghana, marriage practices are traditional customary practices deeply engrained in culture. Three main types of marriages are recognised although different cultures may have other acceptable forms. The three recognised types of marriages are: (i) customary marriage, (ii) Islamic marriage and (iii) Christian marriage. All types of marriages are celebrated with a feast and merrymaking in addition to gift giving. In customary marriage, the brides receive a bridewealth from the groom whilst in Islam this same gesture is referred to as the *Mahr* 'dowry'. The settlement of the bridewealth is a symbol of the groom's appreciation of the bride and his capacity to take care of her (Nukunya, 2003).

Customary marriage is the most common type and often practiced in rural communities. It is regulated by traditional custom of the specific ethnic groups. Among the Kusaas, this is recognised by the payment of the bridewealth which is four cattle. Islamic marriage is also referred to as the "Mohammedan marriage and practiced by the Muslims community in the

¹ Kusaug refers to all the six districts inhabited by the Kusaas in the Upper East region of Ghana.

country. It follows the Sharia and the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammed (SAW). It involves recitations of verses from the Quran. Finally, Christian marriage or Marriage by Ordinance is performed following the Christian religious practices. It involves the exchange of vows and rings. It is important to add that several Ghanaians, including the Kusaas, practice a combination of these marriage types. They will often begin with a customary marriage ceremony followed by a Christian or Islamic marriage ceremony to conform to religious beliefs and legal requirements.

Abass-Abaah (2024:100–103) outlines six forms of traditional marriages acceptable in Kusaug tradition: monogamy, polygamy- affinal polygamy where the co-wives come from different families and communities and sororal polygamy where the man is allowed to marry the sister of his wife or her other relatives when the wife is still alive. This commonly happens when a wife "fails" to deliver a male child - heir apparently, to the man (husband). Another type of acceptable marriage among the Kusaas is levirate marriage - where a brother to the deceased can marry the widow. More important to this work is early marriage referred to as 'Pua Sauk' which is contracted only under customary marriage as it is currently illegal in Ghana. Early marriage is mainly an endorsement from the religious beliefs and cultural practices of the people. Abass-Abaah (2024: 102) explains that Kusaug tradition permits early marriage though he is quick to add that the practice has waned due to the abuse of the system and the misconception of the practice by external observers. As part of the Kusaug traditional customs, all sons-in-law play a significant role by competing with one another at the funeral of an in-law (Abass-Abbah, 2024). The son-in-law who wins at the funeral is presented with a young girl as his wife, amid jubilation, music and dance. Although the cultural intent of early marriage maybe noble, the practice is abused leading to high rates of teenage pregnancies and other forms of gender-based violence (GSS, 2018a, 2018b: 269–275). This necessitates initiatives such as the performance of the *googi* to encourage rural folks and community leaders to prioritise girl-child education.

3. Methodology and data collection

This research is entirely qualitative. The main data is a *googi* performance on early marriage and teenage pregnancy performed by Alembood Akidaug Akologo with her Winpang *googi* team at Yakote in Bawku. This song was performed on August 5, 2022 and commissioned by a team working on the project: *Promoting Women's Participation in Social Transformation through Popular Arts in Kusaal-Speaking Communities in Ghana* with sponsorship from the University of Glasgow's Culture for Sustainable and Inclusive Peace Network Plus in collaboration with the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. Abubakari et al., 2021 posit that *googi* is a type of performance which is loved and enjoyed by children, adults, males, females and the aged. It is a kind of social leveler during the performance of which everyone - young and old can participate in dancing and singing. It resonates so well with the people, and it is one major means used for communicating important social issues (Abubakari et al., 2021). Following Abubakari et al., 2021, Ali and Bodomo, 2021, the song is parallelly transcribed and translated into English. This approach gives non-speakers of Kusaal a full understanding of the message. Similarly, transcribed and translated lines are paired and numbered accordingly. The analysis uses the transcribed version although the translation is also given to allow readers to have a fair understanding of what is being discussed. The transcription and translation were done by Mr. Lawrence Sando, an MPhil holder in Linguistics and a native speaker of Kusaal. This was scrutinized by the first author who is also a native speaker of Kusaal. The audio, transcription and translation of the song is provided in the appendix for readers who are interested. It is important to add that relevant sections of the main song are the only parts that are presented for analysis. The song is composed of 19 stanzas with a chorus repeated after each of these stanzas. Thus, data may be taken from stanza one of the song which is numbered (1–4) and another from stanza fifteen which is numbered (137–144) to support a claim or explain a phenomenon (i.e. section 6. 2.1). The numbering is only intended to help readers match the local language to its parallel translation in English.

4. Popular culture, griot in West Africa and *googi* among the Kusaas

The term popular culture has been described in different ways from different perspectives. Kidd (2014: 18) notes that the word popular is from the Latin *populus*, meaning "the people" which did not refer to all people, but rather to a very specific and very large group of poor and working people. It made an exemption to a tiny group of ruling elites, who were associated with a very different kind of culture a privileged set of cultural goods like paintings, classical music, literature, and other forms of creative expression—that we now refer to as high culture. Everyone else had what we now call folk culture - local music, crafts, oral traditions, morality plays, and many other types of cultural expressions. Kidd adds that if popular means the people, then popular culture could be associated with folk culture, and many analyses focus on it. Additionally, folk culture is just one of the meanings associated with popular culture. Contrary to the identification of social stratification or classes among the community of people referred to by Kidd, the Kusaal speaking communities do not have different sets of cultures: one for the elite or rich class and another for the ordinary person. The entire cluster of communities enjoy the same local music, crafts and oral traditions among others. Kidd (2021) further explains that popular culture refers to the set of practices, beliefs, and objects that encompass the most widely shared meanings of a social system. Popular culture is here used to describe all the cultural artifacts of a group of people be they tangible and intangible that are meaningful to the social-cultural system of the said group of people. These cultural artifacts embody the oral traditions - songs, folktales, proverbs, riddles, the belief systems, artistic works: carvings, paintings among others.

By employing cultural elements that are rooted in local communities including folktales, songs, proverbs, docudramas among others, popular culture can be used as a tool for social transformation. This is because these cultural artifacts hold significant meaning to the people who own and leveraging on this offers an opportunity to deliver educational messages meant for positive

behavioural and attitudinal changes among members of the targeted communities. Popular culture is often used as tools by researchers and local artistes to promote positive transformation from 'culturally' induced practices that have commonly outlived their usefulness and have become sources of conflict including gender-based violence in communities where they are rife.

Thus, following the people's common beliefs, values and ways of life, a message is crafted and communicated through a common local medium of musical performance to spread messages that seek to address societal problems such as early marriage- for socio-cultural transformation. There is a blend of value and belief systems in addition to intangible cultural artifacts in the form of music, narratives and drama among others to emphasise messages that promote peace and societal cohesion. Indigenous people find aesthetic and diversionary gratifications in popular culture performances such as the googi performances. These artistic forms draw from the known, loved and appreciated cultural artifacts make including song, and folktales. The main reason for this identification is because of inherent transformative messages in them which are communicated using culturally accepted media.

The griot for centuries, plays significant role in West African oral tradition. It is traced in several countries and cultures in Senegal, Mali, Niger, Guinea, and Mauritania (Hale 1997). Traces can also be made to the people of northern Nigeria (Hale 1997, 1994; Ebine, 2019; Kaschula 1999). The griots and griottes are not only regarded as praise-singers but they serve as historians, genealogists, advisors, spokespersons, diplomats, interpreters, musicians, composers, poets, teachers, exhorters, town criers, reporters, masters or contributors to several ceremonies (naming, initiation, installation of chiefs, and so on) (Hale 1997:251). Hale explains that although griots are born to the professions, they all do not perform all these functions. They have been instrumental in preserving and transmitting oral history, genealogy, and cultural traditions. They are loud in political and social affairs by acting as intermediaries between the rulers and their subjects. They form a very respected group of people. Hale (1997: 267) acknowledges the nomenclature 'griot' as African underscoring the availability of different terminologies for this profession "iggio (Moor), guewel or géwél (Wolof), mabo or gawlo (Fulbe), jali (Mandinka), jeli (Maninka, Bamana), geseré or jaaré (Soninké), jeseré (Songhay), and marok'i (Hausa), in different languages" (Hale 1997:251). In Yoruba culture, they are called *Akewu Oba* (the king's praise man) or *Olohun iyó* (golden voice) (Ebene, 2019:3). The griots and griottes use a string musical instrument which belongs to the harps, in their performance. This instrument also has several names from different cultures: kora, khalam (xalam) ngon and goje. The *googi* among the Kusaas traces its roots to migrants from northern Nigeria who settled in the northern and upper regions of Ghana for business. The term *googi* among the Kusaas is argued to have been borrowed from Hausa where *goje* is the instrument. The term is extended to refer to the performance and the artist among the Kusaas.

Abubakari et al., 2021 explains that *googi* is a local popular musical performance among the Kusaas of Ghana and other sister languages and traced to the Hausa of Northern Nigeria. Among the Kusaas, it is performed by both males and females, and it is often performed at events that attract the participation of chiefs and prominent people in the community. These events include festivals, ceremonies and funerals of the elderly. *Googi* performers sing to extol a virtue and to condemn a vice when the need arises. These performers are often considered as the voice of the voiceless and the mouthpiece of the ordinary people. They often do not have any liability and cannot be sued by anyone for a performance they have rendered and the verbal attack they launch on whoever may be affected (Abubakari et al., 2021). The images in Fig. 1 show the scene of the performance of the song under study involving Alembood Akidaug Akologo with her Winpang *googi* team in action exhibiting the fiddle and the maracas which are exclusively captured in Fig. 2. The performance was staged but the lyrics were spontaneous.



Fig. 1. Performance by Alembood Akidaug Akologo with her Winpang *googi* team in action exhibiting the fiddle and the maracas. This picture was taken during fieldwork by the author.²

² Informed consent was obtained from the performers before the pictures were taken. They also gave verbal and written agreements for the use of these pictures in this study.

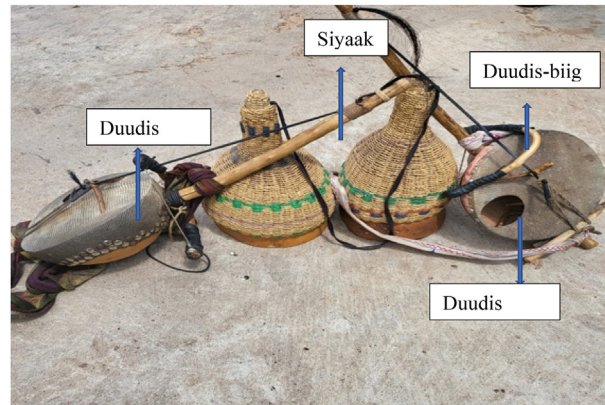


Fig. 2. Googi instruments among the Kusaas of Ghana. (picture taken by authors during fieldwork, August 2022).

The set of instruments that are used for the *googi* performance is called *duuring*. *Duudis* is the fiddle which is made from a calabash, the skin of an amphibian and strips of hair, from the tail of a horse. The calabash is covered with the hide of the monitor lizard and not agama lizard as noted in Abubakari et al. (2021 : 67). The small stick is called *duudis-biig* 'duudin's child' used for rubbing the strings of the fiddle. The strings for both the *duudis* and the *duudis-biig* are sourced from the strips of hair of a male horse which is believed to be longer than that of a female horse. The other instrument in the shape of a trapezium is made from the rafia rope and is called the *siyaak* 'maracas' which is always used in pairs.

Interviews with performers and other older traditional opinion leaders in Kusuag reveal that performance of *googi* are spontaneous and unrehearsed (Abubakari et al., 2021). At a funeral or any social gathering, a performer can be inspired by the occasion to instantly perform. The belief is that these artists are supported and inspired by the it is not possible for just any individual to be a performer of this type of music. However, following the oral-formulaic theory, one can see a pattern suggesting some type of blueprint or design characterising this type of performance. Even though the content or subject matter of a performance may not have been rehearsed, the structure of the performance is part of the training apprentices are given for which reason, they can perform at any spare of the moment. An instance is the constant use of repetition for easy flow of ideas and memorability of performance. *Googi* artist, at any instance, only needs to know the burning topic or issue at stake and they can turn this into a performance with spontaneous flow of words crafted in rich poetic language and melodious tunes following standard blueprint of the technique of the performance. More importantly, *googi* performers are custodians of the culture and the history of the communities they belong to. Through apprenticeship, they learn and become knowledgeable of the story and history of every family in the community from their ancestral lineage to the current generation. They are the only members of the community with the poetic license to criticise persons of the highest authority without fear or favour. They cannot be punished for what they say during communal gatherings such as festivals, funerals and other traditional occasions. The act of fiddling - *googi*, is believed to be a calling from the god of music and the ancestral spirits. It is inherited by people who have lineages with performers. These performers are highly revered in society and members of the community have great admiration, love, and joy for this type of music. It serves as one major source of entertainment although its content may speak on important social issues. It has remained a traditional medium that has been used in propagating messages that are of immense social significance. Abubakari et al., 2021 analysed the use of *googi* performance in advancing the COVID-19 safety protocols by the World Health Organisation and the Ghana Health Service. It was a successful campaign as rural folks easily identified with the medium and the use of the local language enhanced comprehension of the message.

The current song to be analysed in this study, highlights the need to curb early marriage and its associated gender-based violence acts. It addresses adolescence pregnancy and childbirth among the Kusaas. The practice of early marriage is believed to have emanated from the abuse of the cultural practices where it is acceptable for girls to be betrothed and married off before they are 18 years. The performance communicates the need to stop the cultural practice of early marriage. It calls on chiefs, queen-mothers, traditional authorities and other opinion leaders to rise and assist with the fight to stop the menace. The song encourages parents to be responsible for their children's welfare and encourage the youth to seek education which offers superior long-term as well opportunities for financial liberation and social transformation.

5. The conceptual farmwork of persuasive communication

Persuasion involves the process of changing a person's mental state for a change in behaviour, attitude and or values either positively or negatively. Persuasive communication is message designed to influence people's attitudes or behaviours (Rosenberg, 2022). It seeks to convince others to align with one's proposal and act towards a change in that direction. It is powerful framework used within various contexts including politics, and advertisement. The ability to convince people using

popular culture to change from practicing early marriage and allow girls to seek education forms the critical basis for the use of persuasive language of communication by the artist whose work this research focuses on. In persuasive communication, rhetorical devices offer the performer the needed tools and techniques for persuasion. Rhetorical techniques, also called persuasive or stylistic techniques, enhance the performer's ability to convey and convince the target audience to change their perspectives towards the central message of the performer. The main tool in persuasive communication is the manipulation of language aimed at evoking emotional and psychological responses that will promote certain actions towards the perspective of the performer. The *googi* song under study is a classic example of a rhetorical masterpiece in which a performer presents varied arguments to convince the audience on the need to embrace education and fight against early marriage and teenage pregnancies. The singer manipulates language to sell her message in such a way that her audience are left with no option but to sing along whilst they subconsciously come to terms with the central message that is being propagated. The young, the old, the ordinary person, sub-divisional chiefs and the paramount chief of Kusaug are all called upon by the performer to reconsider the aspect of Kusaug cultural norms that allows girls to be married young.

Aristotle identifies three modes of persuasion (Robert n.d.:8). He explains that "... the first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself." The third is what is generally referred to as the *Kairos*, which appeals to the timing, the context, and the setting of the orature. It is often argued to be the most effective since no matter the personal circumstances of the orator, the logical, emotional, and credibility of the argument, an inappropriate context or setting, and timing will inevitably affect the acceptance of the message by the target audience. In an interview with Kinneavy, Thompson (2009:3) states that "... Kinneavy makes it clear that *kairos* is central to understanding language's persuasive force because it accounts for certain elements of the rhetorical act that are ultimately beyond the rhetor's control. Part of what makes language persuasive at a particular time is not only the timing of the event, and not only the situational context of the rhetorical act, but also the intermingling, the unification, and the interdependence of the distinct aspects of timing and propriety."

The main rhetorical mode employed by the *googi* performer on early marriage is the *Kairos*. This is reflected in the timely moment the song was composed in consonance with both context and setting. Early marriage coupled with teenage pregnancies is rife in the research communities as indicated in parts of this research. Kusaug counts as one of the areas in Ghana with high numbers of teenage pregnancies which are born out of early marriages. The *googi* performer brings out the alarming and outmoded practice of betrothal and paints a gloomy picture of its devastating effect on the girl child, her parents, and society at large. She advances some suggestions and makes attempts at galvanising the youth, parents, traditional authorities, and community leaders to take up the battle to curb the problem.

In this study, we intend to analyse the *googi* performance on early marriage from a communication, language and literary background. We explore the artist's use of persuasive language through literary and stylistic techniques to transmit her central message in the song. Early marriage.

6. Discussion and analysis of *googi* performance on early marriage

This section starts with an overview of the structure of the song followed by a discussion on the central themes of the song and finally, the literary devices employed by the author in crafting the song.

6.1. Structure of the *googi* performance on early marriage

Structurally, the song is composed of nineteen (19) stanzas with diverse number of sentences and types of sentences in each stanza. There are minimum of five sentences in a stanza and maximum of about 15 sentences in a stanza. Stanzas with five or less sentences number about seven whilst those with more than five sentences are about twelve. There are eighteen instances of the chorus. The chorus is what is used to identify the verses into stanzas, thus a stanza is separated from another by the chorus. The inconsistency in the number of verses in all the stanzas reflects the state of confusion and the gravity of the problem which the song seeks to address. By presenting the song as indicated, the stakeholders are persuaded to accept the phenomenon of early marriage as a challenge that requires the commitment of everybody to resolve it. The almost equal number of the chorus to the stanzas is magnificent in that the chorus is easily memorised, and people subconsciously sing along with the performer. The short stanzas also come in handy and do not strain the listening span of the audience. The stanzas with more sentences are also for specific purposes. They are the portions that are full of advice to the youth, parents, opinion leaders on the benefits of embracing formal education. Although they are lengthy, they are so persuasive considering the professions and other social and economic benefits the youth stand to derive if they are encouraged to pursue formal education. The stanzas with more verses also mention prominent people and well-educated people that the youth can see as examples and role models to aspire for brighter future.

The song can also be divided into several rhetorical stages some of which are repeated to provide a recursive rhetorical structure. Six stages are identified in this study: Calling (or Address); Problem Identification, Chorus/Audience Response, Problem Elaboration, Solution, Closing. The initial stage is the calling or address stage. At this stage the artist addresses the

audience and sets the context of the song. She refers to her audience as *Ghana dima* ‘people of Ghana’ and uses the interjection to further draw their attention to her call. This is elaborated in lines 1–2.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) Mmm! Ghana dima oo eeh! apɔ bi' ka
nok pɔvɔg laa? | (1) Mmm! My people of Ghana, oo eeh!
teenage pregnancy? |
|--|--|

Immediately after the call, the artist introduces her message using rhetorical questions. She further questions the motif of giving girls out into marriage based on the argument that it is an acceptable cultural practice.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (2) Du'adiba ya daa pɔ baŋ beɛ? | (2) Parents! didn't you know about it |
| (3) Ya daa zi' ye gbavɔ malisaa? | (3) Didn't you know that Education is good |
| (4) Ka yel ye buudi tɔɔma eeh! | (4) And say it is culture |
| (5) Anɔk biigi tise ka o pɔ bi naae yee! Ayoo | (5) Giving girls out into early marriage yee,
ayoo |

After the problem identification stage, we have a response from the audience. The chorus immediately gets everyone to sing and to identify with the problem and the proposed solution by the artist.

- | | |
|--|---|
| (6) <i>Siakir</i> | (6) <i>Response (chorus)</i> |
| (7) <i>Nannana ti yɔ'vɔn baŋyaa, ti daa pɔ baŋe</i> | (7) <i>We didn't know but now we know</i> |
| (8) <i>Nannana ti yɔ'vɔm baŋyaa apɔ bi' ka nok
pɔvɔg laa</i> | (8) <i>Now, we know that early marriage is not
good</i> |
| (9) <i>Nannana ti yɔ'vɔm baŋyaa</i> | (9) <i>Now, we know</i> |

Stage four is problem elaboration. The artist further elaborates the problem providing more details and illustrating this with examples. She identifies prominent professions and uses the researchers as role models to encourage the people to educate their girl-children for a better tomorrow.

- | | |
|--|---|
| (47) Apɔ paae yɔvɔm piig ne anii ka nok pɔvɔg
la | (47) When a girl gets pregnant before 18yrs
and (48) doesn't know who is responsible |
| (48) On nok pɔvɔg la o maan wala-wala beɛ | (49) She will run to Azuur and Azuur will
deny it and (50) she points to Abugur and
when he too denies it. (51) It is her father and
mother who will shoulder the responsibility
of taking care of her. |
| (49) O yel ye Azɔvɔr ka o ye li ka' onɛɛ | |
| (50) Ka o tɔlis yel ye Abɔvɔr ka o ye li ka'
onɛɛ | |
| (51) Ka o ba' di'e mɔri geend
Ka o ma me di'e mɔri geend yaa | |
| 107) Madam Adwoa ye m yeli ya yee
Madam Adwoa ye m yeli ya ee | 107) Madam Adwoa says I should inform
you |
| (108) Let them (girls) be educated | (108) When you are educated, it will help
you |
| (109) It will help them if they are educated | (109) When you become a doctor, it will help
you |
| (110) If they become teachers, it would help
them | (110) When you are educated, it will help
you |

In stage five, the artist identifies solutions to the problem. She mentions different categories of people who are the main stakeholder and influential members in the community. She calls on chiefs and other opinion leaders, parents, young men and women to embrace education for socio-cultural transformation.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (127) Atɔlim yeli Kpalweg na'aba Avaavɔgɔ | ((127) Inform Kpalwega's chief, Avaavɔgɔ |
| (128) Ka tɔlim yel Kutang na'ab Akulig ye | (128) And inform Kutanga's chief Akulig |
| (129) Ka tɔlim ye Tensung na'abaa | (129) And also inform Tensunga's chief |
| (130) Ka tɔlisi yel Wad na'ab ooo! | (130) And also inform Wad's chief |
| (131) Nannana ti yɔ'vɔn baŋ ya
Apɔ bi' ka nok pɔvɔg | (131) That now, we 'know' (the effects of)
teenage pregnancy. |

In the final stage, the closing stage, the artist summarises the song and reinforce her message. She includes a final appeal to the audience and reiterate the key points in her call.

(183) Bibaanlug banjime ya	(183) Youth! Be careful!
(184) Kɔmbaanlug banjime ye	(184) Teenagers! You should be careful!
(185) Ba ya'a tisif pɔvɔg ba ya'alifne	(185) You will suffer if you become pregnant at an early age.
(186) Ka mɔri gin ka pɔ nyet one di'eda	(186) Especially, if you cannot find the one who is responsible for the pregnancy
(187) Mɔrigim fɔ mɛŋ ka ban gbavɔɔ	(187) Be patient and get educated first.
(188) Fɔ ya'a ban gbavɔŋ ka lieb kariki	(188) When you are educated you can become a learned person, you can be independent
(189) Fɔ ya'a ban gbavɔŋ ka lieb puliŋ ya	(189) When you are educated you can become a police officer and be independent
(190) Fɔ ya'a ban gbavɔŋ ka lieb sɔgia	(190) When you are educated you can become a military officer and be independent

An important feature that needs mention is the recursive rhetorical structure employed by the artist. The problem identification and advice stages appear multiple times. This ensures that the target audience realise the gravity of the problem and accept the solution. The chorus appeals for collective action as it seeks to galvanise everyone to get involved. The mention of names and testimonies also make the issue real and appeal to the emotion as it persuades the people to accept the call for change.

6.2. Central themes of the googi song on early marriage and teenage pregnancy

With less than a decade remaining to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly, Goal Number 5 on gender equality by 2030, the fight is more of a mirage considering the current circumstances of rural folks in Ghana and particularly in the Upper East Region where teenage pregnancy and other related gender-based violence practices rather appear to be on the rise. The *googi* performance on early marriage highlights the devastating effect of early marriage while advancing possible steps to curb this menace. The song focuses on the cultural, social, economic and health complications that emanate because of early marriage. Due to space constraints, the discussion below highlights three major themes from the song.

6.2.1. Early marriage is premised on cultural practice

The song identifies the main cause of early marriage as rooted in the cultural practice of the people. The singer, right from the opening of the song, makes a strong case calling for a relook of the cultural practice that allows for early marriage. She underscores the need for formal education by questioning the motive of neglecting the latter whilst allowing the practice of early marriage to thrive. She emphatically mentions the purpose of the song as one that seeks to eradicate early marriage in Kusaug calling on the chiefs and traditional leaders and parents to help control the practice and rather ensure that the youth get educated, as that has potential for more qualitative gratifications in the long run. The verses below which are excerpts from the song and taken from stanzas one and five respectively, support the claims above.

(1) Mmm! Ghana dima oo eeh! apɔ bi' ka nok pɔvɔg laa?	(1) Mmm! People of Ghana, oo eeh teenage pregnancy?
(2) Du'adiba ya daa pɔ ban bɛɛ	(2) Parents! didn't you know about it
(3) Ya daa zi' ye gbavɔŋ malisaa	(3) Didn't you know that Education is good
(4) Ka yeŋ ye buudi tɔtɔma eeh! Anok biigi tise ka o pɔ bi naae yee! Ayoo	(4) And gave girls out to early marriage because of culture
(137) Sakur yeŋa mɔn'oe nidibne	(137) Education is now important to people
(138) Ka madam Hasiya paana	(138) That is why Madam Hasiya is here
(139) O paane Yakuta	(139) In the Yakut community
(140) Yakut na'aba Adelwin tɛŋ oo!	(140) And before the chief of Yakut, Adelwin
(141) Ka m kaasi buol Nayok na'ab	(141) She is calling on Nayok's chief
(142) Ka kaasi buol Zabug na'ab oo	(142) She is calling on Zabug's chief
(143) O bɔɔd ye ya sɔŋ o yaa	(143) She needs help...
(144) O bɔɔd ye sɔŋ kat pu'a-ɛlig tisib oo	(144) She wants you to help eradicate early marriage

As a direct consequence, the chorus of the song reiterates the fact that the people were living in 'ignorance' and were practicing early marriage which leads to teenage pregnancies, however, they are now educated and will avoid any practice (s) that will lead to teenage pregnancies.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (14) Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa | (14) We didn't know but now we know |
| (15) Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa apv
bi' ka nok pvvгаа | (15) Now, we know teenage pregnancy is not
good |
| (16) Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa | (16) Now, we know |

On adolescence pregnancy and childbirth, the performer creates a scene of what could be described as cultural faux pas where a girl given out in early marriage ends up being pregnant and is unable to take care of herself and the husband is also unable to do so. She then comes back as a burden to the parents who initiated the marriage based on the acceptable cultural norm. The lines below from stanza three (3) substantiate this:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (17) Fv ya'a nok biigi tis sid elib yaa | (17) If a girl is given out for marriage |
| (18) Ka o paae du'a ka pv tun'e zal laa | (18) and she gives birth and cannot take care
of herself and |
| (19) Ka one nok o pv tun'e zal o | (19) her husband too cannot take care of her |
| (20) Di paae ne o ba' ne o ma yv'vsee | (20) then it becomes a burden on her parents |

The singer further paints a gloomy picture of a pregnant teenager who is unable to identify the man who impregnates her because she has multiple sex partners. With no man taking responsibility, the burden of taking care of the adolescent mother-to-be is left on the shoulders of her parents who may themselves not be engaged in any meaningful job.

- | | |
|---|--|
| (47) Apv paae yvvm piig ne anii ka nok pvvg
la | (47) When a girl gets pregnant before 18yrs
and |
| (48) On nok pvvg la o maan wala-wala bee | (48) doesn't know who is responsible |
| (49) O yel ye Azvur ka o ye li ka' onee | (49) She will run to Azuur and Azuur will
deny it and |
| (50) Ka o tolis yel ye Abvur ka o ye li ka'
onee | (50) she points to Abugur and when he too
denies it. |
| (51) Ka o ba' di'e mri geend
Ka o ma me di'e mri geend yaa | (51) It is her father and mother who will
shoulder the responsibility of taking care of
her. |

6.2.2. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy pose major health risks

On the theme of health risks and the need for education, the singer mentions that all teenagers who get pregnant suffer for which reason health workers have advised that all girls should be educated. Some of the leading health problems associated with teenage pregnancies are pre-birth complications, stillbirths, fistula, sexually transmitted diseases, and even deaths. Putting girls in school is one way of avoiding early marriages leading to teenage pregnancy. Educating girls also includes sex education which is part of the basic school curriculum in Ghana. Formal education, as recounted by the performer, is the main antidote for socio-economic liberation and transformation.

- | | |
|---|--|
| (23) Biig nok pvvg ka pv paae yvvm biiga
Ka keŋ ka li an namsivg | (23) A teenager who becomes pregnant
always suffers |
| (31) Laafi tvntonib la pa'al ye yaa | (31) Health workers have advised that |
| (32) Ya kel ka biis la woo keŋ sakur yee | (32) all children should be educated. |
| (33) Ba ya'a banee li na svŋi tii | (33) If they are educated it would help us |
| (34) Ya ya'a zan'asee ti kpen geendii,
nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa | (34) if they are not, all of us would continue
to suffer. |
| (35) Apvbi' ka nok pvvg laa nannana ti
yv'vm banjyaa | (35) We didn't know about (the
consequences of) early marriage but now we
know |
| (79) Ya kel ka ba ban gbavŋo | (79) Let them (girls) be educated |
| (80) Ba ya'a ban gbavŋo li na svŋi ba | (80) It will help them if they are educated |
| (81) Kilim tika li na svŋi ba yee! | (81) If they become teachers, it would help
them |
| (82) Ba ya'a kilm du'ata li na svŋi ba yee! | (82) If they become doctors, it would help
them |
| (83) Ka kilm MP li na svŋi ba yee! | (83) If they become Members of Parliaments,
it would help them |

6.2.3. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy major causes of poverty in Kusaug

Early marriage and teenage pregnancy are also identified as one of the leading courses of poverty. The teenage mother becomes a burden on her mother who culturally has little say in decisions concerning the girl child being given out in marriage. If it happens that the man is irresponsible, the girl-mother returns to her mother who then must fend for her. The cyclic repercussions of the woman being at the centre stage of 'suffering' that results from early marriage is expressed in the following lines from stanza nine (9) and seventeen (17) of the song.

(71) Biig ya'a paae ka pu nye di O ya'a lem paae ka pu nye son'	(71) When a teenager gets married and doesn't get to eat or wear,
(72) Bikanna yv'v yaane o ma nee	(72) she becomes a burden on her mother.
(160) Ka o ma giligi gun'vɔŋ ka mɔr o paana O paana nyet ki'ibu yaane O nyet zambaad yaane dɔgɔda Sankanna li namis o ne	(160) After the mother sent her around and couldn't find the man who is responsible for the pregnancy, taking care of her alone including what she will eat, and wear becomes difficult.
(161) Apv bi' ka nok pɔvga	(161) Teenage pregnancy

The song generally highlights gender-based violence against the girl child who gets pregnant because of early marriage. It expresses the sexual, mental, physical, and economic hardships that teenage mothers go through. Little is mentioned on the repercussions of early marriage on male although they play key roles in giving the girl out and in getting them pregnant. The social reality is that most of these young fathers even deny responsibility for the infants and the teenage mother suffers it all. She drops out of school and her future becomes bleak. This is captured by the singer in the lines from stanzas four (4) and sixteen (16) below.

(23) Biig nok pɔvga ka pu paae yvɔm biiga Ka keŋ ka li an namisvɔg	(23) A teenager who becomes pregnant always suffers.
(24) Na'aba Asigir fu yel ye bɔ?	(24) King Asigir should inform the
(25) Yelim Yakut na'ab ye o yet ye bɔ bee, nannana ti yv'vɔm banjyaa	(25) Chief of Yakut that we didn't know but we now know that
(26) Apv bi' ka nok pɔvga laa nannana ti yv'vɔm banjyaa	(26) teenage pregnancy is not good
(150) O pu paae yvɔm pig ne anii ka nok pɔvga	(150) When she became pregnant before 18 years, she didn't know who was responsible.
(151) On nok pɔvga la o daa yel ye Azuur Ka paae ka Azuur ye li ka'one	(152) So, she said Azure was responsible and Azure denied it.
(152) O keŋ tɔlisi yel ye Awin	(153) And she pointed to Awin, and he also denied it
(153) Ka Awin yel ye on pu nye o	(154) She then said it is Ajok who was responsible for the pregnancy, and he also denied it.
(154) Ka o yv'vɔn yel Ajok ee!	

In all, the song sends out three key messages: (1) early marriage among the Kusaas is traceable to the culture of the people. It is considered a normal practice for a girl to be betrothed in the early years of her life. Although this has been the norm, the practice has outlived its usefulness and is abused in present days. The singer calls for action to eradicate this menace. Secondly, the singer identifies teenage pregnancy as posing major health risks and complications such that health workers are calling for the youth to be educated. She emphasises the need for the youth to seek formal education. Additionally, early marriage and teenage pregnancy lead to cyclic poverty. The girl-mother is unemployed and with an irresponsible 'husband', the girl turns back to her mother who will have to shoulder the responsibility of taking care of the young-mother to be. The next section discusses the major rhetorical tools the singer employed in drumming home these messages and various other subthemes in the song.

6.3. Rhetorical devices used in the googi performance on early marriage

Googi performance is an instance of Kusaal oral tradition. It is an art that revolves around the power of the spoken word. It is a craft that shares the intangible cultural assets of a group of people including their history, and current and pressing issues aimed at transmitting knowledge or information through entertainment for the common good of all. As an art of the spoken word, persuasive devices are the main tools employed in drawing and sustaining the attention of the audience until the common objective of the song is achieved. In a closely related study where googi performance is used as a medium of communicating the safety protocols of COVID-19, (Abubakari et al., 2021:73) explain that googi performers ensure that their arts are easy-to-absorb and easy to analyse for which reason they are careful of their diction, clarity of sentences, the use of rhetorical devices, sentence variation among others. In the performance of the googi song on early marriage and teenage

pregnancy, the singer employs several techniques in her attempt to drum home her message. Some of these, to be discussed in detail, are metaphors, ideophones, repetitions and rhetorical questions.

6.3.1. Metaphor

The singer draws attention to the gravity of early marriage and its associated effects of teenage pregnancy by likening the situation to a calamity that needs to be fought by the people of Kusaug. Using the researchers as role models and advocates for peace and proponents of education, she creates scenarios citing various professions that the people will find themselves in should they embrace education. She uses the member of parliament for the Bawku municipality as a metaphor of what one may become or be like should they embrace formal education. She names the researchers and medical professionals that the youth can emulate to persuade them to fight and eradicate early marriages and teenage pregnancies. The following excerpts from stanza twelve (12) corroborate the claims made.

(99) Anɔ'one sɔɲidaa?	(99) Who will help in this fight
(100) Madam Hasiya ye m yeli ya yee!	(100) Madam Hasiya says I should inform you
(101) Sɔ'ɔ faa kimme gbavɔɔ	(101) Everyone should be educated
(102) Ya ban gbavɔ ka lieb nintita'ara ya	(102) Be educated and become great people
(103) Ya ya'a ban gbavɔ ya na nwenne on nɔɔna	(103) Be educated and become like her
(104) Abigail ye m pa'ali ya	(104) Abigail says I should tell you
(105) Ya ya'a ban gbavɔ ya na nwenne Ayarigne	(105) When you are educated you can become like Ayariga (Bawku Central Member of Parliament)
(106) Sɔ' woo na nwenne MP yee	(106) Anyone can become an MP
(107) Madam Adwoa ye m yeli ya yee Madam Adwoa ye m yeli ya ee	(107) Madam Adwoa says I should inform you
(108) Ya ya'a ban gbavɔ li na sɔɲiyaa	(108) When you are educated, it will help you
(109) Ya ya'a lieb du'ata li na sɔɲ ya yee	(109) When you become a doctor, it will help you
(110) Ya ya'a lieb kariki li na sɔɲ ya yee	(110) When you are educated, it will help you
(111) Ya ya'a len lieb manager li na sɔɲ ya yee	(111) When you become a manager, it will help you.

The metaphorical use of various professional bodies is an enticing means of further persuading the people to avoid giving young girls out for marriage and to encourage them to go to school to become medical doctors, managers of organisations, politicians among others.

The effect of teenage pregnancy is compared to devastating calamities such as war and major pandemics. This metaphor is realised in the call for help to 'eradicate' the problem. In creating this imagery, the singer addresses all the important traditional rulers in Kusaug to help combat the menace as can be seen below:

(127) Atolim yeli Kpalweg na'aba Avaavgo	(127) Inform Kpalwega's chief, Avaavgo
(128) Ka tɔlim yel Kutang na'ab Akulig ye	(128) And inform Kutanga's chief Akulig
(129) Ka tɔlim ye Tensung na'abaa	(129) And also inform Tensunga's chief
(130) Ka tɔlisi yel Wad na'ab ooo!	(130) And also inform Wad's chief
(131) Nannana ti yu'on ban ya Apɔ bi' ka nɔk pɔvga	(131) That now, we 'know' (the effects of) teenage pregnancy
(137) Sakur yela mon'oe nidibne	(137) Education is now important to people
(138) Ka madam Hasiya paana	(138) That is why Madam Hasiya is here
(139) O paane Yakuta	(139) In the Yakut community
(140) Yakut na'aba Adelwin tɔɲ oo!	(140) And before the chief of Yakut, Adelwin
(141) Ka m kaasi buol Nayok na'ab	(141) She is calling on Nayok's chief
(142) Ka kaasi buol Zabug na'ab oo	(142) She is calling on Zabug's chief
(143) O bood ye ya sɔɲ o yaa	(143) She needs help...
(144) O bood ye sɔɲ kat pu'a-elig tisib oo	(144) She wants you to help eradicate early marriage

The use of metaphor aids in the portrayal of teenage pregnancy as a strong enemy to be fought, killed, uprooted and totally 'eradicated' in society. Comparing teenage pregnancy to a calamity to be eradicated enhances the creation of a mental image that evokes emotions and propels action to fight the menace. The singer, therefore, manages to persuade the audience to see the gravity of the situation she is talking about and calls for action to combat same. The image of a calamity associated with early marriage and teenage pregnancy underscores the urgent need for action. The scene created by the metaphor enhances easy comprehension of the message. It is also meant to influence decisions and to encourage parents to educate the youth for better prospects.

6.3.2. Repetition with variation

Abubakari et al., 2021:73) advance the argument that repetition (with variation) is a prominent rhetorical device used for sustaining attention and facilitating comprehension to enhance memorability in popular speeches across the world. The *googi* song on early marriage employs repetition and repetition with variation for maximum effect. Whilst repetition entails repeating everything in a previous line, repetition with variation entails repeating part of what is previously said whilst adding or changing some parts. The most repeated lines and one most significant thing is the chorus which reiterate the fact that we have a cultural practice which we now know has outlived its relevance and needs to be eradicated. The concept behind the practice of early marriage has now been abused and corrupted hence the resulting current situation of child-mothers everywhere.

(53) <i>Ti daa pɔ banjime</i>	(53) <i>We didn't know</i>
(54) <i>Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa, ye dunia dima</i>	(54) <i>But now we know</i>
(55) <i>Ti daa pɔ banjime</i>	(55) <i>We didn't know</i>
(56) <i>Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa apv bi' ka nok pɔvg laa</i>	(56) <i>Now, we know that early marriage is not good</i>
(57) <i>Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa</i>	(57) <i>Now, we know</i>

Another call for action which has been repeated severally is the call for embracing education. It is reiterated as the only solution to the current crises and the means to end poverty among the Kusaa's. The singer equally repeats several professions that the youth can engage in when they embrace formal education. The constant repetition of this is craftily done to encourage, to persuade and to enlighten the people to let go a practice that has outlived its usefulness and to embrace the current realities that have the potential of propelling peace, tranquillity and social transformation.

(58) <i>Sɔ woo zamis gbavɔɔ</i>	(58) <i>Everybody should be educated</i>
(59) <i>Ya ya'a keɲ sakure li na sɔɲi ti yee</i>	(59) <i>If you're educated it would help us</i>
(60) <i>Ya ya'a nye tɔɔma li na sɔɲi ti yee</i>	(60) <i>If you're educated and get a job it would help us</i>
(61) <i>Fv ya'a zi' gbavɔɔ fv niɲid wala tɔm be</i>	(61) <i>How do you find a job if you're not educated</i>
(62) <i>Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa Apv bi' ka nok pɔvg laa</i>	(62) <i>Now we know (the effects of) teenage pregnancy</i>
(108) <i>Ya ya'a ban gbavɔɔ li na sɔɲiyaa</i>	(108) <i>When you are educated, it will help you</i>
(109) <i>Ya ya'a lieb du'ata li na sɔɲ ya yee</i>	(109) <i>When you become a doctor, it will help you</i>
(110) <i>Ya ya'a lieb kariki li na sɔɲ ya yee</i>	(110) <i>When you are educated, it will help you</i>
(111) <i>Ya ya'a len lieb manager li na sɔɲ ya yee</i>	(111) <i>When you become a manager, it will help you.</i>
(112) <i>Apv bi' ka nok pɔvg nannana ti yv'vm ban yaa</i>	(112) <i>Now, we know about teenage pregnancy</i>

Thirdly, to emphasise the need for change, the singer repeatedly calls on traditional leaders of Kusaug, the custodians of the culture and tradition of the people to ensure that the culture of early marriage is abolished. As traditional leaders, their words have so much weight to turn events and actions around.

(10) <i>Yakut na'ab yeli ya yee</i>	(10) <i>Yakut chief and King Asigiri say (11) women should help Kusaug to grow.</i>
<i>Ye na'aba Asigir yel nɔɔɛ</i>	(12) <i>We didn't know about early marriage but now we know</i>
(11) <i>M pu'ataaba ya gosimin yaa</i>	
<i>Ya gos ka Kusaa nobigeɛ,</i>	
(12) <i>Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa, daa pɔ bi' ka nok pɔvg laa</i>	
<i>Nannana ti yv'vm banjyaa</i>	
(40) <i>M tɔlim ka li paae Punsug na'ab yee</i>	(40) <i>I'm sounding a clarion call to the chief of Pusiga and to (41) the chief of Bugri that (42) early marriage is not good</i>
(41) <i>Ka tɔlim ka li paae Bvgɔr na'ab yee</i>	
<i>Sid elib tɔ'ɔtɔ laa</i>	
(42) <i>Sid elib tɔ'ɔtɔ laa li mɔr nyan yee abaa!</i>	
(90) <i>Kel ka tɔlim ye Bvgɔr na'ab ye</i>	(90) <i>Let me inform the chief of Bugure</i>
(91) <i>Ka tɔlim yel Gangbi'ir na'ab ye</i>	(91) <i>Also inform Gangbire's chief</i>
(92) <i>Ka tɔlisi yel Garu na'ab ye</i>	(92) <i>Also inform the chief of Garu</i>
(93) <i>Pu'a-elib laa ya kel tisib yaa</i>	(93) <i>They should desist from supporting early marriage</i>

The overlord of the Kusaug traditional area, Na'aba Asigir is mentioned five times in the song. The importance of the subject matter requires the involvement of everyone to help address the situation. The overload of Kusaug is the paramount chief with about 26 divisional chiefs under him. His command is what prevails in matters affecting the people. The mention of the name is intended to send a strong signal to all parents and other practitioners of early marriage to desist from the act.

(63) Na'aba Asigir yel noor
Kusaa woo-woo ya banjime yaa
Kusaa dap du'adib ya banjime ya
Kusaa pu'a du'adib ya banjime yee

(68) M tɔlim ka li paae Sabil na'ab
Ka lem mɔ tɔlim ka li paae Ti'il na'ab

(69) Abaa! Asigir yel noore

(70) Sid tisvga li mɔri endog

(63) Na'aba Asigir yel noor
Kusaa woo-woo ya banjime yaa
Kusaa dap du'adib ya banjime ya
Kusaa pu'a du'adib ya banjime yee

(63) King Asigir has instructed that all
Kusaas including parents should know the
consequences of early marriage

(68) The chief of Zebilla and the chief of Tiili
should be informed that (69) Asigir says (70)
child betrothal is not good

(63) King Asigir has instructed that all
Kusaas including parents should know the
consequences of early marriage

6.3.3. Emotives and interjections

The singer starts with what could be described as emotive expressions, 'mmmm', 'ooo', ayoo, and 'eehhh'. These sounds though nonsensical, evoke impression of ideas and sensations that directly appeal to our emotions, and persuade the listener to pay attention and to act. on the appeal. These sounds contribute significantly to the meaning of the song. They create a mental image of the emotional state of the performer. The sounds mmmm, eeehhhh, oooo are depictions of the mental agony the thought of teenage pregnancy brings to the performer, parents and the general community. The sounds create an image where the performer is pictured in a state of distress, humming, and lamenting on the effect of early marriage and teenage pregnancy. These expressions attract attention and set the pace for the central theme of the song.

(1) Mmm! Ghana dima oo eech! apɔ bi' ka
nɔk pɔvɔg laa?

(2) Du'adiba ya daa pɔ ban bɛɛ

(3) Ya daa zi' ye gbavɔŋ malisaa

(4) Ka yel ye buudi tɔma eeh!

Anɔk biigi tise ka o pɔ bi naae yee! Ayoo

(1) Mmm! people of Ghana oo, eech teenage
pregnancy?

(2) Parents! didn't you know about it

(3) Didn't you know that Education is good

(4) And gave girls out to early marriage

because of culture

The sounds ayoo, mmmm, eeehhh, and several others can also be described as interjections based on the meaning assigned them from another perspective. They are spontaneous and give the performer the opportunity to recollect her thought since googi is a spontaneous performance without prior rehearsal. The mmmm and eehh sounds pave the way for contemplation and doubt. They help in questioning parents and traditional leaders on the motif for allowing early marriage irrespective of the consequences it imposes on girls and young women. The performer questions the reason for promoting this practice in the name of culture ignoring its devastating implication.

6.3.4. Literary voice

A remarkable style used by the performer that deserves mention is her choice of the literary voice. The conceptual use of pronouns for specific purposes and targeting specific persons who are intended to take specific actions requires commendation. Three (3) pronouns are used giving her direct access to specific target audience at any moment in time. In addressing the youth in the bid to persuade them to seek education, the singer uses the pronouns *fu* '2SG' and *ya* '2 PL', These, she often used with the conditional 'if statement' and repeated severally for emphasis which ends up creating a heuristic thought of self-accomplishment should one adopt to go to school.

(58) Sɔ woo zamis gbaɖɖɔ	(58) Everybody should be educated
(59) Ya ya'a keŋ sakure li na sɔŋi ti yee	(59) If you're educated it would help us
(60) Ya ya'a nye tɔɔma li na sɔŋi ti yee	(60) If you're educated and get a job it would help us
(108) Ya ya'a baŋ gbaɖɖɔ li na sɔŋiyaa	(108) When you are educated, it will help you
(109) Ya ya'a lieb du'ata li na sɔŋ ya yee	(109) When you become a doctor, it will help you
(110) Ya ya'a lieb kariki li na sɔŋ ya yee	(110) When you are educated, it will help you
(111) Ya ya'a len lieb manager li na sɔŋ ya yee	(111) When you become a manager, it will help you.
188) Fv ya'a baŋ gbaɖɖɔ ka lieb kariki	(188) When you are educated you can become a learned person, you can be independent
(189) Fv ya'a baŋ gbaɖɖɔ ka lieb pɔlin ya	(189) When you are educated you can become a police officer and be independent
(190) Fv ya'a baŋ gbaɖɖɔ ka lieb sɔgia	(190) When you are educated you can become a military officer and be independent

To identify herself as a community member and to galvanise everyone for change, she uses the pronoun *ti* 1 PL 'us' throughout in the chorus emphasising the point that *we have now become aware that early marriage and teenage pregnancy are not to be condoned*. The 1st person plural makes the audience identify themselves with the singer. Anyone who sings finds himself included as accepting to the pledge that *we are now aware of the repercussions associated with teenage pregnancy*. Since the chorus is repeated severally, it is the part that is first memorised by everyone who hears the song. This truly becomes a pivot for transformation as it sticks to the brain and rings a bell of caution should one be caught in-between taking a decision on giving a young girl out in marriage.

(7) Nannana ti yv'vn baŋyaa, ti daa pv baŋe	(7) We didn't know but now we know
(8) Nannana ti yv'vm baŋyaa apv bi' ka nɔk pɔvg laa	(8) Now, we know that early marriage is not good
(9) Nannana ti yv'vm baŋyaa	(9) Now, we know

In addition to the personal pronoun use, the indefinite pronoun *sɔ' faa* 'everyone' is repeated severally in the song. The synonym *sɔ' woo* 'everyone' is also repeated twice. These indefinite pronouns are always used to call everyone to action; either to seek education or to encourage people to think of a better future through education.

(101) Sɔ'ɔ faa kimme gbaɖɖɔ	(101) Everyone should be educated
(120) Sɔ' faa ya kem sakur	(120) Everybody should be educated
(106) Sɔ' woo na nwenne MP yee	(106) Anyone can become an MP
(177) Sɔ' faa yv'vn pɔ'vne o buudi	(177) Everybody is now protecting his family

6.3.5. Alliteration

For rhythmic and other lyrical effects, the singer employs the use of alliteration in several parts of the songs. The repetition of identical consonant sounds enhances memorability, draws and sustains attention and more importantly injects some feeling of emotions which makes the audience further identify with the message of the song. Additionally, alliteration has created an emphatic effect which further helps in comprehension. The repetition of the /p/and/k/and/g/sounds in line (23) as below is a typical example where the consonant choices are used to create rhythmic effect as well as attract attention and sustain interest. The voicing difference between [p] and [b] and [k]and [g] is so remarkable.

23) Biig nõk pʊʊg ka pʊ paae yʊʊm piiga Ka keŋ ka li an namisʊg	(23) A teenager who becomes pregnant always suffers.
(107) Madam Adwoa ye m yeli ya yee Madam Adwoa ye m yeli ya yee	(107) Madam Adwoa says I should inform you that (2x)
(108) Ya ya'a baŋ gbaʊŋ li na sʊŋi yaa	(108) When you are educated, it will help you
(109) Ya ya'a lieb du'ata li na sʊŋ ya yee	(109) When you become a doctor, it will help you
(110) Ya ya'a lieb kariki li na sʊŋ ya yee	(110) When you are educated, it will help you
(111) Ya ya'a len lieb manager li na sʊŋ ya yee	(111) When you become a manager, it will help you.

The use of the glide [j] orthographically written as/y/and the repetition of words particular words both at sentence initial, *Ya ya'a* 'if you ...' and sentence final *yaa*, 2 PL' and *yee* 'that'. deserves come commentary. The glide has a soothing and a strong rhythmic effect which is not hash to the ear appealing to the senses of the audience with the aim of persuading them to take the actions advocated in those sentences. The sentence final *yee*, is more interesting in that the first *yee* in line (107) is meaningful and translates into the complementizer 'that'. However, the subsequent *yee* in lines (109–111) are idiophonic and have no bearing to the meaning 'that'. They only function as emphatic ideophones cautioning the people not to take for granted the benefit they stand to gain when they embrace education and let go early marriage and its aftermath-teenage pregnancy.

6.3.6. Rhetorical questions

Persuasive speeches are often laden with rhetorical questions since the latter has persuasive power and the ability to subtly influence the audience. This is because, rhetorical questions do not seek answers but have their answers reflective in the life experiences of the audience. To this, they are effective tools that are used for emphasis and more specifically, these question princely target answers that are crucial to the message the speaker or performer wishes to extend to the audience. The googi performance on early marriage begins with this powerful tool. The first stanza of 5 lines are all questions meant to appeal to the conscience of the audience and get them thinking of the topic through introspection. She addresses Ghanaian and parents to rethink what is considered as culture and tradition by giving under-aged children out for marriage.

(1) Mmm! Ghana dima oo eeh! apʊ bi' ka nõk pʊʊg laa?	(1) Mmm! people of Ghana, haven't you heard about early marriage
(2) Du'adiba ya daa pʊ baŋ beɛ?	(2) Parents! didn't you know about it
(3) Ya daa zi' ye gbaʊŋ malisaa?	(3) Didn't you know that Education is good
(4) Ka yeŋ ye buudi toʊma eeh? Anõk biigi tiɛ ka o pʊ bi naae yee? Ayoo	(4) And gave girls out to early marriage because of culture

Aside from the first stanza, the use of rhetorical questions is also observed in line (24) where the question is directed to the king and overlord of the Kusaug traditional area. The singer questions his thought on the practice which again sends a strong signal to chiefs, traditional leaders and all others who matter in this situation.

(24) Na'aba Asigir fʊ yeŋ ye boʊ?	(24) King Asigir what do you say?
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To the entire community she further asks thought provoking questions to further persuade the people to rethink and reconsider the practice of early marriage.

(47) Apʊ paae yʊʊm piig ne anii ka nõk pʊʊg la	(47) When a girl gets pregnant before 18yrs (48) what do you expect her to do?
(48) On nõk pʊʊg la o maan wala-wala beɛ	
(164) Dunia dima ti maan wala aah! Apʊ bi' ka nõk pʊʊga	(164) My people what should we do about this teenage pregnancy

6.3.7. Juxtaposition

The singer in the very opening of the song starts with a strong contrast where she juxtaposes the 'sweetness' in acquiring formal education to the suffering due to the culture of giving under-aged girls out to marriage in the name of culture. This sharp contrast in directly addressed to parents in the whole of Ghana. In the first stanza, the major themes of the song are

immediately laid out. The audience is directly faced with the problem of the day and left to think to create mental imageries of the pressing need for change. The three most important sentences in the first stanza are: *apɔ bi' ka nok pɔvɔ laa*. 'Teenage pregnancy' *gbavɔ malisaa* 'education is sweet', *buudi tovma* 'cultural practice', *Anok biigi tise ka o pɔ bi naae* 'early marriage'. The audience is immediately forced to think of the contrast between formal education and the 'sweetness' it brings at the end and the negative repercussion of giving under-aged girls to marriage because of it being a norm in the culture. With this foregrounding, the singer repeats the words *namisɔvɔ* and *gɛɛnd* which both connote hardship and suffering as consequence of early marriage and teenage pregnancy, to the several times in the song as opposed to the echoing of several benefits the youth stand to derive when they acquire formal education. The expression *li na svɔti* 'it will help us' is repeated severally and is more of a collocation to education anytime the latter is mentioned. To make a contrast metaphoric, the singer mentions several professions in her bid to fully admonish to youth to seek formal education and to encourage parents to desist from the practice of giving out the hands of their under-aged daughters in marriage.

7. Conclusion

This study sought to analyse the use of a popular performance on early marriage and teenage pregnancy to persuade the Kusaal-speaking communities in the Upper East Region of Ghana to eschew certain cultural practices that are currently abused leading to gender-based violence including early marriages and teenage pregnancies. The cultural practice of the Kusaas allows for girls below the age of 18 to be married. Notwithstanding the short-term material and social benefits derived by stakeholders through early marriage, the song emphasises that the demerits are so grave, that the practice is not worth the risk. The effects of teenage pregnancies as indicated earlier and as advocated in the song through the advice of health professionals can be offset through purposeful communication as done through the googi performance, on the potential for education to bring about the needed behavioural change over time. The performer, Alembood Akidago, highlights some key issues by tracing the root causes of early marriage and teenage pregnancies to the culture where girls can be betrothed as soon as they were born and are allowed into marriage before, they are 18, with associated cultural and familial benefits. However, despite these gratifications, she equally explains that teenage pregnancy poses major health risk and calls on everyone to help fight the menace. She further explains that early marriage and teenage pregnancy are major causes of poverty in the region. The teenage girls are often unemployed and if they get impregnated by a man who refuses responsibility, then they become a burden on their parents who may also not be meaningfully employed. The singer calls on all traditional leaders, parents and the youth to resist the practice of early marriage and embrace education for the socio-cultural and socio-economic transformation of the people. The googi performance on early marriage is crafted using several rhetorical devices that are verbally communicated effectively to help advance the themes of the song through persuasion. The performer employs alliteration, metaphors, ideophones, repetition and repetition with variation among others instruments to make the piece very memorable and above all entertaining. In all this, the study has revealed that early marriage, teenage pregnancies and other GBV-related practices can be curbed by employing popular culture as a communicative tool to manage and sustain peace more especially in instances where women and girls are the most vulnerable. Unwholesome cultural practices that have outlived their usefulness and impede progress, irrespective of their perceived uses and gratifications should be addressed. To do this, the indigenes should be offered superior functional alternatives such as education, so they personally embrace the need for change. To facilitate ownership for the process of change without being made to feel offended, the use of music, folktales and other cultural artifacts such as googi performances can be deployed as effective communicative tools. Generally, this study contributes to our understanding on the use of persuasive communication through indigenous language and popular culture to address societal problems that have serious repercussion on development.

Declaration of competing interest

Authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Hasiyatu Abubakari: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Validation, Resources, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Adwoa Sikayena Amankwah:** Writing – review & editing, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Abigail Opoku Mensah:** Funding acquisition, Data curation.

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