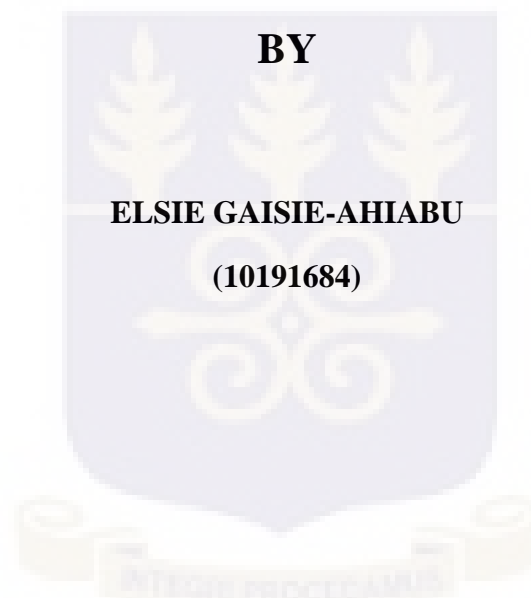


**REGIONAL INSTITUTE FOR POPULATION STUDIES AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON**

**CHILD SEX WORK IN ACCRA: DRIVERS, CHARACTERISTICS AND COPING
MECHANISMS**



**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF PHD IN POPULATION STUDIES DEGREE**

JULY 2019

ACCEPTANCE

Accepted by the College of Humanities, University of Ghana, Legon, in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Population Studies.

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21st August 2020

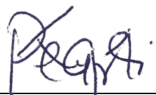
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Professor Stephen O. Kwankye

21st August 2020

Date



Dr. Pearl Kyei

Date 21st August 2020

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that except for reference to other people's work, which have been duly acknowledged, this is the result of my own research and it has neither in part nor in whole been presented for another degree.



Elsie Gaisie-Ahiabu

21st August, 2020

Date

ABSTRACT

A study was undertaken in certain locations with contextual factors conducive to the sex trade in the capital city of Ghana; Accra. The areas were as follows: Konkomba market, Agbobloshie, Abuja/CMB, Railways, Dome/St Johns, Madina, Okaishie/druglane, Awoshie/Mangoase, Chorkor and Korle Gonno. The objectives of the study were to investigate the characteristics of child sex workers, examine what drives them into the trade, identify the challenges child sex workers encounter and how they cope with the challenges. A conceptual framework was designed to guide the study and three theories; the Eco Developmental Theory, Lifestyle Exposure Theory and the Resilience Theory were used to guide the study. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used for data collection. The Respondent Driven Sampling methodology was used to collect quantitative data from a sample of 220 child sex workers in investigating the characteristics and drivers of child sex work. In-depth interview guides were used to collect qualitative data from 10 child sex workers to ascertain the challenges they faced and how they coped. Analysis of the quantitative data was done by using descriptive and explanatory analysis, cross tabulations and the binary logistic regression. Thematic network analysis was used for the qualitative data. Various findings were made from their socio-demographic characteristics, reasons for engaging in sex work, challenges they faced and their coping mechanisms among other related factors. Results showed that child sex work was rife in the locations investigated and were within the ages of 12-17 years. Majority of the child sex workers were aged between 15-17 years and are Christians, with the bivariate analysis indicating the second highest religious grouping being Muslims who mostly were among the older adolescents aged between 16-17 years. The child sex workers had very minimal educational attainment with almost 87 percent being school drop-outs. Almost all the child sex workers (97.4%) migrated to practice their trade in the locations sampled. The research showed 96 percent of them lived with either both parents, a parent or a relative prior to engaging in the sex trade. Two types of child sex workers were identified; the seaters who are sedentary at a location and the roamers who solicit for clients on the streets and places where clients might be available. Bivariate analysis indicated the roamers are generally younger than the seaters at ages 15-16 and 12-14 years respectively. They have an average of 4-6 clients a day and earn an average of GHc 108.38 (US\$ 27) on a good day. Sexual debut was found to be below the legal age of consent of 16 years in Ghana; first sex was between 12-15 years with first birth between 13-16 years. Childhood poverty was identified as a main driver of child sex work as nearly 65 percent reported going to bed without food. They reported encountering challenges in their trade which included abuses (physical, emotional and sexual), indebtedness, refusal of clients to pay for services rendered among others. Certain coping mechanisms were adopted to cope with these challenges. They reduced abuse by keeping to known regular clients, collected money before services, practiced inter-femoral to make more money, relied on each other for social support among other strategies including use of drugs to reduce inhibitions in order to stay in the trade despite the challenges. Recommendations were made based on key findings of the study. Key recommendations include strategies to be adopted to keep the girl-child in school, parental irresponsibility should be addressed through legislation and that migration of teenagers especially the girl-child should be curbed nationally.

Key words: child sex work, drivers, seaters, roamers, adolescents, characteristics.

DEDICATION

TO MY HUSBAND

RALPH AHIABU

AND

CHILDREN

ARABA ASEYE AHIABU AND KELLIE JOOJO AHIABU

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The twist and turns of life most times are inexplicable except to acknowledge in all humility that it must be by God's doing. From a very humble beginning, God has led me this far. To Him be the Glory.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACCEPTANCE	i
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
CHAPTER ONE	1
Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Rationale	6
1.4 Study Area	9
1.5 Objectives	13
1.6 Research Questions	13
1.7 Organisation of the Study	13
CHAPTER TWO	15
Literature Review	15
2.1 Introduction	15
2.1.1 Definition of Child Sex Work (CSW)	15
2.1.2 Types of sex work	18
2.1.3 Characteristics of Child Sex Workers	24
2.1.4 Drivers of Child Sex Workers	26
2.1.5 Challenges of Child Sex Workers	29
2.1.6 Coping Mechanisms of Child Sex Workers	32
2.1.7 Summary	34
2.2 Theoretical Framework	35
2.2.1 Eco Developmental Theory	35
2.2.2 Lifestyle Exposure Theory	36
2.2.3 Resilience Theory	37

2.3 Conceptual Framework.....	38
CHAPTER THREE	42
Data and Methodology	42
3.1 Introduction	42
3.2 Sampling Design	42
3.3 Quantitative Method	43
3.3.1 Procedure	44
3.4 Qualitative Method.....	47
3.5 Measurement and Variables.....	48
3.5.1 Definition of concepts.....	48
3.5.2 Childhood abuse and neglect	50
3.5.3 Child Sex Work.....	50
3.5.4 Mediating Factors	51
3.6 Statistical Analyses.....	52
3.6.1 Quantitative Data	52
3.6.2 Qualitative Data	53
3.7 Ethical Considerations.....	53
3.8 Limitations.....	54
CHAPTER FOUR	55
Characteristics of Child Sex Workers	55
4.1 Introduction	55
4.2 Socio-demographic characteristics	55
4.3 Schooling status	58
4.4 Living arrangements and migration status.	59
4.4.1 Current residence	59
4.4.2 Residence before migration	62
4.4.3 Living arrangement before migration	63
4.4.4 Current living arrangement	64
4.5 Fertility and reproductive health issues.....	64
4.5.1 Child birth	65
4.5.2 Abortion	66
4.5.3 Contraception	66
4.5.4 Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)	66
4.5.5 Health seeking behaviour.....	67

4.6 Work and other contextual issues	68
4.6.1 Type of sex work practiced and how CSWs secure their clients	68
4.6.2 Clients of CSWs.....	73
4.6.3 Earnings of CSWs.....	75
4.6.4 Duration of sex work practice	79
4.7 Summary	80
CHAPTER FIVE	81
Drivers of Child Sex Work in Accra.....	81
5.1 Introduction	81
5.2 Main reasons for getting involved in sex work.	81
5.3 Abuse and neglect.....	83
5.4 Poverty.....	84
5.5 Early sexual debut, motherhood and initiation into sex work.....	86
5.5.1 Early sexual debut.....	86
5.5.2 Early motherhood.....	87
5.6 Running away from home.....	89
5.7 School Problems.....	90
5.8 Summary	92
CHAPTER SIX.....	93
Factors affecting type of sex work practised among child sex workers	93
6.1 Introduction	93
6.2 Bivariate relationship of between age and socio-demographic characteristics of CSWs.....	93
6.3 Reasons for getting involved in sex work.	95
6.3.1 Involvement in CSW by age among young and old adolescents	95
6.3.2 Childhood neglect among young and old adolescents	97
6.3.3 Physical abuse among young and old adolescents	98
6.3.4 Emotional abuse among young and old adolescents.....	99
6.3.5 Sexual abuse among young and old adolescents.....	99
6.3.6 Age at first birth among young and old adolescents	100
6.3.7 Childhood poverty by age among young and old adolescents	101
6.3.8 Age at sexual debut among young and old adolescents	102
6.3.9 Dropping out of school among young and old adolescents	103
6.4 Bivariate relationship of CSWs by type of sex work and socio-demographic characteristics ..	104
6.5 Involvement in CSW by type of sex work.....	107

6.6 Drivers of CSW by type of sex work	111
6.7: Multivariate Analysis.....	112
6.8 Summary	116
CHAPTER SEVEN	118
Challenges and coping mechanisms of child sex workers	118
7.1 Introduction	118
7.2 Challenges faced by CSWs.....	121
7.2.1 Abuse	122
7.2.2 Economic/financial	124
7.2.3 Social/societal	126
7.2.4 Health.....	129
7.2.5 Security	129
7.2.6 Motherhood Challenges	131
7.3 Coping mechanisms for challenges encountered by CSWs	133
7.3.1 Abuse Reduction	134
7.3.2 Use of drugs and alcohol.....	136
7.3.3 Belief in the Supernatural	137
7.3.4 Coping with financial challenges.....	137
7.3.5 Good Social Support	139
7.3.6 Safeguarding Techniques	140
7.3.7 Coping with Health Challenges	141
7.4 Summary	141
CHAPTER EIGHT.....	142
Summary, conclusion and recommendations	142
8.1 Introduction	142
8.2 Summary	143
8.3 Conclusion.....	147
8.4 Recommendations	149
8.4.1 Strategies to keep the girl-child in school	150
8.4.2 Parental/guardian irresponsibility	151
8.4.3 Curbing migration of teenagers.....	151
References	153
Appendices.....	162

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. 1 Map of Accra Metropolis showing study sites.	11
Figure 2. 1: Model linking childhood abuse and neglect to prostitution through five youth problem behaviours.....	39
Figure 2. 2: Conceptual Framework showing drivers of child sex work and their coping mechanisms.....	40
Figure 4. 1: Type of sex work practised	69
Figure 4. 2: How CSWs use their earnings.....	77
Figure 5. 1: Age and sexual related activities	87
Figure 7. 1: Major themes for challenges faced by CSWs	121
Figure 7. 2: Major themes for coping mechanisms used by CSWs.....	134

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4. 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of CSWs in Accra.....56

Table 4. 2 : Reasons for never attending school and dropping out of school.....59

Table 4. 3: Current residence of CSWs.60

Table 4. 4: Living arrangement and migration status of CSWs in Accra.....63

Table 4. 5: Fertility and reproductive health issues65

Table 4. 6: How CSWs solicit their clients.....72

Table 4. 7: Clients per day74

Table 4. 8: Earnings of CSWs per day and mode of payment.....76

Table 4. 9: Duration in sex work79

Table 5. 1: Reasons for getting involved in sex work.....82

Table 5. 2: Abuse and neglectful childhood84

Table 5. 3: Childhood poverty85

Table 5. 4: Reasons for moving or migrating to this area.....90

Table 5. 5: Reasons for dropping out of school91

Table 6. 1: Crosstabulation of CSWs by age and socio-demographic characteristics.....94

Table 6. 2: Percent of CSWs by age and reason for involvement in sex work.....96

Table 6. 3: Percentage of CSW by age and childhood neglect98

Table 6. 4: Percentage of CSW by age and the experience of physical abuse98

Table 6. 5: Percentage of CSW by age and the experience of emotional abuse99

Table 6. 6: Percentage of CSW by age and the experience of sexual abuse.....100

Table 6. 7: Percentage of CSW by age and the age at first birth101

Table 6. 8: Percentage of CSW by age and childhood poverty101

Table 6. 9: Percentage of CSW by age and age at sexual debut102

Table 6. 10: Percentage of CSW by age and reasons for dropping out of school103

Table 6. 11 Percentage of CSWs by type of sex work and socio-demographic characteristics
.....106

Table 6. 12: Percent of CSWs by type of sex work and reason for involvement in sex work
.....108

Table 6. 13: Percent of CSWs by type of sex work and the drivers (abuse and neglect) of
CSW110

Table 6. 14: Percent of CSWs by type of sex work and the drivers (poverty, early sexual
initiation and school dropout) of CSW112

Table 6. 15: Binary logistic model for factors influencing type of CSW 114

Table 7. 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of in-depth interview participants..... 120

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AMA	Accra Metropolitan Assembly
APP	Appendix
CIS	Child status Index
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Children
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CSW	Child Sex Work
DIC	Drop-in-Centre
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism
FSW	Female Sex Work
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPEC	International Programmes on the Elimination of Child Labour
RDS	Respondent Driven Sampling Methodology
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSA	sub-Saharan Africa
WAPCAS	West African Project to Combat AIDS

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background

A child is described in Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) “as every human being below the age of 18 years”. Children are dependent on adults for care and protection; as a result, they are not supposed to be involved in strenuous work or practices that impede their development and well-being. In order to be able to safeguard the development and well-being of children so that they can mature into healthy, hardworking and responsible adults, various measures have been put in place globally to ensure that their general well-being is not compromised. Some of these measures include the United Nations Convention on the right of the Child, (1989), International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention Number 182, New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) declaration on Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) numbers 3,4, 8, and 16 (UNDP, 2015).

In spite of all the measures, different forms of child labour that present themselves in various degrees of child abuse can be found in a number of societies across the globe (Busuttil, 2011:1). These forms of child labour bring a lot of suffering to children and impact negatively on their well-being (Birdthistle, Floyd, Mwanasa, Nyagadza, Gwiza & Glynn, 2010; Wamoyi, Wight, Plummer, Mshana & Ross, 2010). According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), one of the worse forms of child labour is child sex work (UNICEF, 2000).

Globally, children make up about a third of the population; however, in some countries children make up about half of the population. In spite of this, their voices are seldom heard and more rarely listened to in the political and decision making processes (United Nations

Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty, 2017:24). Those that are hardly heard or seen are those that live and grow up on the streets or in households in unregistered slums or squatter settlements (UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty, 2017). Child sex workers can be identified among this group of children who are hardly heard or seen. In Ghana "girls under 18 years were among the most vulnerable child labourers, as many engaged in prostitution or were sexually exploited in exchange for protection while living on the street" (US Department of state; Human Rights and Labor Reports, 2011:19).

Sex work is defined differently by various authors. However, the basic premise of the various definitions is the offering of sexual services in exchange for money, favour, goods, etc (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005:201; Orchard, 2007; Overs, 2002; Hounmenou, 2016:2; Jacob, 2008). Child Sex Work (CSW) can therefore be described as the offering of sexual services by a person below 18 years in exchange for money, goods, rewards, etc.

Studies indicate that there are different types of sex work. Harcourt & Donovan (2005:201) identified at least 25 different types of sex work and grouped them under two broad categories as direct and indirect sex work. According to these authors, direct sex work involves the kind of acts where the women/girls involved in the trade do their work openly and also accept that they are sex workers and are further acknowledged as such by others. Indirect sex work on the other hand is the situation where those practising the trade do not perceive themselves as sex workers and are also not perceived by others as such. In Ghana, two main types of female sex workers were identified by the West African Project to Combat AIDS and STI, Ghana (WAPCAS), namely roamers and seaters (WAPCAS, 2005). The roamers are mostly those who move from place to place to solicit for clients. They do not have any specific place to practise their trade and are comparatively younger than the seaters. The seaters are older women who have practised for a number of years and can be located at

specific places. Their clients usually go to them at their designated places. Literature can also be found on Hotel Based Sex Work (Pettiforr et al., 2000), Street Sex Work (Sloss and Harper, 2004) and Escort agencies (Kramer, 2008).

The legal status of this trade is very different in countries across the world. In some countries it is legal or decriminalised whilst in others it is a criminal offence (Rekart, 2005: 2123-2124). Some societies punish people involved in it very severely whilst others are quite liberal with sex workers (Jenkins, 2014 cited in Nwakanna, 2015:55).

Literature further indicates that sex work is practised by males and females, as well as the young and the old (Spice, 2007). The sex work phenomenon has been a very controversial area of study and has brought a lot of debate around the globe. Some schools of thought argue about its legality or otherwise; others are interested in the criminality of the trade, while some also debate about the rights of sex workers. However, the practice of sex work by children is not acceptable anywhere.

The practice of the trade by children has raised a lot of concerns across the globe (UNICEF, 2000; Flowers, 2001:147). A number of studies have been conducted in the area of child sex work to aid in resolving the issue (Busza, Mtetwa, Chirawu & Cowan, 2014; Hounmenou, 2016; Serafini, 2012; Siringi, 2002; UNICEF, 2009). Several reasons have been attributed to the emergence and increase in the phenomenon of child sex work. Globally, child trafficking has been cited as one of the factors that drive children into sex work (Harcourt and Donovan 2005:201). Cases of child trafficking can be mostly found in the US, Canada and Asia (Reid, 2010; Orchard, 2015). Children are abducted or lured by traffickers; some are also sold by their poor relatives (Orchard, 2015). In parts of India and Thailand, cultural/religious factors have been cited as some factors that drive children into sex work (Orchard, 2007; Tremayne, 2001; Harcourt & Donovan , 2005:201; Bullough & Bullough,

1987). There is also literature that supports the fact that some women were born into the sex work trade. These women/girls were temple dancers known as Devadasis and female court musicians known as Nautch girls (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005:201; Bullough & Bullough, 1987). These girls were mainly responsible for performing a number of duties at the Temple, dance at festivals and also to provide sexual favours to some men among others. Although this system was abolished in 1984, it is believed that it is still practised secretly in some rural parts of India and Thailand (Orchard, 2007:2380-2381). In Africa, there is quite a different picture. Survival and/or transactional sex are what the literature talks about. Children are said to enter the sex trade mainly for survival (Human Rights Watch, 2003). According to William et al., (2012:355), “A growing body of literature has documented the presence of transactional sex involving children and young people in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)”.

According to Jacob (2008), prostitution is a phenomenon of global magnitude that violates the human rights of millions of women and girls all over the world. Children’s rights are grossly violated when they are exploited for prostitution. It is for this reason that attempts have been made by some international organisations like the Human Rights Watch, Save the Children, UNICEF and others to stop it, but the phenomenon still persists in many countries.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The importance of the well-being of children cannot be overemphasised as this is clearly enshrined in the various measures of protection that safeguard children’s well-being, such as the CRC, SDGs and others. A child engaging in sex work is a gross violation of all the rights of the child. This is because the sex work trade has devastating effects on children’s development. Children who engage in sex work are noted to encounter a number of challenges in the course of their work (Busza et al., 2014; Willis & Levy, 2002; Serafini, 2012). Researches have established that children who engage in sex work experience situations that impact their health negatively and can have long term consequences later in

life (Flowers, 2001:153; Louis & Mikhail, 2002: 48; Rekart, 2005: 2124; Williams, Binagwaho, & Betancourt, 2012: 359; Willis & Levy, 2002).

One significant challenge encountered by children who engage in sex work is early maternity (International Labour Organisation (ILO)/International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), 2005). Early pregnancy and maternity could predispose young girls to becoming sex workers just as child sex work could lead a girl child to becoming a mother very early in life. According to literature, some of these children become mothers while they are still children (Siringi, 2002; Ministry of Gender and ILO/IPEC, 2002; Montgomery, 2001). The overlap of childhood and/or teenage experiences, early motherhood and the unique challenges associated with being involved in the sex trade definitely aggravates the vulnerability of these children. As a result of all the challenges enumerated above, maximum effort should be put into addressing the child sex work issue.

Generally, sex work is abhorred in most societies. Immediately a person is labelled as a sex worker in any society, the age of the person and the circumstances that got them into that state does not really matter. All society sees is immorality and delinquency inherent in the practice so becomes unwilling to be associated with the practise. Children who find themselves practising sex work are therefore mostly left on their own.

It is particularly important to take a critical look at child sex work because evidence shows that between 20 percent to 40 percent of sex workers initiate sex work before the age of 18 (Silverman, 2010). Other works support the fact that a number of sex workers began to ply the trade when they were children (Kriitmaa et al., 2010; del Amo et al., 2005; Steinfatt and Baker, 2011; William et al., 2012; Orchard, 2007). In Ghana, a qualitative study in Kumasi conducted by Onyango et al., (2012:5) indicated that out of 24 sex workers interviewed, almost half of them started engaging in the trade at the age of 15, while 4 of

them started practising sex work between ages 12 and 14. This presupposes that if the right interventions are put in place to curb child sex work, a number of women will probably not find themselves in the trade.

Social norms and entrenched structural inequalities and laws lead to violence against children of this nature that does not seem to attract the attention of the state or stakeholders to intervene. Research and the uptake of research findings are essential for the understanding of what drives children into sex work in the context within which sustained social change can be brought about to end the violence against children. This study therefore aims at providing comprehensive information on the situation of child sex workers within the Greater Accra Region. This information will go a long way to aid in providing appropriate interventions in addressing the challenges of child sex workers by helping with the formulation of tailor-made intervention strategies that will inform policy. The information provided will further enhance data needed to aid in the ongoing transformation of the child protection system by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Ghana, which will invariably help in the attainment of some of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

1.3 Rationale

Over the years, sex work has attracted a lot of research. The situation became very profound with the onset of HIV and AIDS in the early 1980s. Most of these researches basically look at reproductive health issues and measures that aid in the reduction of the spread of the HIV virus (Sinha, 1999; Busza et al., 2014: 85; Scorgie et al., 2012: 929). These researchers categorically state that “majority of studies on female sex work (FSW) in sub-Saharan Africa in the past decade have been epidemiological in orientation, driven by concerns around the HIV epidemic and the role of sex workers as a “core group”. This situation has resulted in knowledge gaps in studies on sex work that need to be filled to help address the phenomenon of sex work with a more comprehensive outlook. One of such gaps

is studies in the area of child sex work. Among all the sexual offences that are committed on children, globally, child sex work receives the least attention from policy makers, law enforcement authorities, NGOs in the child rights sector and even more tragic, the society where the children live (Mushohwe, 2018:2).

While many studies have been undertaken in the area of adult sex work across the globe (Busza, Mtetwa, Chirawu, & Cowan, 2014; Sloss & Harper, 2004; Pettifor, Beksinska, & Rees, 2000; Abel, Brunton, & Fitzgerald, 2007; Anarfi & Awusabo-Asare, 1993; Harcourt & Donovan, 2005; Ogutu & Muraguri, 2016; Society, 2016; Obeng-Odoom, 2014; Kohm, 2006), the same cannot be said about child sex work. Although ILO and End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) have done a number of researches in this area, there is still a lot to be done in order to address the problem of child sex work.

In Africa, studies on child sex work “do not provide a sound analysis of the scope and characteristics of the phenomenon” (Hounmenou, 2016:27). In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), child sex work prevails in all the major cities (ECPAT International: 2014), yet there is very limited data on the dynamics of the situation (Hounmenou, 2016:1). This situation poses a challenge to how the issue can be effectively addressed. Comprehensive data are, therefore, needed to help put in appropriate measures to forestall the situation.

In Ghana, there have been some studies in the area of adult sex work (Cassels et al., 2014; Obeng-Odoom, 2014; Akyeampong, 1997). However, studies in the area of CSW are quite limited. Literature suggests that some studies in the area of street children, child migrants and adult sex work allude to the fact that the phenomenon exists (Adomako Ampofo, 2004; Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014; Anarfi & Awusabo-Asare, 1993). Some anecdotal reports from the media and non-governmental organizations further indicate that the phenomenon is rife in the country (Daily Graphic: November 19,

2008; October 30, 2008; Ghana Business News: August 10, 2015; Weekend Today: April 21, 2017:1). Personal observations also attest to this fact. Visits to some sites in the Accra Metropolis reveal that children practise sex work in some parts of the city. The anonymity of the phenomenon in the public space probably accounts for limited studies in the area. As a result, a more serious approach should be attached to the studies on child sex work in order to curb the phenomenon.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Number 3 clearly aims at “*ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all at all ages*” whilst Number 4 aims at “*ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all*”. Number 8 generally focuses on “*... full and productive employment and decent work for all*”, with sub-section 8.7 stipulating “*immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour...*”. Sub-section 16.2 further prescribes “*the end of abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children*” (UNDP, 2015).

In order to attain these goals, obtaining comprehensive information on the issues of child sex work is paramount. This will provide reliable data on these children who seem to have been left out of the main developmental plans that cater for the well-being of children because of the clandestine nature of their work. Reliable data will go a long way to accelerate the achievement of some of the goals directly, and also help with the attainment of other SDGs indirectly.

To contribute to filling the knowledge gap in the area of CSW, a research on CSW has been undertaken in certain parts of Accra, the capital city of Ghana on the phenomenon.

It is believed that the novelty of using the Respondent Driven Methodology (as elaborated in Chapter 3) in the quantitative data collection enhanced the research process greatly and helped with securing a good representative sample of a group that is very hard to reach. Although a few works have been undertaken in the area of CSW, the methods employed are mostly qualitative. As much as using qualitative methods has its own advantages, employing a mixed method approach in this study will help obtain a rich blend of data that will serve diverse groups such as researchers, policy makers and child focus organisations in achieving their aim. Finally, it will enhance the literature that exists on child sex work.

1.4 Study Area

The study was carried out in Ghana's capital city, Accra. Ghana lies on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. The country has a total land area of 238,537km (Obirikorang et al., 2018). It shares boundaries with Burkina Faso on the North and the Gulf of Guinea on the South. Togo can be located on the East with La Cote d' Ivoire on the West. The country is divided into 10 administrative regions. The capital city of Ghana, Accra is in the Greater Accra Region and is under the jurisdiction of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). It is the most populous city of Ghana. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, 1,665,086 people reside in the city, and it covers a total land area of 201sq km (UN Habitat, 2009).

It is reported by the AMA that there is a daily influx of more than one million people from other parts of the country into the city to undertake various economic activities (ama.gov.gh/ama/). This makes it a very vibrant place during the day. The city has large public buildings and many industries and factories that employ many civil servants and private workers (Ghana cities, n.d). These characteristics make it possible for the existence of

a large migrant male population. It also has very big transport terminals that help people to easily commute from the city to various parts of the country.

The vibrant market, industries and companies that exist in the city serve as a huge market for investors, thereby drawing a greater percentage of both local and foreign investors to the city. Some of the male migrants who come to the city mainly to invest and work for money do not necessarily travel with their partners; however, the natural urge to have sex is unavoidable. The demand for sex workers in such situations cannot also be overemphasized.

Sex work is, therefore, practised by both adults and children in certain parts of the city where the demand for their services exists. With the help of some existing agencies and organizations (Prolink and ADRA) that work with sex workers, specific sites were identified for the study. A pre-field work study indicated that child sex workers can be located in the following areas in the city of Accra: Konkomba market, Agbobloshie, Abuja/CMB, Railways, Dome/St Johns, Madina, Okaishie/druglane, Awoshie/Mangoase, Chorkor and Korle Gonno. Figure 1.1 shows a map of the study areas within the Accra metropolis.

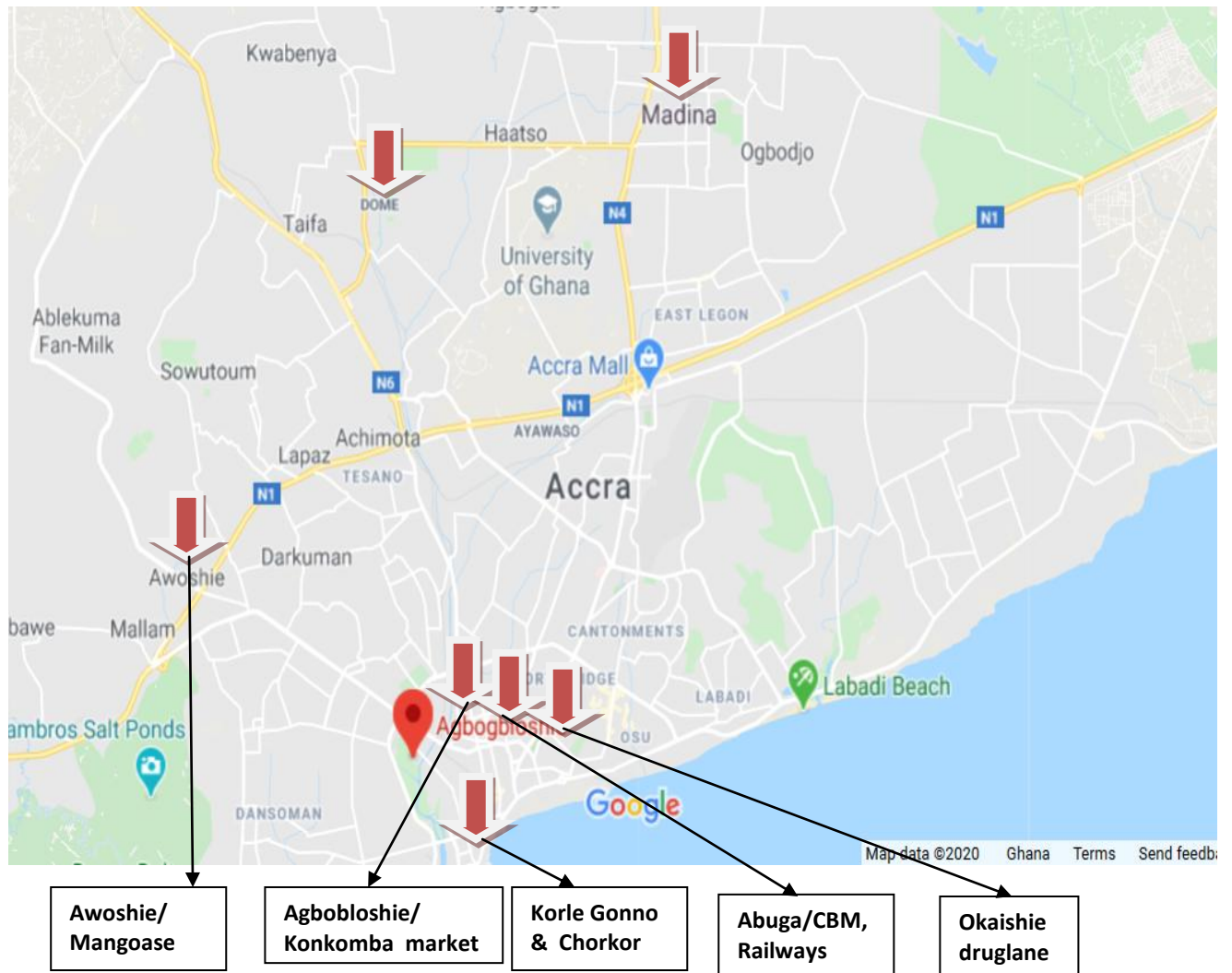


Figure 1. 1: Map of Accra Metropolis showing study sites.

Data collection was therefore limited to these areas. The areas mentioned above have their own unique characteristics that make them attractive for children to practice sex work. Some of them have large bus terminals where many travelers and migrants can be located. Truck drivers who transport foodstuffs from various parts of the country can also be found at Konkomba market and Agboblshie. Truck drivers and men on board ships have been cited to be in the category of men who usually demand the services of sex workers (Trotter, 2009). Almost all the areas mentioned above have big bus terminals that are very vibrant. This situation, therefore, creates a good environment for child sex work to thrive. According to Scorgie et al., (2012:925), “girls living near to areas with especially high demand for sex workers may enter the trade at younger ages. Some of the socio-economic risk factors that

lure children into sex work enumerated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO, n.d.) include working and living in or near environments where there is a concentration of night entertainment (bars, discos, brothels). All the areas mentioned above have the characteristics mentioned by the ILO. Konkomba market and Agboloshie have some of the largest brothels in the city of Accra. Smaller brothels can also be located in Dome and Madina. These areas within the city of Accra have very vibrant day and night life. When one visits these areas where the sex trade exists, it can be realized that they are dotted with a number of night clubs and entertainment centres that provide food, music, drugs and alcohol to merry makers and people who can afford. At Agbobloshie and Konkomba market where majority of the child sex workers were located, the sale and use of drugs and hard liquor is a normal practice during the day and night.

In addition to the above, the city has beaches dotted along the coast where a lot of people go to make merry and relax over the weekends. Although data were not collected from the beaches, Adomako Ampofo (2007:67) indicated in her study on street children in Accra that beaches are very important locations for sex workers. She further emphasized that men picked girls as young as 11 or 12 years from some beaches in the Labadi area in Accra to have sex with. It can be said that Accra as a city in itself has some characteristics that make it attractive to the practice of sex work. The city is located about 20km away from the harbour City of Tema, where a number of migrant expatriates and seamen can be located. Other attractions include the country's largest and only international airport which can also be located in the city. All migrants and visitors who come to the country by air pass through the city of Accra before they get to their final destination.

All these factors enumerated above create a conducive environment for sex work to thrive. Girls who practise the trade secure enough clients in a setting like the city of Accra. According to Scorgie et al., (2012:923), "particular situations increase demand for sex work

and generate specific client groups, for example, mobile men separated from their families and social networks for extended periods of time...”. This implies that the situation in the city of Accra is such that sex workers will always be in demand, and once the demand exists, there will be enough girls to meet the supply end.

1.5 Objectives

The general objective of the study is to understand who child sex workers are and what pushes them into sex work by bringing out the problems they encounter and how they cope with these problems.

Specifically, the study will seek to:

- i. Investigate the characteristics of child sex workers in Accra
- ii. Examine the drivers of child sex work in Ghana
- iii. Identify the challenges child sex workers encounter in the course of their work
- iv. Assess how child sex workers cope with their challenges.

1.6 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- i. What is the socio-demographic profile of child sex workers in Ghana?
- ii. What are the key drivers of child sex work in Ghana?
- iii. What challenges do child sex workers in Ghana encounter in the course of their work?
- iv. How do child sex workers in Ghana cope with these challenges?

1.7 Organisation of the Study

This research is organised in eight chapters. Chapter one specifically discusses the background of the study. It further spells out clearly the problem that is being addressed and

the rationale for undertaking the research. The objectives for the research are also enumerated, and finally the research questions that guide the achievement of the study objectives. Chapter two discusses the various theories that underpin child sex work. Literature is also reviewed in this chapter to ascertain what child sex work is, the various types of sex work that exist and the factors that drive children into sex work. The literature review further explores character traits that are specific to CSWs, the challenges they encounter in the course of their work and the mechanisms they adopt to help them cope with their challenges. Chapter three discusses the methodology for the study. Chapter four mainly explores, describes and discusses the characteristics of the respondents by using simple frequency distributions, summary tables and charts. Chapter five examines and discusses the drivers of child sex work. Chapter six further investigates factors that affect the type of sex work practiced among child sex workers. Chapter seven looks at the challenges the children face and how they cope with these challenges. A summary of the findings of the research, conclusion and recommendations are presented in chapter eight.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Literature reviewed for this study is organised around six main themes. The various themes include definition of the concept of child sex work; types of sex work; characteristics of child sex workers; drivers of child sex work; challenges encountered by child sex workers in the course of their work and how the children are able to cope with the trade.

2.1.1 Definition of Child Sex Work (CSW)

Child sex work has been defined differently by various authors. According to Article 2(b) of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000), child sex work is the commonest type of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), and it is described as “the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration.” This definition also implies children having sex with adults in exchange for basic needs like food, shelter, protection, or in exchange for favours such as higher course grades or extra spending money (Hounmenou, 2016: 27). The Worst Forms of Child Labour, (Convention No. 182,1999) of ILO describes it as the “use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution”. According to Kemdo & Nhongo (2002), a family member, parent, teacher or procurer may frequently but not always act as intermediary to the sexual exploitation of children for remuneration in cash or kind.

In all the definitions above, there is an underlining commonality, which is the provision of sexual services by a child for some kind of gain. In this study, CSW can, therefore, be described as the offering of sexual services by a person below 18 years in exchange for money, goods, rewards, etc.

The age of a child is of considerable importance with regard to the issue of child sex work. International laws define a child as anyone below the age of 18 (CRC, 1989); however most countries recognise lower ages of consent to sexual initiation. Across the globe, age of consent varies by jurisdiction. The highest age of consent in the world is 21 in Bahrain. The second-highest is South Korea, which is 20 years, while the majority of countries have an age of consent between 16 and 18 years. The lowest in the world is Nigeria which is 11; Philippines and Angola are 12; while Burkina Faso, Comoros, Niger and Japan are 13 (Standard digital, 2019). In situations where countries do not have laws that prohibit the engagement of girls under 18 in sex work, the age of consent will then become the effective age at which the abuse of children in the area of sex work becomes legal (Jeffereys, 2000). The age of consent, therefore, legitimises sexual relationship with the opposite sex, albeit may be below the internationally accepted age for the definition of a child. The discrepancy, therefore, poses some challenges about the legality of the practice of sex work by some children. In other words, a child can consent to sex at the age of 16 in Ghana but unlike an adult, her engagement in sex work attracts an undesirable and derogatory label of child sex work which is frowned upon generally by society to a higher degree than adult sex work.

The legality of adult sex work varies across the globe and the conditions for engaging in the trade are very clear. Sex work is legal in some countries and prohibited in others (Rekerk, 2005; Rössler et al., 2010). In SSA, with the exception of Senegal, sex work is considered illegal in all countries (Scorgie et al., 2012). It is also culturally unacceptable and frowned upon by many (Tyoanande & Samson, 2014). The case of child sex work, however, is illegal in most countries, and all countries have various forms of restrictions to the practice of sex work by children. Globally, measures have been put in place to check this act of children selling sex (1990 International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention Number 182,

New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) Declaration on Convention on the Right of the Child).

The legality of sex work in general across the globe is very controversial. In Ghana, section 276 of the Criminal Code of 1960 (Act 29) criminalizes sex work and soliciting for sex. Despite the law criminalizing sex work, the practice in Ghana is rife and obvious along certain streets and in communities that have sex work 'seater' communities without attracting the attention of the police and other law enforcement agencies, except for occasional swoops which are rare. The relevance or importance of laws should be measured in their effectiveness in checking and or putting a stop to certain undesirable human practices. The criminalization of sex work is not only ineffective in most countries but has also become a hindrance to the implementation of public health interventions. Thus, as in Ghana, many countries where the trade is illegal, sex work still prevails and only provides avenues for abuse by clients and law enforcement agencies especially the police (Rekark, 2005).

In the interest of human rights of sex workers, health and safety, many reputable organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Amnesty International, UNAIDS among others are advocating the decriminalization of sex work. However, since its decriminalization of sex work in 2003, New Zealand is the only country in the world where street-based sex workers or 'roamers' can freely work on the street without fear of arrest (Schmidt, 2017). Sweden has taken a different legal approach penalizing the buyers while at the same time decriminalizing the women in prostitution (Raymond, 2003).

As it is with the controversy regarding the legality of sex work, so it is with child sexuality and age of legal sexual debut. In Ghana, a 16-year-old child engaging in consensual sex is legal but if that sexual activity is regarded as sex work, it would be illegal. While sex

with another child below 16 years would be described as defilement in addition to being illegal if seen to be sex work.

2.1.2 Types of sex work

According to literature, adult sex work has some very clear-cut typologies and the various types have been discussed by a number of authors (Okal, Chersich, Tsui, Sutherland, & Temmerman, 2011; Harcourt & Donovan, 2005; Scorgie et al., 2012; Spice, 2007; Fuchs, 2013; Jacob, 2008; Nzambe & Asamoah-Adu, 2000; Obeng-Odoom, 2014). Some of the types mentioned in literature are street prostitution, brothel type prostitution and the escort type. There are also those who can only be located in bars and hotels, lap dancers, massage parlour operators, survival sex, transactional sex, travelling entertainers, military prostitution and a host of others (Scorgie et al., 2012; Jacob, 2008; William et al., 2012; Belcher & Herr 2006; Ferguson, Morris, & Kariuki, 2006). Literature also mentions some types of sex work activities that are exclusive or specific to children (Orchard, 2007; Willis & Levy, 2002). Child sex work, however, is ubiquitous and assumes any type of practice (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005; Willis & Levy, 2002). The activities of adult sex workers are not necessarily separated and significantly different from that of children (Jeffreys, 2005). In most cases, both adults and children work together. As a result, children are seen practising the various types of sex work along with their adult counterparts (Willis & Levy, 2002).

This review, therefore, discusses the various types of sex work without necessarily looking at them from the point of view of whether they are practised by children or adults. It, however, seeks to discuss whether a particular type is practised by both children and adults or it is practised exclusively by one group. A study by Gangoli (2002), undertaken in India looked at the conditions in a brothel at Bombay. In this brothel, both adults and children were living together, working together and treated the same. The study established that the more

experienced adult sex workers helped the children withstand the challenges associated with the trade. This study is indicative of the fact that in sex work, adults and children can work together and also practise the various types as well.

Brothel type of sex work is the situation where sex workers all live in the same house or place with a manager and clients come in and have sex with them (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005; Fuchs, 2013). They may either be working for themselves and paying rent to the owner of the brothel, or they may be working for the brothel owner who is responsible for paying them some fees after they have collected the money from the clients. This type of sex work often offers security to the sex worker. In some advanced countries, brothels are licensed. They can be mostly found in places where sex work is decriminalised or tolerated, such as Australia, New Zealand, South East Asia, India, Europe and Latin America (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005).

On most of the streets across the world, both children and adults compete to solicit clients in the open during late hours; this is called street prostitution or street walking. Street prostitution has been described in the literature as the situation where either young girls or women stand by the side of the road/street or walk along the street with the aim of soliciting clients to have sex with at a fee (Fuchs, 2013; Harcourt & Donovan, 2005; Semple et al., 2015). Clients usually pick them up and have sex with them in their homes or at mutually agreed destinations. Street prostitution is considered dangerous because anybody can pick the girls and send them anywhere they want; in the process, some of them are harmed in various ways (Spice, 2007; Semple et al., 2015; Kohm, 2005). Although it is widespread across the globe, it is particularly seen in the United States, Europe, United Kingdom and Australia. It can also be witnessed in places where there is socio-economic breakdown such as Eastern Europe, parts of Africa, South and South East Asia and Latin America (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005).

In SSA, some researchers have discussed survival/transactional sex (William et al., 2012; Bajaj, 2009; Swindler & Watkins, 2007; Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014). This type of sex work is practised by both the young and the old. However, there is evidence to show that it is practised mostly by children in conflict zones (William et al., 2012.). These children are either orphaned or displaced. They are, therefore, ready to have sex in exchange for money or other basic necessities that help them survive.

In Zimbabwe, three main types of child sex work have been discussed by Mushohwe (2018). They are the Individual “voluntary” child prostitution, forced child prostitution by handler and street prostitution. According to the researcher, the individual “voluntary” type is the most common in Zimbabwe; children willingly sell sex for various reasons with the main reason being for monetary gains as a result of poverty. The second type described by Mushohwe (2018) which is forced child prostitution by handlers is the situation where vulnerable children are used as sex slaves by handlers (pimps). The third type is street prostitution, usually practised by children who have left home for various reasons. It is mostly practised as a means of survival.

In China, some sex workers are born into the sex trade as children by other sex workers. Some children are also purchased from their parents, while others are captured in warfare and used as sex workers (Bullough & Bullough, 1987). Sex workers are usually classified primarily on the basis of their accomplishments. Those who simply relied on the fact that they were females constituted the lowest class; they are known as the common prostitutes. The other category, that is treated with some respect above the common prostitutes are the prostitutes in the wine houses. These women have an amazing capacity for wine, and are accustomed to drinking great quantities at banquets, but this is regarded as a disgrace (Bullough & Bullough, 1987).

Spice (2007) discusses indoor and street type of sex work, describing the indoor sex work as workers who are based in off-street premises; they could be in flats, saunas, massage parlours or places that do not expose them to the violence and dangers of the street.

According to Harcourt & Donovan (2005), sex work can be broadly grouped into direct or indirect sex work. In the case of direct sex work, it is clear that the primary purpose for the interaction between the sex worker and the prospective client is to exchange sex for a fee; also, sex work is the main preoccupation of the sex worker. Some examples of direct sex work according to the authors are: street prostitution, brothel, escort, private, window or doorway, club/pub/bar/karake/dance hall, door knock, transport (ship, truck and train) and others. Indirect sex work on the other hand is the situation where sex work is actually the secondary source of income for the practitioner. Some types mentioned by the authors are lap dancing, massage parlour, sex for drugs, etc.

Lawman (2004) distinguishes three main forms of sex work. He states that sex work is not monolithic and that a distinction can be drawn between (a) sexual slavery, including debt bondage; (b) survival sex, which is driven by poverty, drug prohibition and addiction in situations where participants have few if any viable income alternatives; and (c) prostitution which is a choice made by the person who has other choices. He further indicates that these forms of commercial sex should not be conceived as discrete categories, but rather as positions on a continuum.

In Rome, prostitution was a trade, a necessary one for which there was great demand, but the women who practised it were low class-status persons. It was probably the main way a woman without inherited wealth or a husband could earn a living, and a standard Latin term for prostitution, *meretrix*, means “she who earns”, as if to imply that this was the only thing a woman could do. Other terms include *scrota* (whore), *Lupa* (she-wolf) and the word

prostitute. The Romans had temple sex workers. Beside these there were other kinds of sex workers who worked in brothels, the *Iupanaria*, or streetwalkers. There were also women who picked up additional income through selling sex but who were not necessarily required to list themselves as sex workers. In this group were women employed by low class hotels (*tebernae caupoiae*); women employed by establishments run close to or in cooperation with the public baths; women in bakeries and inns, where women might be employed to entertain certain customers. Among the part-time sex workers were streetwalkers known also as “night moths”, “grave watchers”, “strollers” or even “two asses” (because that was their price) who practised their profession at street corners, in baths, in the obscure byways of the city, near some of the temples, and even on gravestones and in tombs. Also unregistered were the actresses, hard players, barmaids and others who had jobs but used their beds to supplement their income. At the top of the sex work pyramid were the courtesans, some of who served long periods as immortalized in literature (Bullough & Bullough, 1987).

Sex work can also be formal or informal (Okal et al., 2011; Scorgie et al., 2012). In this case, the setting under which it takes place determines the nature of the practice. Formal sex work usually occurs in established and well organised places such as brothels, etc. The informal type on the other hand can be found at places such as bars, hotels, the road side, beaches or any convenient place that is acceptable to the parties involved.

Sex work can be divided into four main parts, these are; institutional, freelance, corporate and international prostitution. The first is mostly practised in the hotels, brothels and bars while the second is a single sex operator. Corporate prostitution happens when women are compelled into sleeping with their bosses to get jobs, promotions or even keep their jobs; or when female workers must sleep with clients to achieve their targets. The last one involves human trafficking and smuggling of women across borders (Wakdok, 2010).

Certain cultural /religious beliefs and practices predispose some children to acts that are believed to be sex work practice in their nature. Orchard (2007), describes the Devadasis tradition that existed in some rural communities in India until it was abolished in 1984. According to him, the tradition of Devadasis has undergone some significant changes over the years. In the past, women and young girls were dedicated through marriage to different gods and goddesses; they then became the wives of these deities. These women and young girls had specific roles to perform. These roles included feeding and offering prayers to the deities, dancing for them at festivals, cleaning the items used in the temple and finally providing sexual services to the male temple attendants, priests, patrons and clients of the Temple. Although the practice was abolished in 1984, it is practised secretly (Orchard, 2007). In its present state, it has lost its socio-religious status and gained some kind of economic value. Young girls are inducted secretly into the system of Devadasi and soon after their inductions, they begin selling sex for economic gain after menarche.

There is some other cultural/religious practice that has been described as child sex work, but is seen more in the domain of abuse and exploitation of children than sex work. Trokosi is a cultural practice that exists in some communities in the Volta Region of Ghana (Dzansi & Biga, 2017; Howusu, 2015; Akapbli, 2014). Trokosi has been documented by the Encyclopaedia of Prostitution as a type of child sex work (2006:101-104). However, the condition under which this system operates is very different from the practice of sex work. In the case of Trokosi, parents offer their virgin daughters to a shrine/deity as sex slaves to work to atone for the sins that an ancestor may have committed. The priest of the shrine or deity has access to the child and as a result, takes advantage of her by having sex with her and even having children with her if he wishes (Dzansi & Biga, 2017; Howusu, 2015; Akapbli, 2014). This practice was criminalised in 1998 in Ghana but it is alleged that it is still being practised secretly by some communities (Howusu, 2015:43-45). The difference between child sex work

and Trokosi is that, the child is very likely to stay with this particular person for the rest of her life. In this regard, the situation is more of child abuse and exploitation rather than the practice of sex work. This is because the child does not get paid for having sex and the child involved may not necessarily have multiple sexual partners from whom she collects money. It can, therefore, be argued that Trokosi is not a type of child sex work. It is rather a form of abuse and exploitation that has serious human rights implications.

In Ghana, Nzambe & Asamoah-Adu (2000) mention two main types of sex workers, they are the roamers and the seaters. The roamers, according to the authors, are mostly found on the streets, in bars, hotels, night clubs, on the beaches and all other places where they can easily solicit for clients. They are not stationary, like their name suggests, they are always on the look-out for clients so they move a lot. They can therefore not be easily located. Their other major characteristic is that they are relatively young. The seater, traditionally known as “maame I come” (I am ready, no need to talk) are very sedentary. They live and work at one place; as a result, they can be easily located. Clients visit them at their “homes”, have sex with them there and pay and leave. These women are much older as compared to the roamers. They have well organised associations with officers appointed. They usually live together at specific locations; they hold meetings and also look out for the interest and welfare of each other. Obeng-Odoom (2014:71) describes a third type of sex work in Ghana in his study in Sekondi-Takoradi. He states that apart from the seater and the roamer types, there are women and girls who are part-time sex workers. This category, according to him, are either women or girls who are working or are studying but are also “selling their bodies” for financial gain.

2.1.3 Characteristics of Child Sex Workers

According to a report by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection & UNICEF (2014:17 & 28), in Ghana, there are claims that children as young as six years in

some parts of the Central Region engage in child sex work. Some other studies in the country have also shown that 12-year-olds engage in the sex trade (Obeng-Odoom, 2014; Onyango et al., 2012). A study in Kumasi reported very low academic attainments for sex workers below the age of 20. It indicated that 14.6 percent had no formal education, about 40 percent had below primary education while 37.5 percent left school during or following completion of Junior High School (JHS) (Onyango et al., 2012). Scanty information exists on their religious affiliation or practices. Belcher & Herr (2005) report that, sex workers appreciate spirituality in their lives because it helps them to reduce their numb feelings. Literature with regard to the marital status of child sex workers has proven difficult to find. This could be probably because researchers do not envisage children that young in marital relationships. It could also be assumed that children who practise sex work do not usually engage in child marriage.

Sex workers in general are also known to migrate a lot due to the nature of their work (Obeng-Odoom, 2014). Van (2007:81) stated that “sex workers commonly move around in a quest to: follow seasonal trade opportunities; access a wider or different client base (attempting to avoid regular clients who may expect sex without payment); improve working conditions; recover from illness; or avoid violence and stigmatization”. Any discussion about sex work in SSA that fails to mention how mobile the group is, is not complete (Scorgie et al., 2012). Sex workers move in response to shifts in their demand, and are also generally noted to ply their trade outside their hometowns (Van, 2007). They always move away from home because they usually do not want people to know what they do. In North Africa and the Middle East, “a child engaged in prostitution is deprived of all ties to their community, rejected by their family, and left with a few options other than to stay in prostitution” (Mikhail, 2002:47). Migration then becomes an important component of child sex work; they can practise this trade if they are ready to move around. In Ghana, a study in Kumasi

indicated that many of the children involved in child sex work migrated from the rural areas that are close to Kumasi to engage in sex work in the city (Onyango et al., 2012).

2.1.4 Drivers of Child Sex Workers

The reasons for which children engage in sex work are varied, and also differ between various countries and communities (Willis & Levy, 2002). The factors are also very interrelated such that in most of the instances a number of factors come together to predispose a child to engaging in the trade. According to ILO (n.d:2), children who are particularly at risk include runaways, children from dysfunctional families, children of sex workers, homeless children, AIDS orphans, migrant children, children from ethnic minorities and out-of-school children.

Willis & Levy (2002), broadly categorise the drivers of sex work in general into three as economic, social and cultural factors. Some children collect money for sex because they are poor (ILO/IPEC, 2005; Mikhail, 2002) and cannot find any other way to economically sustain themselves. For others, culture/religion is the basis (Orchard, 2007). Social factors can also contribute to the engagement in sex work by some children; factors such as “the desire to escape the drudgery of farming and domestic work, forced marriage, boredom, conflict and abuse or to secure independence from traditional gender norms” (Gysels, Pool & Nnalusiba, 2002:54).

It has also been documented that children, particularly girls who are involved in certain types of child labour, such as: child domestic labour, street vending and scavenging are at high risk of being pulled into commercial sexual exploitation (ILO, n.d:2). Other children and adolescents who are also at risk include those who have migrated on their own for the purposes of looking for work, thereby being separated from their families and communities. Trafficked children are also highly vulnerable (ILO, n.d:2).

2.1.4.1 Neglect and abuse of children

Some studies have revealed that child neglect and abuse are risk factors for children engaging in sex work (Wilson & Widom, 2010; Agnew 2004, 2005a, 2006 cited in Reid, 2010; Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014). In Brazil, a study found that about 80 percent of CSWs were ever abused by a parent or relative (Serafini, 2012). In the USA, child sex work is linked to childhood sexual abuse (Willis & Levy, 2002). Hounmenou's (2016) findings support this assertion, that children in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso suffer sexual abuse prior to their entry into sex work.

Once a child is abused and neglected, there is a pathway that this child can follow that might lead them into delinquent behaviour (Agnew, 2004, 2005a, 2006 cited in Reid, 2010 :54). One of such pathways is the child running away from home. A study in the City of Accra revealed that “children run onto the street to escape physical and sexual abuse at home” (Adomako Ampofo, 2007:73). In parts of Nigeria, children running away from home due to abuse end up as sex workers (Adedoyin, 1995 cited in Willis & Levy, 2002). Engagement of children in sex work arises because they are faced with the challenge of finding for themselves when they leave home; because they have no skill they are left with no choice but to engage in sex work to sustain themselves. It can, therefore, be implied that some young girls will automatically fall out of school and sell sex to survive when they run away from home.

A child who has run away from home and ends up on the street eventually becomes poor because nobody takes care of his/her needs. Also, a child who is neglected and abused by caregivers will normally lack a number of basic things that can make them experience poverty. Child poverty, therefore, becomes another pathway to a child engaging in sex work. In a study in Ghana, Adomako Ampofo (2007:73) indicates that “experiences of poverty and the inability of families to provide adequately for children were deeply and directly complicit

in the children's emergence on the street". Child poverty can result in victims resorting to many ways of survival, some of which may be criminal and illegal. Engaging in sex work is one of the survival mechanisms of poor children (Scorgie et al., 2012; Orchard, 2007; Mikhail, 2002). These children either do it for themselves or help if their family is in need (Onyango et al., 2012; Rekart, 2005; Mikhail, 2002). For young sex workers in Africa whose parents have died, economic and food insecurity makes sex work the only survival option (Campbell, 2000 cited in Scorgie et al., 2012). In Brazil, young children between the ages of 9 – 15 years engage in sex work to obtain money, food or illegal drugs (Serafini, 2012). This situation mainly arises because they are poor and often exploited by either their parents or abductors. In Ghana, a qualitative study on young sex workers in Kumasi identified familial poverty as one of the major push factors into child sex work (Onyango et al., 2012). In Nepal, child sex work is also attributed to poverty as well (Willis & Levy, 2002).

Dropping out of school, early sexual debut and teenage pregnancy are all factors that have been cited as drivers to child sex work (Wilson & Widom, 2010; Onyango et al., 2012:17; Gysels et al., 2002). In Uganda, a qualitative study found that female sex workers ascribed their choice of sex work to limited options following teenage pregnancy, school dropout and relationship dissolution (Gysels et al., 2002). According to Wilson & Widom (2010:228), relative to other problem behaviours assessed in their study conducted in the US, "initiation of sexual behaviour before age 15 was the single strongest predictor of entry into prostitution". Onyango et al., (2012:17), emphasised that dropping out of school played a significant role in girls' initiation and engagement into the sex trade.

Some girls are also introduced into sex work by their mothers, or other close relations who are already in the sex trade (Onyango et al., 2012).

2.1.5 Challenges of Child Sex Workers

Sex workers in general face numerous challenges in the course of their work (Sloss & Harper, 2004; Semple et al., 2015; Jeffereys, 2000; Rekart, 2005; Rössler et al., 2010). However, being a CSW disposes one to a lot more challenges that are even more difficult to handle than the adult sex worker (Busza et al., 2014: 86; Willis & Levy, 2002). Their challenges are often intense because they are too young to handle them. Studies indicate that they encounter physical, psychological and emotional problems as well as medical challenges (Serafini, 2012; Willis & Levy, 2002; ILO, n.d: 2), which can lead to irreversible impairments (Jeffereys, 2000; Willis & Levy, 2002). Their undeveloped biological make-up predisposes them to the easy acquisition of diseases such as cervical ectopy (Pettifor et al., 2007; Sakar et al., 2006 cited in Busza, et al., 2014). They also suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and are highly suicidal (Willis & Levy, 2002:1419). They feel humiliated, guilty and sad, they lose their self-esteem and may develop challenges with regard to written and verbal communication (ILO, n.d:1).

Physically, an older sex worker may be more able to stand up to a client and find a way to prevent herself from physical abuse because of her body size and strength. A child, on the other hand, will not be able to do the same because of the smaller body size. This is a threat to the safety of the child as they can easily be physically abused (Jeffereys, 2005). The nature of the violence that occurs in sex work can be fatal: the mortality rate of children who practise sex work is estimated to be six times more than those of similar ages who do not practise sex work (Willis & Levy, 2002).

The practice of the sex trade can be legal or illegal depending on the country of residence (Nwakanma, 2015; Rekart, 2005). The illegality of the trade poses greater health challenges. The adult sex worker has the advantage of practising in a safe environment if sex work is legal; they can access health care and other social services under such circumstances

(Willis & Levy, 2002). In Australia for instance, there are health and safety guidelines for brothels and the sex industry as a whole (Rekart, 2005). This means that those in the trade enjoy some level of safety and protection. However, the child sex worker does not have that opportunity because CSW is illegal everywhere and considered a gross violation of children's rights (Willis & Levy, 2002; ILO, n.d.), it is exploitative and considered an abuse by international laws and treaties (CRC, ILO, SDGs). Children, therefore, engage in it on the blind side of authorities. This situation acts as a hindrance to the access of health care (Willis & Levy, 2002), which invariably compromises the health and well-being of the children. In SSA, sex work is considered criminal everywhere, except Senegal (Scorgie et al., 2012), therefore sex workers are heavily stigmatised (Onyango et al., 2012; Scorgie et al., 2012). Another challenge of CSWs is poor negotiating skills. Due to their age and limited experience, children lack the confidence, skills and the experience to negotiate with their clients for safe sex practices (Busza et al., 2014; Onyango et al., 2012; Willis & Levy, 2002). This situation makes them practise unprotected sex which increases their risk of infections (Willis & Levy, 2002). The power dynamics of gender and age put them at a disadvantage (Onyango et al., 2012; Pettifor et al., 2007). Researches in China and Indonesia revealed that young sex workers are unlikely to use condoms successfully (Lau et al., 2002 cited in Busza, et al., 2014). Children therefore suffer from curable and preventable illnesses as compared to their older counterparts that are able to negotiate for safe sex and also can better access health care (Willis & Levy, 2002; Onyango et al., 2012).

The unprotected sexual encounters can result in unwanted pregnancies (ILO, n.d; Ministry of Gender and ILO/IPEC, 2002; Montgomery, 2001; Jeffereys, 2000). Hounmenou (2016), reports that one out of every three children in sex work at Ouagadougou experienced unwanted pregnancy. Whether the child has the baby or aborts the pregnancy, she is faced with health implications that can have tremendous consequences on her life. If the pregnancy

is kept, “the dangerous effects of early pregnancy and child birth are widely accepted to include increased risk of dying, increased risk of premature labour and severe complications during delivery (Mikhail, 2002). Summer (2010) corroborates this assertion by stating that, pregnancy put teenage girls’ health at risk through childbearing or unsafe abortion. Pregnancy-related deaths are the leading cause of mortality for 15-19 year-old-girls worldwide” (Mikhail, 2002; Maier & Schneider, 2011).

When the child decides to abort the pregnancy, she faces all the complications that are associated with abortions such as becoming suicidal (Reardon et al., 2002), developing psychiatric problems (Rue et al., 2004) and the likelihood of experiencing infertility and life-threatening reproductive conditions (Springfield, 2002).

If these girls are able to successfully deliver their babies, they are further faced with the challenge of caring for their babies while plying their trade simultaneously. According to Gyesaw & Ankoma (2013), young mothers are usually poor and most often have challenges adapting to the obligations of parenthood. A study undertaken by Anarfi (1989:131) in Abidjan, Cote d’ Ivoire, indicates that sex workers have little time to take care of their children due to the nature of their work. In order to attend to their clients during peak hours, they either drug their children to sleep, drown them in beer or simply ignore them. Obviously, one can deduce that the well-being of both the mothers and their children is compromised due to the challenges associated with the sex work.

According to Willis & Levy, (2002), morbidity and mortality in child sex workers are higher compared to their older counterparts. A number of them suffer disabling injuries in the course of their trade and end up crippled, blinded, or deaf (Siringi, 2002). An epidemiological study that compared sex workers by age group indicated that younger sex workers are more likely to contract HIV and also experience sexual and physical violence

(Silverman, 2011; ILO, n.d.). They are also at a risk of injuries, including rape, as a result of violence from pimps, clients, police and intimate partners (Willis & Levy, 2002). In Madagascar, it was documented by Pettifor et al., (2007) that, child sex workers were at significantly higher risk of chlamydial and gonococcal infection compared to older women. Willis & Levy (2002) further report that, due to the poor living conditions of child sex workers on the street, they are at risk of malnutrition and other related disorders.

Teenage motherhood, occurring at a critical developmental stage of teenagers' lives, has been identified as having adverse social and health consequences (Mushohwe, 2018).

Unfortunately for CSWs, the teenage/adolescent developmental challenges further compound their challenges. These are unique developmental challenges that are associated with all teenagers. The process of developing from childhood to adulthood has very unique challenges that need the assistance of good parenting and guidance to negotiate. Some of the challenges encountered at this stage relate to physical, mental and emotional changes (ILO/IPEC, 2005). These challenges already make the child vulnerable in a number of ways. The situation is then compounded if the child has to endure all the work-related challenges that a sex worker has to endure.

2.1.6 Coping Mechanisms of Child Sex Workers

Sex workers have various strategies that help them cope with their challenges. These methods are not exclusive to the child sex workers; they are practised by the adults as well.

One common practice with both parties is relying on each other for information on prospective clients, especially when it comes to clients that they consider dangerous, aggressive and harmful. Sex workers share information on their clients with each other so that they do not get themselves into trouble with clients they consider dangerous (Okal et al.,

2011). They discuss what happens with violent clients so that their colleagues will stay away from them.

They also resort to the use of alcohol and drugs to numb their feelings with regard to the psychological and emotional pains they go through to be able to work (Okal et al., 2011; Scorgie et al., 2012; Sloss & Harper, 2004; Jeffereys, 2000). In South Africa, studies revealed that female sex workers usually take in alcohol and drugs in order to be able to cope with their work; it specifically helped them to lower inhibitions and increased their courage and confidence to approach and solicit clients (Pauw & Brener, 2003; Trotter, 2008). As much as this strategy helps some of them to cope with the challenges they encounter in the course of their work, it can also have adverse consequences. Over-indulging in alcohol and drugs may result in the poor judgement of a prospective violent client, which may result in the sex worker being abused severely (Semple et al., 2015:8-9). They may also involve themselves in actions that they would usually not undertake under normal circumstances, such as, being involved in unprotected or anal sex (Okal et al., 2011; Onyango et al., 2012; Semple et al., 2015). Heavy alcohol intake may also lead to the use of condoms inconsistently and incorrectly, which may lead to the acquisition of STIs including HIV (Chersich, Luchters, Malonza, Mwarogo, King'ola, & Temmerman, 2007; Fisher, Cook, Sam, & Kapiga, 2008). Apart from helping sex workers to cope with their work challenges, the use of drugs has also been cited in some studies as a driver into sex work (Scorgie et al., 2012; Kohm, 2006). Another protective mechanism is having “boyfriends” who will protect them from violent and abusive clients. These boyfriends could be their lovers, or men they simply have sex with in exchange for protection (WAPCAS, 2005) or their pimps who help them solicit clients. Others also simply pay for protection (WAPCAS, 2005).

In order to avoid being harassed and arrested by the police, some of them negotiate with the police by paying unofficial fees and extending sexual favours (Okal et al., 2011; Onyango

et al., 2012). There also exists an unwritten contract between the police and the women dictating some norms to follow in order to avoid being arrested (Belcher & Herr, 2005:101).

Sex workers usually do not stay overnight in a client's house. This is a mechanism that protects them from being harmed in an unfamiliar environment. Some clients would like to take them to their homes, but they try as much as they can to avoid this, being at a neutral place is safer for them than a place where the client is more familiar with than themselves (Onyango et al., 2012).

To ensure safety, sex workers often would prefer to use their own condoms instead of the one provided by the client, and condoms with lubricants to prevent the condom from breaking (Onyango et al., 2012).

2.1.7 Summary

The reviewed literature indicates that there are children who practise sex work across the globe (Harcourt & Donovan , 2005; Willis & Levy, 2002; Onyango et al., 2012; Hounmenou, 2016). There are also various types of sex work practised by both children and adults (Scorgie et al., 2012; Jacob, 2008; William et al., 2012; Belcher & Herr 2006; Ferguson, Morris, & Kariuki, 2006).

The reasons why children engage in the sex trade are varied (ILO/IPEC, 2005; Mikhail, 2002; Orchard, 2007; Serafini, 2012; UNICEF, 2014). Children in sex work are known to encounter challenges in the course of plying their trade (Scorgie et al., 2012; Van, 2007; Onyango et al., 2012; Semple et al., 2015), however they find strategies that help them cope with the challenges (Onyango et al., 2012; Okal et al., 2011; Pauw & Brener, 2003; Trotter, 2008).

Most of the studies on child sex work were conducted in the developed world. In SSA, there is very scanty literature on studies in this area. A study in the area of CSW is essential to understanding what drives children into sex work and also how they are able to cope with the challenges they encounter in this part of the world. This study therefore seeks to contribute to literature in the sub-region and also help with policy formulation in the area of child sex work.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This section of the study reviews the various theories that guided the research. It is necessary to examine how some scholars have explained the issue of child sex work with theories to help understand the concepts and definitions and also to give general ideas on the issue to guide the research. Three main theories guided the study. They are the Eco Development Theory, the Lifestyle Exposure Theory and the Resilience Theory. These theories have been used to explain similar works in the past. It is believed that these theories will give a more nuanced approach to the understanding of the research being undertaken.

2.2.1 Eco Developmental Theory

The Eco Developmental Theory (Szapocznik & Coatsworth, 1999) bases its premise mainly on the notion that healthy and deviant behaviour results from a combination of the family, school, neighbourhood, sociocultural environment and biological factors. According to Schwartz, Coatsworth, Pantin, & Sharp (2006:360), “the theory focuses on the ways in which systems influence one another and on the ways in which these sequences of influence affect developmental outcomes”. It views the family as the most influential and proximal on the development of adaptive and maladaptive behaviour patterns (Perrino, Gonzalez-Soldevilla, Pantin, & Szapocznik, 2000). The theory postulates that family relationship has influence on other social contexts, such as peer groups and schools, which further contribute to the development of deviant or healthy behaviour. As a result, childhood neglect and abuse

have negative impact on the development of a child and can further result in anti-social behaviour patterns such as sex work in children.

According to Wilson & Widom (2010), this theory has been used to describe risky behaviour for a number of adolescent problems. The theory was used by Wilson & Widom (2010) to investigate the role of youth problem behaviour in the path from child abuse and neglect to child sex work. The problem behaviours presented by Wilson & Widom (2010) are the potential mediating factors of the relationship between child neglect and abuse and sex work. They identified five problem behaviours that emerge in childhood that mediate the relationship between childhood maltreatment and involvement in sex work. They are early sexual initiation, running away from home, juvenile crime, school problems and early drug use.

2.2.2 Lifestyle Exposure Theory

The Lifestyle Exposure Theory (Gottredson & Garofalo, 1978) postulates that, demographic characteristics of young persons can be associated with the time they spend away from home in the absence of guardianship. The theory suggests that, the lifestyle of a child and the sort of activities they involve themselves in could predispose them to becoming victims of crime. The theory stipulates that when children either lack supervision due to poor parenting or run away from home due to exposure to violence, they can involve themselves in certain lifestyles that can predispose them to becoming victims of crime. Such lifestyles include frequenting night clubs and partying at night, which expose children to the influence of alcohol and other harmful substances. As a result, girls are put at a greater risk of being trafficked for involuntary prostitution.

The theory further assumes that children who are likely to be coerced into sex work live in poor and deprived informal settlements with deplorable conditions of living such as

overcrowding, poor sanitation and electricity, and an environment characterized by a culture of violence. This theory can be used to explain the characteristics as well as the drivers of child sex work.

2.2.3 Resilience Theory

The Resilience Theory (1987) on the other hand seeks to explain why children and adolescents are able to adapt and withstand traumatic and difficult life situations. Rutter (2006:2) defines resilience as “reduced vulnerability to environmental risk experiences, the overcoming of stress or adversity, or the relatively good outcome despite risk experiences”. One important feature of resilience is that “exposure to stresses or adversities may either increase vulnerabilities through a sensitization effect or decrease vulnerabilities through a steeling effect” (Rutter, 2012:337). The strengthening or steeling effect is what makes a child decide to continue engaging in sex work despite all the challenges associated with the trade. The Resilience Theory generally argues that the presence of one or more protective factors or “assets” can reduce the effects of exposure to adversity. The more protective factors a child or young person has, the more resilient they will be. Assets in this sense can be described as what the child personally owns and depends on. Younger sex workers may find it easier to obtain clients, charge high fees, or maintain the long hours and late nights required by their work compared to older women who may have more family responsibilities (Odek et al., 2009 cited in Busza et al., 2014: 86). They also have attractive bodies that can help them stay in business for a long time. These “assets” enable them stay in the trade despite the challenges they encounter.

A major similarity that permeates all the theories mentioned is the underlining principle that the home environment in which a child grows may contribute significantly to the child becoming delinquent or otherwise and invariably lead a child to the engagement in child sex work.

This study adopted, combined and modified all the three theories to guide the research. In conformity with the Eco Developmental Theory used by Wilson & Widom (2010) to investigate the drivers of child sex work, this study expects that abuse and neglectful behaviour on the part of caregivers can lead a child into engaging in sex work. However, the problem behaviours /drivers (early sexual initiation, running away, juvenile crime, school problems and drug abuse) identified by Wilson & Widom (2010) are slightly altered to suit the social, cultural and economic context of the study. The main drivers that will inform this study are: early sexual debut, running away from home, child poverty, early motherhood and school problems.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Wilson & Widom (2010) used the framework in Figure 2.1 to explain how childhood or adolescent behaviours resulting from childhood abuse and neglect can result in a child engaging in sex work.

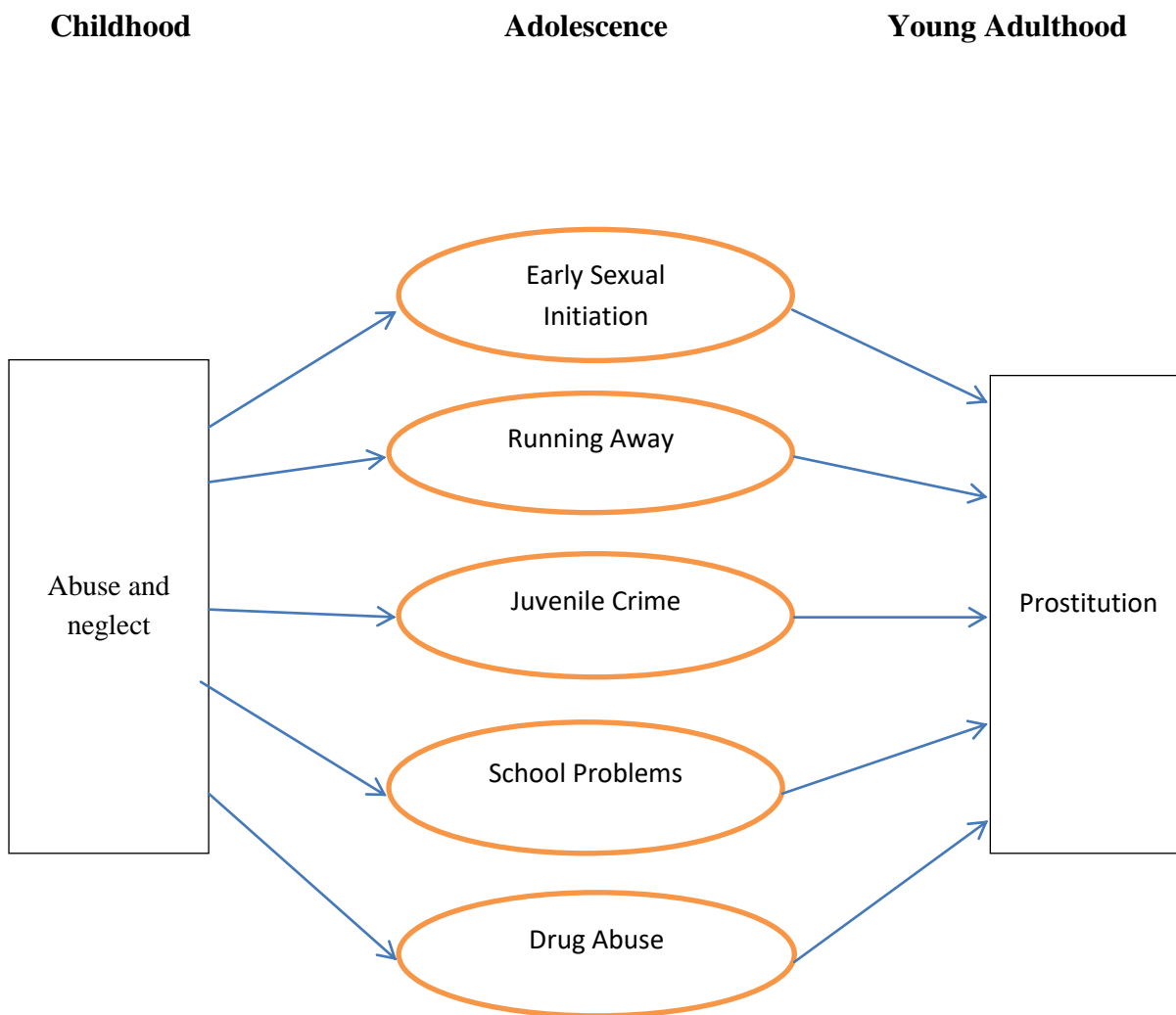


Figure 2. 1: Model linking childhood abuse and neglect to prostitution through five youth problem behaviours

Source: Wilson & Widom , 2010.

In conformity with the conceptual framework developed by Wilson & Widom (2010), this study adopts the conceptual framework of the two authors to explain the drivers of child sex work. In the process of trying to explain the various mediating variables, the characteristics of child sex workers will be unravelled together with how they cope with their trade. The issue of children engaging in sex work at an age (16 years) that is legally accepted by law in Ghana for children to have sex is also discussed. Figure 2.2 is the modified framework from Wilson & Widom (2010) used in this current study.

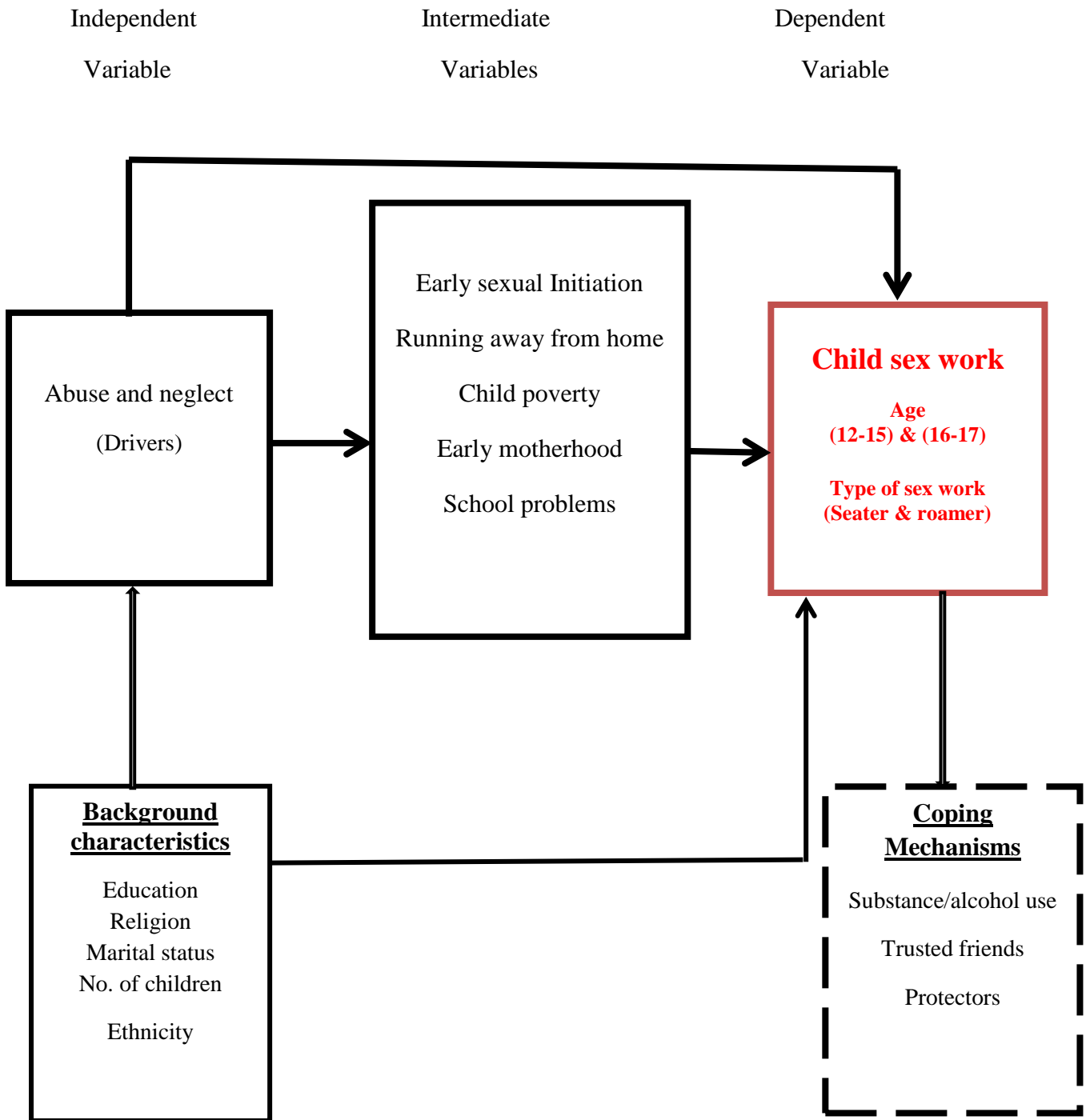


Figure 2. 2: Conceptual Framework showing drivers of child sex work and their coping mechanisms.

Source: Adapted from Wilson and Widom (2010)

The five mediating factors mentioned in figure 2.2 are not exhaustive. However, the choice of the factors mentioned is informed by literature and also influenced by the various theories that guide the research. According to Perrino et al., (2000 cited in Wilson & Widom, 2010:212), “Eco Developmental Theory suggests that, the evaluation of a single factor in isolation of related factors may overestimate its effects”. As a result, the study evaluated multiple pathways to the engagement of sex work by children. Figure 2.2 theorises that an abused and neglected child could experience any of the five mediating conditions either in isolation or in combination with others and this situation could eventually lead to the child engaging in sex work. The age of the child in this sense may influence what drives them into sex work and also what drives them may determine the type of sex work practiced. In order to be able to stay in the trade, the child adopts some effective coping mechanisms.

In Figure 2.2, neglect and abuse by caregivers can lead directly to a child becoming a sex worker. Neglect and abuse can also lead children into sex work by going through intermediary variables such as early sexual debut, running away from home, child poverty, early motherhood and problems in school that results in dropping out of school. Also, possessing certain background characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, marital status, education and the number of children one has may either directly or indirectly lead a child to become a sex worker.

According to literature, children in the sex industry are noted to face a lot of challenges (Busza et al., 2014: 86; Willis & Levy, 2002; Onyango et al., 2012; Pettifor et al., 2007). However, they continue to practise the trade despite the challenges they face. They are reported to adopt some coping strategies that help them to be able to withstand their challenges and still stay in the business; some of these strategies are the consumption of alcohol/use of drugs and relying on trusted friends and protectors.

CHAPTER THREE

Data and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodological procedures used in the study. A concurrent mixed methods approach was used in collecting data from the target population. The Respondent Driven data collection method was used in collecting quantitative data and in-depth interviews were used in the qualitative data collection. Data were collected from selected suburbs in the City of Accra where child sex workers could be located. Measurements used are discussed and variables and concepts are also defined and explained in this chapter. Statistical analyses and ethical considerations are also discussed in this chapter.

3.2 Sampling Design

Creswell & Clark (2007:5) describe mixed methods as “a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone”.

The use of this methodology offers the researcher a number of advantages. According to Bulsara (n.d), the variation in the process of data collection ensures greater validity and also ensures that questions are answered from various perspectives. It further helps to fill gaps in the data collection process and finally it is very useful when one methodology cannot provide all the information that the researcher needs.

3.3 Quantitative Method

The Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) data collection methodology was used in collecting the quantitative data. This method of data collection “has become a recognized as well as a viable option for rigorous sampling of hard-to-reach populations” (Johnston & Sabin, 2010:38-48). It was introduced by Douglas Heckathorn in 1997. It is generally used when the group under investigation is small relative to the general population, when there is no exhaustive list of population members, it is a stigmatized population, the population is rare, non-response rate could be high and finally when there is lack of trust on the part of the population being investigated. It is a process of chain referral sampling that makes use of primary and secondary incentives to collect data from hard-to-reach or invisible populations whose members form connected networks. Respondents are generally recruited with the help of organizations or projects that are already working in the community with the target population. The initial sample known as “seed” is the non-random selection of between 3-5 participants (Decker & Ramachandran, n.d.:12), who are normally recruited through organizations that work with the target population or existing peer outreach programmes (Johnston & Sabin, 2010). These participants are interviewed and made to understand the importance of the study. The selection of the seed is very important. One needs influential, respected and well-connected individuals because they initiate the chain referral system by each recruiting a fixed number of participants by using coupons specially designed for the purpose (Johnston & Sabin, 2010). Coupons are redeemed at a permanent location where interviews are conducted. The primary incentive is given when a participant avails herself for an interview and the secondary incentive is redeemed when the participant is able to recruit other participants. The process is continued until the sample is attained. The final sample is independent of the seeds, and when the sample reaches equilibrium, it includes all the variety of subgroups.

3.3.1 Procedure

Quantitative data for this study was collected in the City of Accra. In order to ensure a smooth process, two agencies (Prolink and ADRA) that work with sex workers were identified in the city.

Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Ghana and Prolink are non-governmental organizations that operate in various communities in the country. The main aim of Prolink is to empower disadvantaged persons especially children and girls to uphold their rights and improve their health, education and socio-economic status. ADRA on the other hand, implements projects in the following areas: food security and agriculture, primary health care among others.

The two organizations partnered to implement a global fund project to reduce new HIV infections and deaths among key populations. Their main focus was on female sex workers of all ages. They had drop-in-centres (DICs) where they tested the sex workers for HIV and STDs. They made referrals where necessary, sold condoms and lubricants at subsidized prices and offered counselling to female sex workers for free. They therefore had a very good relationship with the sex workers.

The offices of the agencies were used as the points of call for the CSWs. This helped a lot with the data collection because most of the girls already knew the DICs and also felt comfortable in the environment. The use of premises of the two agencies did not introduce bias to the study in any way; it rather enhanced the trust and relationship between the researcher and the children. It also helped with the recruitment of respondents in the right age brackets.

The methodology used also helped to reach a wider network of girls who did not benefit from the organizations. The project staff took advantage and enrolled some of these children on the counselling programme.

One of their offices at Agbobloshie was also used in training the field staff. A total of eight field workers were trained. Two out of the eight helped with mobilization whilst the remaining six helped the researcher to collect the data from the children. The training was organized and completed within two days.

On the first day, the researcher and the interviewers took turns in reading aloud questions from the questionnaire and explaining in both English and the local language (Twi) to the hearing of everyone. After this session, there was a question and answer time followed by mock interviews. The process of recruiting child sex workers by using the Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) method was explained and its importance emphasized.

On the second day of training, the field workers piloted the questionnaires in Tema New Town in the morning. In the afternoon of the same day, the field staff reported to the office at Agbobloshie for a debriefing. A few corrections were made to the questionnaire and also more clarifications were made based on the concerns and the challenges that the interviewers encountered in the field.

The two organizations that were used had offices known as Drop-In-Centers (DICs) in all the suburbs that sex workers can be located in Accra. Data were therefore collected at the DICs in the following suburbs in Accra: Agbobloshie, Konkomba market, Railways, Abuja, Madina, Okaishie, Druglane, Awoshie, Mangoase, Dome-Crossing, St Johns, Chorkor and Korlegonno. These locations were selected on the basis of the fact that they were places where CSWs were present in large numbers. By the use of the RDS method, the child sex worker was not encountered on the street; they were recruited through the agencies that

already work with them. With the help of the organizations, the “seeds” were selected in the various communities that child sex workers work. The children were educated on the relevance of the research and made to understand why it was important for them to participate in the project. The children were also made to understand that the research will be of great benefit to them in the long run since the outcome will inform policy. With this information they were asked to educate and encourage their peers to participate. They were then encouraged to direct all other child sex workers they recruited to the designated offices.

Trained research assistants were located in these offices to interview the child sex workers whenever they reported. A structured questionnaire was used in a face-to-face interview to collect data. Interviewers were trained to observe all the important and necessary rules employed during the interview such as asking the question as it is, not influencing the interviewee in any way, being polite and tolerant, etc. Before the interview, an oral assent was sought, and a participant advocate signed on behalf of the interviewee. After a child was successfully interviewed, the research assistant gave them a non-monetary incentive that was 30 male condoms and 25 sachets of lubricants as their primary incentive. They were given coupons and encouraged to bring between 3 to 5 friends to be interviewed as well. When respondents brought their friends, they automatically qualified to redeem the second incentive which was a face towel. These incentives were given out based on consultations with some sex workers, agencies that work with them and other stakeholders. According to Kendall, et al., (2008), one has to be cautious with incentives because too little will attract sex workers from a lower socio-economic background and giving too much could also attract people who are not sex workers, which could lead to either over or under-representation of the population.

Recruitment and interviewing of child sex workers continued until a sample size of 223 children was achieved. At this point, there were no new members to recruit, and also no new

information was being discovered. Out of the 223 respondents, three questionnaires were not used for analysis because interviews were half-complete. The children had clients and had to leave the interview to attend to them. They promised to return to complete the interviews but did not come back. The remaining 220 questionnaires were eventually used for the analysis.

3.4 Qualitative Method

In-depth interviews were used to collect qualitative data. These interviews were useful because, they offered the interviewer the special opportunity of providing details on behaviour, attitudes and motivation, thereby giving latitude for the researcher to expand their scope (UNICEF, 2009).

Semi-structured interview guides designed to elicit as much information as possible around the subject area was used to interview selected participants after quantitative interviews were conducted. These interviews were necessary because, qualitative studies offer the researcher the advantage of being able to understand the environment or culture within which a person lives (Belcher & Creswell, 1988 cited in Belcher & Herr, 2005:117). Questions can also be asked at the appropriate time and it can also be used to further understand and explain quantitative results (Janestick 2000 cited in Belcher & Herr 2005:117).

Ten child sex workers who were willing to be interviewed in-depth were interviewed after the quantitative data were collected. Five out of those selected had children and the other five did not have children. All in-depth interviews were carried out by the researcher in a private space. Seven of the interviews were audio-taped with the permission of the respondents. Notes were also taken as a back-up. Comprehensive notes were taken from respondents who did not want to be recorded. Their reasons for not wanting to be recorded were that they were afraid whatever they said might be played on some radio station. They

also felt that recorded interviews might be traced to them, although they were assured of confidentiality. Interviews were mostly conducted in Twi for the Ghanaian respondents. All of them spoke fluent Twi and some spoke Fante as well. English was used for the few non-Ghanaian respondents. All interviews were translated and transcribed verbatim to English. They were then typed out for analysis.

The purpose for the in-depth interviews was to help understand issues better and to offer more in-depth understanding to the child sex work phenomenon. It also offered explanations to causes of child sex work that are deep-rooted in socio-economic and some cultural contexts that might not be easily captured with the normal face-to-face interviews.

3.5 Measurement and Variables

Questions used in collecting data to measure the various variables were mostly borrowed from the Child Status Index (CSI) Manual. The tool was developed by *MEASURE Evaluation* at the Carolina Population Centre at the University of North Carolina as part of on-going efforts by US government agencies to improve the systematic assessment of the needs of children and their households. The Child Status Index was first made public in 2008 with the Manual and Field User's Guide appearing in July 2009. The CSI was designed as a simple, economical, yet comprehensive tool, organized around six dimensions pertaining to child welfare which could be used to collect data on/from children below the age of 18 on mainly welfare issues (CSI, 2010).

3.5.1 Definition of concepts

Abuse is any behaviour pattern that constitutes a child being physically, sexually or emotionally abused. Physical abuse in this research is described as a deliberate physical injury to a child or neglectful behaviour that results in injury to the child. Emotional abuse is a situation where the child is mistreated by caregivers, e.g, cursing and name-calling. On the

other hand, sexual abuse mainly occurred when a child is persuaded or forced to take part in sexual activities. Neglect is when a child is not provided the needed care and protection by parents or caregivers.

The concept of child poverty as a driver of child sex work is when a child describes herself as being poor because they do not have access to certain basic necessities in life. Some of these necessities are: housing, sufficient food and protective clothing. In this study, poverty is looked at objectively. Deprivation of food was the main basis of a child to be considered as poor. This is used because according to the hierarchy of needs propounded by Maslow (1943), one of the very basic necessities in everybody's life is food. The need for food is for physical survival. Human beings need food in order to survive. Therefore, if a child is deprived of this very basic necessity, then that child is considered as being poor. According to Maslow (1943), our need for physical survival to a large extent motivates our behaviour. If a child is deprived of a basic survival need such as food, this child can resort to any means to satisfy the need. Practising sex work to satisfy the basic need for survival, therefore, can become a very viable option for a hungry child who has been deprived of food.

Children who run away from home either leave home voluntarily or are thrown out of their homes for various reasons. This child is also living on her own or with her peers with no adult supervision (adult supervision in this sense excludes the supervision of a pimp or an adult sex worker).

Early motherhood in this situation is when the child sex worker delivered before the age of 18. Early sexual debut however, means the child had sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 16. The choice of this age was informed by the legal age for consensual sex in Ghana. School drop-out in this context is where the child has stopped going to school for some reason. A child sex worker in this study is any girl below the age of 18

years involved in trading sex. Coping mechanisms are the various strategies that the children adopt to be able to withstand the challenges they encountered in the course of their work.

3.5.2 Childhood abuse and neglect

Childhood abuse and neglect were assessed by self-report in response to various questions borrowed from the CSI module used in measuring the welfare of children. Questions relating to all the three main forms of abuse were asked. These questions were asked in retrospect to determine whether they suffered any kind of abuse prior to their joining the sex trade. Some of the measurements for abuse and neglect are as follows:

In the past (*before you started engaging in sex work*) did anyone in your family and living in your home:

- Push, Grab, or kick you?
- Burn or scald you, (including putting ginger or peppers in your anus)?
- Hit, beat, or spank you with a belt, paddle, a stick or other object?
- Scream at you very loud and aggressively?
- Call you names, say mean things or curse you?
- Threaten to leave you forever or abandon you?
- Make you look at their private parts or want to look at yours?
- Touch your private parts, or made you touch theirs?
- Try to have sex with you when you did not want them to?

3.5.3 Child Sex Work

Involvement in sex work was assessed by the fact that the initial seed that was selected to help with the recruitment of the child sex workers was a child who routinely patronized the activities of any of the agencies (Prolink and ADRA) that the researcher worked with and also these agencies had to confirm the identity of these children as sex

workers. Furthermore, after the “seed” was selected, subsequent respondents were interviewed based on the fact that they were recruited by fellow sex workers.

3.5.3.1 Consensual and non-consensual sex

A child as stated in chapter one is internationally defined as any person below the age of 18 years (CRC, 1998). Nonetheless, the age of consent for sexual debut in Ghana is 16 years. This means that children who are 16 and 17 years old can legitimately consent to sex although they are below the internationally accepted age for a child. Their counterparts who are below the age of 16 cannot do same.

This study therefore sought to separate these two groups of children in chapter six to help explore further the issues of CSW based on the legality to have sex as a child or not. Children within the age group of 12-15 were put in one group referred to in the study as young adolescents (YA) and those in the age group 16-17 were put in a second group referred to as old adolescents (OA). These two groups were further compared to find out whether there are any relationships.

3.5.3.2 Seater and roamer type of sex work

As indicated in chapter two, predominately, two main types of sex work exist in Ghana, the seaters and the roamers. This study further investigated what determines the practice of a particular type of sex work among the respondents.

3.5.4 Mediating Factors

Five main factors were identified in the literature as drivers of child sex work. These factors are early sexual debut, running away from home, child poverty, early motherhood and school problems. They were all measured by self-reporting. Questions assessing the various mediating factors were borrowed from the Child Status Index (CSI) Manual.

3.6 Statistical Analyses

3.6.1 Quantitative Data

Univariate analysis was used to discuss the demographic information. This helped in obtaining descriptive information on child sex workers. However, it was not helpful with identifying the real underlying causes of child sex work which is crucial for the understanding of the problem being investigated.

Bivariate relationships helped to understand whether there was a relationship between any two variables and the strengths of these relationships. Therefore, investigations were made to ascertain the probable variation between two age groups. The young adolescent (YA) age group (12-15) and the old adolescent (OA) age group (16-17).

Further investigations were carried out to explore what determines the practice of a particular type of sex work among the respondents. A binary logistic regression was used to assess the relative importance of the selected variables. The dependent variable is dichotomous categorizing the type of child sex work into two. The target group is the roamer and are coded "1" while the other category (the Seater) is coded "0". The result of the regression analysis is summarised in a Table under the parameters: Co-efficient (B), Standard Error (S.E.), Significance (Sig), and the Odds Ratio (Exp(B)). If the Odds ratio is greater than one, it implies the probability of being a roamer is higher than that of being a Seater. Values under Sig that are lower than or equal to 0.05 are considered significant at 95% confidence level.

According to Busza et al., (2014), it is important to carefully examine and interpret the existing relationships. The pitfall of using only quantitative methods is that some of the deep causes of child sex work are rooted in cultural or socio-economic contexts, and the methods that these children adopt to be able to cope with the challenges of their trade may not be captured. These pitfalls were addressed by employing qualitative research methods.

Qualitative data were useful in this instance to further explain the deep-rooted causes and the coping mechanisms that the children used. Qualitative data were employed to explore individual narratives, perceptions and analysis of their own experiences in detail.

3.6.2 Qualitative Data

Audio-taped in-depth interviews were translated and transcribed verbatim in English to enable the information to be analyzed. Thematic analyses method was used to analyse the data. This is a process of identifying, examining and recording patterns or themes in the data. These themes are important and interesting issues that helped with addressing the research questions. In this work, two broad issues were analyzed qualitatively. They were challenges faced by CSWs and their coping mechanisms. Under the challenges faced, there were six sub-themes, which were abuse, economic/financial, social/societal, health, security and motherhood challenges. Under the broad theme of coping mechanisms, the following sub-themes emerged: Abuse reduction, use of drugs and alcohol, belief in the supernatural, coping with economic/financial challenges, good social support, safeguarding techniques and coping with health challenges. Processing the data into themes helps the researcher to move beyond merely describing issues, but rather helps to do a thorough and rigorous analysis of the issues presented in the data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Approval of the research was obtained from the University of Ghana Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH). The objectives, purpose of study and the voluntary nature of the study were clearly spelt out in the proposal. During the pilot survey, it was realized that the children were very reluctant to sign the assent form because they were not comfortable with it. Some were suspicious whilst others were embarrassed about their inability to read and write. Most of them preferred to give oral assent. This was sought with the aid of a staff of the agency that provided the “seed” acting as their participant advocate and signing on their behalf.

3.8 Limitations

The first potential limitation is related to the issue of self-reporting in the face-to-face interview on sensitive questions. The sensitivity of the study might have made some respondents withhold relevant information regarding their experiences. Furthermore, the possible misreporting of their ages due to the lack of knowledge of their correct ages was a concern. Although they were all obviously in the adolescent age group, some were uneducated and most of them were out of school so a few were not very sure of the ages they reported.

The second potential limitation is related to the non-monetary incentives given to the respondents. This may have attracted some sex workers who probably did not fall within the age bracket under investigation.

The final potential limitation of the study is the nature of the data collected, which puts some limitation on the statistical analysis that could have been done. In finding out the challenges of CSWs and their coping mechanisms, it was observed that the study would have been further enhanced and more interesting if girls of similar ages who are not sex workers had been included. If that had been done, further statistical analysis could have been done to bring out more strongly the factors that drive children into sex work. This observation will form an aspect for further studies on the issues of CSW as recommended in chapter 8.

CHAPTER FOUR

Characteristics of Child Sex Workers

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the characteristics of CSWs by using observation, measures of central tendency and univariate descriptive statistics to describe the socio-demographic characteristics, living arrangements and migration status of respondents. It also describes fertility, work-related and contextual issues related to child sex workers in Accra. The descriptions are largely based on primary data that were collected by the researcher.

4.2 Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 4.1 presents a distribution of socio-demographic characteristics of CSWs in Accra. The table shows that majority (82.3%) of the CSWs fall within age 15-17 years. There appears to be a positive relationship between age and number of sex workers. It can be appreciated that sex work is a difficult work for any woman whether old or young, and this is backed by studies (Sloss & Harper, 2004; Semple et al., 2015; Jeffereys, 2000; Rekart, 2005; Rössler et al., 2010). Certain circumstances drive women into the trade; this observation goes to confirm that minors within age 10-14 years will find it even more difficult to get into the trade than their older counterparts. Approximately seven out of ten CSWs are Christians. This is in conformity with the fact that Christianity is the dominant religion in Ghana. This is further supported by a study undertaken by WAPCAS (2005) in Accra and Tema on CSW, which revealed that 78 percent of all the respondents indicated they were Christians. Although 50 percent of respondents in the in-depth study indicated that they are Christians, only one person reported that she attended church regularly. Reasons given for not attending church suggest that CSWs do not feel comfortable about the work they do, and, therefore, are not comfortable to attend church. A 16-year-old girl from Konkomba market indicated that,

“I’m a Christian, but I don’t go to church again, because I don’t think I will feel fine in the church. I know what I do is wrong in the sight of God”.

Another 17-year-old at Konkomba market indicated that,

“The moment I stop this work (sex work), I will go back to church. I was in the Methodist Church when I left home. I know that what I am doing is not right, it makes me feel very guilty”.

Table 4. 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of CSWs in Accra.

Characteristics	Number (n=220)	Percent
Age		
12	2	0.9
13	8	3.6
14	29	13.2
15	58	26.4
16	63	28.6
17	60	27.3
Religion		
Christian	160	72.7
Muslim	56	25.5
Traditional	3	1.4
Other	1	0.5
Marital Status		
Married	2	0.9
Never Married	201	91.4
Divorced	6	2.7
Widowed	1	0.5
Co-habiting	10	4.5
Ethnicity		
Akan	99	45.0
Ga	27	12.3
Ewe	35	15.9
Mole Dagbani	27	12.3
Other (Ghanaian)	18	8.1
Other (Non-Ghanaian)	14	6.4
Ever had a child		
Yes	35	15.9
No	185	84.1
Education		
Never attended school	25	11.4
Left school	191	86.8
Currently attending school	4	1.8

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

A little over a quarter (25.5%) are Muslims with traditional and other religions accounting for 1.9 percent. An overwhelming majority (91.4%) have never married. This

could be due to the illegality of child marriage in Ghana or their sex work activities. It has also been reported by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection & UNICEF (2014) that the main reason for child marriage in Ghana is poverty and economic hardships. It could be inferred that once a child starts selling sex, that child is earning some form of income and therefore has no need to get married to resolve economic hardships or overcome poverty. Less than two percent (1.4%) of the CSWs are either married or widowed, while 4.5 percent are cohabiting. Divorcees account for 2.7 percent.

Majority (84.1%) of the CSWs do not have children. Out of 15.9 percent of those who have children, only 0.9 percent have two children, all the others have one child each. As expected, Akans being the largest ethnic group in Ghana accounted for close to half (45.0%) of the respondents, dominating the population of CSWs in Accra. Ewes followed with 15.9 percent. In the Volta Region, it is reported that “there are several cases of children in rural and urban areas who have been orphaned and abandoned by relatives who are not prepared to foster them” (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014:5). Possibly, these children try to fend for themselves by migrating to Accra to work. Gas and the Mole-Dagbanis accounted for 12.3 percent each, while other ethnic groups put together accounted for 14.5 percent. The indigenes of Accra, where the research was undertaken, the ‘Gas’ were comparatively fewer (12.3%) compared to other Ghanaian migrants put together (81.3%). This supports the fact that due to stigmatization, anonymity through migration is an important prerequisite to engaging in sex work in general (Scorgie et al., 2012; Van, 2007; Anarfi, 1993).

4.3 Schooling status

Generally, CSWs have low educational status, as supported by a number of studies (Onyango et al., 2012; Ministry of Gender, 2004; WAPCAS, 2005; Scorgie et al., 2012). Table 4.1 shows that approximately nine out of ten CSWs are school drop-outs with only 1.8 percent currently in school; the remaining never attended school. These findings and the WAPCAS (2006) studies, are in conformity with other studies on traditional sex workers, where poor women with no or limited education are highly represented in the sex trade as is the case in Indonesia (Hull et al., 1999).

Explaining why they did not go to school, (Table 4.2) a little over a third (32%) of CSWs stated reasons such as, being sick, orphaned and the cost of education being too expensive. More than half (56%), however, indicated that they do not know why they never attended school.

It is worth noting that an overwhelming majority of CSWS (86.0%) ever attempted schooling but left at a point. This has implications for policy aimed at retaining the girl-child in school, as it impacts on CSW. Among the reasons for dropping out-of-school is poor academic performance and lack of interest in school, which accounted for almost half (48.2%) of the responses. These two reasons are closely related and impact on each other; loss of interest could be as a result of poor performance and vice versa. It could also result from the quality of teaching.

Table 4.2 : Reasons for never attending school and dropping out of school.

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Never attended		
Sick	2	8
Orphaned	4	16
Cost	2	8
Don't know	14	56
No response	3	12
Total	25	100
Reasons for in-complete schooling		
Pregnancy	31	16.2
Poor academic performance	50	26.2
Cost	38	19.9
Orphaned	11	5.8
Sacked/suspended/maltreated/ loss of interest in school	42	22.0
Wanted to work	6	3.1
To help at home/take care of the sick	7	3.7
Others (relocated, school too far, completed desired level, disability)	4	2.1
No response	2	1.0
Total	191	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

4.4 Living arrangements and migration status.

To ascertain conditions under which the children lived prior to engaging in sex work, which could probably help explain what drives them into sex work, there was the need to determine their migration status. Questions were asked to elicit responses about how and where they lived prior to engaging in sex work and whether they migrated to ply their trade or started it at their original places of residence.

4.4.1 Current residence

In Table 4.3, it can be observed that seven out of ten CSWs live at Agbobloshie and Konkomba market, Abuja and CMB or Railways suburbs in Accra. This is a large area within Accra Central that has very similar characteristics and living conditions. These communities are close and within walking distance from each other. They are slum communities characterized by containers and wooden structures that serve as homes for the residents in the

area. They have poor sanitation conditions, unprofessional and dangerous looking electrical connections and are generally overcrowded. Housing is relatively cheap and social amenities are either non-existent or in poor condition. These living conditions are similar to descriptions given by other authors as conditions under which sex workers generally live (Willis & Levy, 2002; Gangoli, 2002).

Table 4.3: Current residence of CSWs.

Characteristics	Number (n=220)	Percent
Current Residence		
Railways	38	17.3
Agbobloshie and Konkomba Market	100	45.5
Abuja and CMB	17	7.7
Madina	21	9.5
Dome crossing and St Johns	29	13.2
Okaishie and druglane	11	5.0
Awoshie and Mangoase	2	0.9
Chorkor and Korlegonno	2	0.9

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Almost half (45.5%) of CSWs reside in Agbobloshie and Konkomba market. This is because these two communities have some of the largest bus terminals, and the two together are the largest slum in the City of Accra. Sex work is said to thrive in such areas because of the demand by truck drivers (Trotter, 2000). CSWs are likely to secure a lot of clientele from these areas. The two communities also have some of the largest and oldest brothels in the city. “Brazil”, “Efo bar” and “The young shall grow” are brothels which accommodate many sex workers within these two communities. Brazil is the largest, oldest and most expensive brothel in the community. It has over forty rooms (there is ongoing expansion work for more rooms to be created), and has been in existence for over thirty years. It is occupied by Nigerian sex workers of all ages. Occupants pay one hundred and five Ghana cedis (about \$20) per week as rent. For the average CSW, this fee is very expensive; however, the researcher was informed that the Nigerian female sex workers can afford it because they make more money than their Ghanaian counterparts. This is because, it is reported that the

Nigerian women pamper their clients. They allow themselves to be kissed and allow some time for foreplay before sex. The men therefore prefer them to their Ghanaian counterparts. The Ghanaians see sex work as strictly business and have impersonal approach to it; they only have sex and take their money.

“Efo bar” is very close to “Brazil” and the brothel has about thirty rooms. The ground floor is made of cement blocks, and the top floor is made of wood. It is occupied by Ghanaian sex workers of all ages who pay forty Ghana cedis (\$8) a week for rent.

“The young shall grow”, is an exceptionally busy and vibrant place. It is a one-storey building with the rooms on the top floor and a drinking bar with a dance hall on the ground floor. Different types of drugs are sold and consumed openly at the place. Residents pay 40 to 45 Ghana cedis (\$8 -\$9) weekly depending on the size of the room. Behind the brothel is a big seater community where some of the girls have rented rooms for an amount ranging from 40 to 50 cedis (\$8-\$10) per week. These rooms are mostly small wooden structures or metal containers.

All the CSWs use privately owned shared bathrooms and toilets that are easily located in the communities. They pay one Ghana cedi to use the shower or to have a bucket of water to bathe, and 50 pesewas to use the toilet. CSWs are at liberty to cook in their rooms, and pay a flat rate of 10 cedis (\$2) per month for the use of electricity.

It was observed that there was a cordial relationship between the older sex workers and the CSWs. The children relied on their older counterparts for counselling, the resolution of conflicts and other issues. However, it was also noted that the older ones felt threatened practising the trade in the same environment with the younger ones. This is because most clients preferred the young girls to their older counterparts, and this at times brought about misunderstanding that lead to quarrels and fights in their community.

Adjacent to “Efo bar” and close to “Brazil” is a day care centre for children called “Showers of Blessings School”. This school keeps the children while their mothers work or take a rest. The children in the school are not the children of sex workers only. The school opens from 7am to 8pm and is situated in a single room with about sixty children aged between two and seven years. Some children spend the night with the owner if their mothers do not come for them due to the nature of their work. The school has a few toys, some posters on the wall and one small television set that is on throughout the day. The children are fed once a day with the support of a local NGO. Parents and guardians pay two cedis a day for the upkeep of their children.

Madina, Dome Crossing and St. Johns are residential areas within the city of Accra. There are certain areas within these communities that are noted for the practice of sex work. At Madina, around the “fire service” area, there are a number of kiosks and wooden structures, which are already furnished with student mattresses. These facilities are only rented out to sex workers for thirty Ghana cedis (\$6) a day.

At Dome Crossing, there is a small brothel that sex workers use; it does not necessarily have a name. At St. Johns, most clients pick the CSWs on the street and take them to an agreed destination.

4.4.2 Residence before migration

Table 4.4 shows that an overwhelming majority (97.3%) of CSWs migrated from elsewhere to ply their trade at their present location. This goes to confirm the assertion that sex workers never ply their trade in their hometowns to avoid stigmatization (Van, 2007; Mikhail, 2002; Onyango et al., 2012; Anarfi, 1993). In total, 75.9 percent migrated from other regions in Ghana, while 15 percent migrated from within the Greater Accra Region.

Migrants from other neighbouring West African countries (Nigeria, Togo and Mali) constituted 6.4 percent of the respondents. Only 2.7 percent of CSWs have never migrated.

Table 4.4: Living arrangement and migration status of CSWs in Accra.

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Residence before migration		
Never moved	6	2.7
Same Region (Greater Accra)	33	15.0
Ashanti Region	41	18.6
Central Region	16	7.3
Western Region	15	6.8
Eastern Region	23	10.5
Brong Ahafo Region	5	2.3
Northern Region	32	14.5
Upper East Region	7	3.2
Upper West Region	2	0.9
Volta Region	26	11.8
Non-Ghanaian	14	6.4
Total	220	100
Living arrangement before migrating		
Both parents	44	20.6
Father (alone)	44	20.6
Mother (alone)	40	18.7
Myself	2	0.9
Employer	5	2.3
Grandparents	42	19.6
Friend/workmate	1	0.5
Other relative	28	13.1
Stepmother	8	3.7
Total	214	100
Current living arrangement		
Myself	50	23.5
Employer	19	8.9
Friend/workmate	126	59.1
Other relative	8	3.8
Boyfriend	10	4.7
Total	213	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

4.4.3 Living arrangement before migration

Before migrating to their present location, one out of five CSWs lived with both biological parents whilst two out of five lived with either their father or mother only. All

together 59.9 percent of CSWs lived with either both parents or one single parent. This figure is lower compared to the national average of about 80 percent of children in Ghana living with at least one biological parent, and almost half living with both parents (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014:4; GSS, 2006). Living with grandparents, other relatives and stepmother account for 36.4 percent. This means that about 96 percent of CSWs before migrating lived with a family member or relative. It can therefore be inferred that not living with a family member or relative does not necessarily predispose a child to becoming a sex worker, rather some other factors within the family context are responsible for children getting into sex work. Factors such as abuse and neglect within the family can predispose children to becoming sex workers. Numerous studies support this fact (Wilson & Widom, 2010; Agnew, 2004, 2005a, 2006 cited in Reid, 2010; Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014; Willis & Levy, 2002; Hounmenou's ,2016; Sarafini, 2012).

4.4.4 Current living arrangement

Currently, more than half (59.1%) of the CSWs live with a work mate or friend. This depicts the element of peer pressure and its concomitant luring into CSW. Almost a quarter (23.5%) live by themselves.

4.5 Fertility and reproductive health issues

To generate data on the fertility and other related reproductive health issues, questions were asked about the number of children they have and other fertility related issues such as abortion, contraceptive use, knowledge on STIs and their health seeking behaviour. The results are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Fertility and reproductive health issues

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Number of children		
One child	33	15.0
Two children	2	0.9
None	185	84.1
Total	220	100
Abortion		
Never	130	59.1
Once	70	31.8
Twice	15	6.8
More than twice	2	0.9
No response	3	1.4
Total	220	100
Contraception		
Condoms	152	69.1
Pills	57	25.9
Others	11	5.0
Total	220	100
Sexually Transmitted Infections		
Awareness of STI	202	91.8
Condoms use to prevent STIs	204	92.7
Ever suffered from an STI	112	50.9
Ever taken an HIV test	135	61.4
Health Seeking behavior		
Chemical shops	77	68.8
Traditional healers	15	13.4
Hospital/Clinics	16	14.6
Others	4	3.2
Total	112	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

4.5.1 Child birth

From Table 4.5, it can be observed that on the whole, 15.9 percent of CSWs have at least one child. This is indicative of the fact that these children had unprotected sex. Information gathered during the qualitative data collection indicated that all (five) child mothers involved in the qualitative study had their children before they started selling sex. This implies early sexual debut resulting in single motherhood which has implications for CSW (O'Donnell, 2002).

4.5.2 Abortion

On the issue of abortion, 31.8 percent reported that they have had abortion once since they began practising sex work, with 6.8 percent indicating they had aborted twice and 0.9 percent reported more than twice (Table 4.5). Although 59.1 percent have never had an abortion, cumulatively nearly 40 percent (39.5%) have ever had an abortion. This is worrying taking into consideration the kind of dangers that these children expose themselves to if these abortions are not done by specialised persons. Any complications during the process can lead to health problems. In India, a study reported that, young sex workers encounter early pregnancies and frequent abortions by quacks or unqualified medical practitioners which lead to a range of gynaecological problems (Gangoli, 2002).

4.5.3 Contraception

Table 4.5 shows that 95 percent of respondents use some kind of contraception; the pill or condoms. Further discussions to find out what kind of pills or condoms they used did not yield any results since the children did not know the names/brands of the products they used. It was discovered that they buy the pills from the chemical shops and mostly depended on the NGOs that worked with them in the areas of reproductive health for their supply of condoms and lubricants. The others which constitute five percent claimed they do not use any contraception except for one person who mentioned the rhythm method.

4.5.4 Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

Though half (51%) have ever had an STI, knowledge of STI is very high at 92 percent reflecting in same percentage patronising condoms as a means of STI prevention. A study in Uganda reported 94 percent of children in sex work having knowledge on a disease that can be transmitted through sex (Ministry of Gender, 2004). However, it was reported during the in-depth interview that some clients offered more money for the non-use of condoms, while

other clients become violent when sex workers insisted on the use of condoms. A 15-year-old from Agbobloshie indicated that,

“Some of them (clients) obviously look like they have some diseases, but they still want to have unprotected sex. They even offer more money to have unprotected sex with you”.

Another 17-year-old at the Konkomba market also reported that,

“Some of the men want to have sex with you without condom, when you refuse, they become angry and start insulting you. If you are not careful, they will even beat you up”.

These narratives could account for the observed 51 percent of respondents ever having STI despite their high knowledge. In a study in the U.S, similar findings were observed; 47 percent of women in sex work stated that men expected sex without a condom; 73 percent reported that men offered to pay more for sex without a condom; and 45 percent of women said that men became abusive if they insisted that they use condoms (Raymond et al, 2001:72). This situation compromises the health of sex workers as can be deduced from every other respondent (51%) having ever suffered an STI in Table 4.5. In this study, the significant level of knowledge on STIs could be said to have impacted the willingness of respondents to have taken HIV test at 61.4 percent.

4.5.5 Health seeking behaviour

Many sex workers are reluctant to access health care due to stigmatisation (Spice 2007:325 ; Onyango et al., 2012; ILO, n.d.), and the findings of this study affirms this assertion. Only about 15 percent seek treatment at hospital/clinic while majority (69%) buy off the counter drugs at the chemist in their localities. In India, sex workers complained that in public hospitals, doctors and staff treat them badly immediately they get to know that they were sex workers (Gangoli, 2002). This reflects 82 percent of respondents not patronising hospitals/clinics in this study. This behaviour poses as a danger to the wellbeing of the children. Relying on chemical shops implies they are either self-medicating or relying on

attendants in these shops to prescribe medicines for them. It was noted in the in-depth interview session that in the event of unplanned pregnancies, they visit some of these chemical shops to buy medicines to abort pregnancies. This can result in a number of health complications for the child. A 15-year-old from Agbobloshie reported that,

“.....you can easily get pregnant, it happened to me oncemy friends took me to a drug store and we bought some medicine. I inserted it and the next day my period came, I don't know the name of the medicine”.

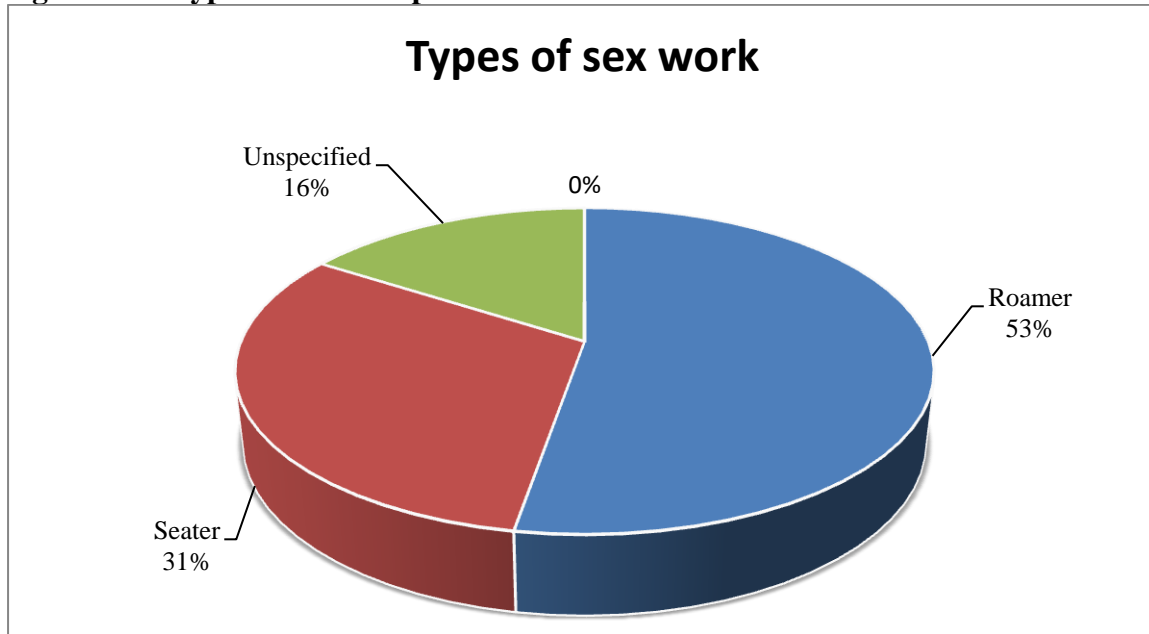
It can be inferred that the health seeking behaviour of CSWs in Accra is poor. However, it was observed through the interaction with the NGOs that recruited the CSWs that, they have a lot of confidence in the services of the NGOs that work with them. Their services include counselling, provision of condoms and lubricants.

4.6 Work and other contextual issues

This section discusses the type of sex work practised by the CSWs and other contextual issues such as their clients, earnings and duration in sex work practice.

4.6.1 Type of sex work practiced and how CSWs secure their clients

Figure 4.1 indicates that 53 percent of CSWs in Accra practise the roamer type of sex work, 31 percent practise the seater type while 16 percent practise other types of sex work.

Figure 4. 1: Type of sex work practised

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

In Ghana, the seater type of sex work has been described by Khonde and Asamoah-Adu (2000) as involving women who are relatively older compared to the roamers. They are mostly 35 years and above and admit to practising sex work and consider it as their profession. They often live in groups at specific places in the city and are a very well organised group. They have leadership positions such as elders, advisors, linguists or “Okyeame” and others. The queen mother is usually the leader of the group and there are rules and regulations that bind the members. Violating rules, regulations and misbehaviour such as fighting, quarrelling, etc, attracts some kind of penalty or a fine. Seaters contribute financially to help members in times of need such as when members are sick or bereaved. Their socio-economic status is low, which is not only one of the main reasons for their entering into the sex trade, but also what keeps them in it.

Roamers are usually a larger and unorganised group; they are younger and have not been in the trade for too long as compared to the seaters. They include women who admit to being sex workers and those who practise the trade but deny being sex workers. Some are full time workers whilst others have other jobs, but practise sex work to supplement their income.

They mostly ply their trade by roaming the streets to solicit clients. They do not have permanent places but move based on where they think they can get clients. Their modus operandi is identical to what some authors refer to as street walking or street prostitution (Fuchs, 2013; Harcourt & Donovan, 2005; Semple et al., 2015). Semple et al., (2015) have described this type of sex work as dangerous because anybody can pick them, take them anywhere and do with them as they please.

Sixteen percent of the respondents were not clear on exactly what they practised. Some of them mentioned that they got their clients through phone calls, pimps and friends. Others also practised both types of sex work. It appeared they were ready to do anything to get themselves clients.

In figure 4.1, about one-third (31.0%) indicated that they entertained their clients in their homes. A home in this context is either in the brothel or in a rented place that is situated in a seater community within Agbobloshie and Konkomba Market.

Brothels are normally buildings that house sex workers of all ages. Some are run by the owners of the buildings who pay the CSWs based on some agreed terms. There are some brothels that are rented out to sex workers who pay fees at certain times to the owner of the facility. They look for their own clients and ply their trade independent of the owner of the facility; this is the type that is practiced in the study areas. The owner of the brothel has some rules and regulations regarding the occupancy of the facility, but not the work the occupant is involved in.

CSWs reported that clients visit them in their homes for services to be rendered. This submission by these young sex workers is contrary to the usual practice of sex work in Ghana. Literature indicates that normally young sex workers only practise the roamer type of sex work, while the older sex workers (over 35 years) are usually seaters (Khonde &

Asamoah-Adu, 2000; WAPCAS, 2006). This finding suggests that younger sex workers are also practising the seater type of sex work in some parts of Accra. This situation could result from a number of reasons. It could be that CSWs probably appreciate the dangers associated with the roamer type of sex work, and therefore are trying to stay safe by practising the seater type of sex work. It could also be due to the stiff competition that is associated with the roamer type and could also be that knowing that they are minors; they avoid the streets to prevent being apprehended by the police. The children reported during the in-depth interview session that; many girls have joined the trade which has resulted in difficulty in securing clients. It is worth noting that this category of seaters does not strictly fit into all the characteristics that the traditional seater groups have. For instance, they do not form a recognised association with offices and they do not pay dues or make contributions towards their welfare. They only sit at one place, either the brothel or their home to wait for their clients to visit.

More than half (53%) of the respondents of this study, fall in the category of roamers also referred to as street walkers or street prostitutes. These are those who indicated that they secure their clients on the streets and from loitering in bars, restaurants and other places that they think they can solicit clients. They usually move around in search of clients. As already indicated, roamers are generally youthful and therefore CSWs are expected to practise this kind of sex work.

Table 4. 6: How CSWs solicit their clients.

Variable (Location)	Number (n=220)	Percent (%)
At home	69	31.4
On the street/anywhere	76	34.5
At restaurants/bars/lodges/etc	40	18.2
Phone contacts	19	8.6
Pimp/Brokers	2	0.9
Friends	14	6.4
Total	220	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

There are about nine percent who get their clients through phone contacts. This shows how technology has influenced the sex trade in Ghana. This is a novelty compared to what literature says about the mode of client solicitation in the past. Mobile phones were not that common in Ghana. Presently, mobile phones are everywhere and generally affordable, so these children use them to enhance their business.

Hesselink-Lauw et al., (2004:355) describe pimping as a process of recruiting and persuading a woman or a girl to make her body available to men for sexual activities or prostitution. Pimps, also known as brokers in some circles are mostly men; they are usually the intermediaries who help the girls to secure clients, and they benefit by taking a percentage of what the client pays for service rendered. Some studies report that they can abuse sex workers and also cheat them out of their earnings (Farley et al., 2005; Farley, 2018). It has also been reported that eighty percent of sex workers interviewed in a study had suffered physical violence from pimps and buyers and endured similar and multiple health effects from the violence and sexual exploitation (Raymond et al., 2002). Pimps often exercise some control over the women they work with. According to Scorgio et al., (2012), in places such as Asia, where sex work is formal and accepted, pimps are usually managers and controllers; they have contracts with sex workers stipulating what percentage of their fees goes to them. In such cases, the fees may also cover rent, protection and the supply of drugs. In this study,

only one percent of CSWs indicated that they use pimps. This finding suggests that pimping is not very common among CSWs in Accra. It also supports earlier works by Scorgio et al., (2012) which indicates that in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), female sex workers do not often use intermediaries. They prefer to accept money directly from their clients after service is rendered. This arrangement gives the girls some control over the money they earn, and also gives them some kind of autonomy, which prevents them from being abused and maltreated by controllers of the trade. In West Africa, pimping is reported to be common in Nigeria (Godin et al., 2008).

Those who relied on friends for clients accounted for 6.4 percent. During the in-depth interviews, the children explained that there were instances where a friend can have more than one client at a time. Under such circumstances, you can be introduced to work with one of the clients to prevent the client from waiting or leaving. When this happens, you are obligated to give the friend who passed on their client to you a percentage of the money that you earn. There is no fixed amount, the two friends will have to decide on the amount once service is rendered and the fee is paid by the client. If the person who passed on their client to you is a good friend, she may not take any money from you, but you may have to reciprocate the gesture whenever the opportunity presented itself. For those who have just started sex work, it is difficult for them to solicit clients. Their friends, therefore, introduce them to clients.

4.6.2 Clients of CSWs

Table 4.7 indicates that on a typical day, a CSW can have an average of 4-6 clients, a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 10. Majority (70.5%) have an average of 4-6 clients in a day. It should however be noted that there are days that the CSWs do not get any clients at all. This is one of the major challenges reported during the in-depth interviews. A 16-year-old respondent from the Konkomba market indicated that,

“There are days that you hardly get any one” (CM6; 16years; Konkomba market)

The number of clients they can have in a day is influenced by the duration of a sex act. Spending the whole night with one client, which is commonly known as “sleep” means having fewer clients. The CSW might only serve one client, with an added advantage of having some time to sleep because sex does not go on throughout the night. They also have “short”; this is having sex with a client anytime between five to ten minutes. If a CSW is able to have a couple of “short” sessions throughout the night and a few during the day, she is likely to have a lot of clients in a day. All these durations attract different fees. Research has shown that high volumes of clients over relatively short periods are linked to high levels of STI and other poor health outcomes (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005).

Table 4.7: Clients per day

Variable (Clients)	Number (n=220)	Percent (%)
2	3	1.4
3	16	7.3
4	67	30.5
5	61	27.7
6	27	12.3
7	5	2.3
8	10	4.5
9	5	2.3
10	9	4.1
No response	17	7.9
Total	220	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

It was observed in the field that the clients of the CSWs were predominantly the low-income earners in society. This could be due to the fact that most of the areas where the data were collected are slum communities within the capital city of Accra. When respondents were asked about the calibre of people who patronised their services, a 15-year-old sex worker at Agbobloshie stated that;

“Most of the boys we have sex with are thieves, they do not do any work. They go out and steal things from people and come to sell. We all know, but we are also working for money so we cannot say anything”.

They also reported in their interviews that some clients borrow sex and pay at a later date. This submission also goes to support the finding that the children patronise clients who belong to the lower socio-economic status. A few of them mentioned drivers and drivers' mates as their clients.

4.6.3 Earnings of CSWs

The study discovered that on a day that their services were highly patronised, a CSW could earn an average of 108.39 cedis (\$27). This amount is obviously high for children of such little or no education, especially as it is about ten times higher than the minimum wage of a worker in Ghana. In Kenya, the average worker earns four Euros a day; however, a 16-year-old sex worker earns about twenty Euros a day (Busuttil, 2011). Such high earning is obviously a good motivation for children who are not in CSW and struggling to survive on their own to be lured into the sex trade. The highest amount the CSWs earn in a day is 300 cedis (\$60), and the least is 10 cedis (\$2). According to Konde and Asamoah-Adu (2000), earnings differ significantly based on age, looks, quality of clothes, level of education, meeting place, type of customer, type of sexual intercourse and duration of intercourse. In this study, sex workers reported that for a short session of sex, they charge 10 cedis (\$2). When the client takes her home and spends the whole night with her, she can earn from 100 cedis (\$20) to 200 cedis (\$40) depending on the calibre of client and where she gets the client from. Although these are the typical rates, when securing clients becomes very difficult, they are forced to charge cheaper rates. Some CSWs in Konkomba market and Agbobloshie indicated that they do not patronise clients in their neighbourhood because they are rough (violent) with them, and do not pay after service is rendered. They said going out to restaurants and clubs around Circle and Accra Post Office areas gives them the opportunity to

meet clients who can afford to give them more money. Despite that, some also maintained that, they render services to the rough boys whenever they were in dire need of money or when they lacked clients.

Table 4.8 presents the earnings of CSWs per day. It can be observed that 43.6 percent of the respondents earn 100 -149 cedis (\$20 - 30) a day. Significantly fewer CSWs (8.2% and 6.0%) earn less than 50 cedis (\$10) and more than 200 cedis (\$50) a day respectively. Majority (72%) earn approximately 50 – 149 cedis per day.

Table 4.8: Earnings of CSWs per day and mode of payment.

Variable	Number (n=220)	Percent (%)
Earnings per day		
Less than 50 cedis	18	8.2
50-99	62	28.2
100-149	96	43.6
150-199	31	14.0
200-300	13	6.0
Total	220	100
Mode of payment		
Money	216	98.2
Food	1	0.5
Shelter	1	0.5
No response	2	0.9
Total	220	100

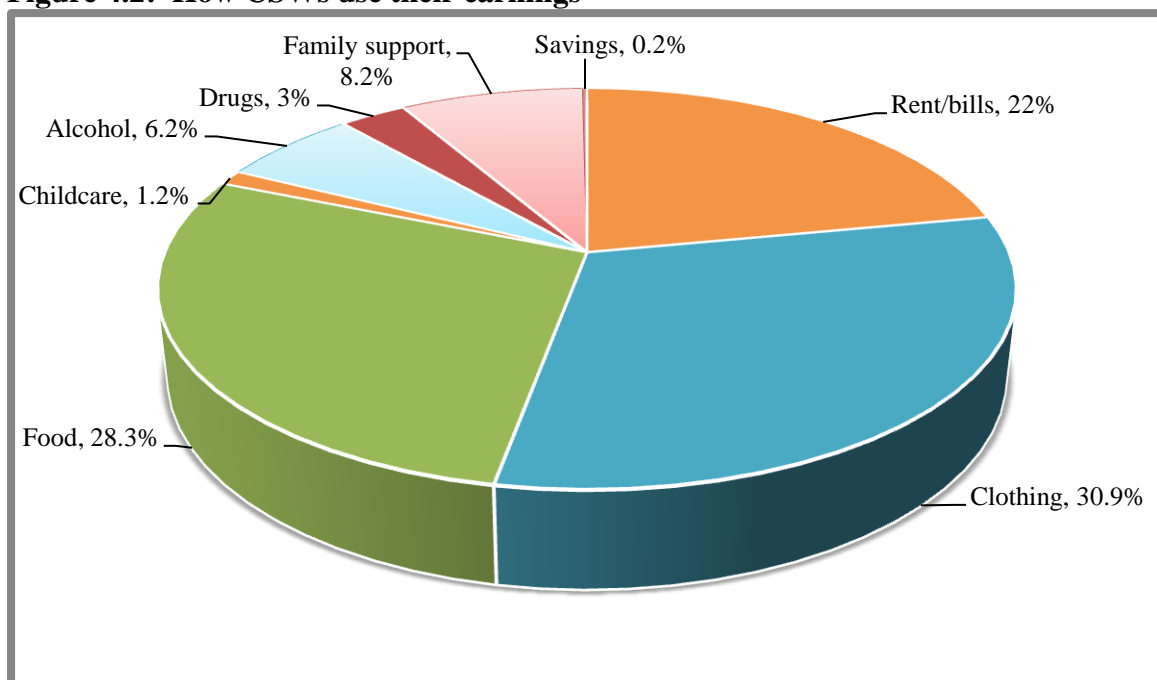
Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Sex workers are remunerated for their services through various ways. Some are paid for their services by receiving free shelter, transportation, food, cosmetics, cash, etc (Scorgie et al., 2012; WAPCAS, 2006). “Some sex workers invite taxi drivers to offer them a free ride home in exchange for sex” (Obeng-Odoom, 2014:71). In this study, majority of the CSWs receive money as their mode of payment. Table 4.8 further shows that 98.2 percent of the respondents take money for services rendered. Only one percent receives either food or shelter for their services. CSWs reported that some clients refuse to pay after service is

rendered during the qualitative interviews. Therefore, sex workers always want to collect their money even before they perform the service.

Figure 4.2 presents how CSWs use their earnings. Spending on clothing ranks first on the expenditure list of respondents; about one-third (30.9%) of their earnings goes into the purchase of clothing. This is not surprising, because the children will have to present themselves in an attractive manner to be able to attract clients. They always have to strive to get unique clothes that reveal a lot of their skin, because they compete with each other to attract the attention of prospective clients. For the average sex worker, the clothing one wears is very crucial to their being able to secure a client. The CSWs also disclosed that it is important that one keeps changing one's clothing otherwise, colleagues start gossiping and laughing at you.

Figure 4.2: How CSWs use their earnings



Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Food ranks second on their expenditure list. Majority of the CSWs indicated in the qualitative interview that they buy already-cooked food. This, according to them, comes at a cost as compared to cooking by themselves. However, the nature of the job is such that they

do not have enough time to cook. Also, they do not have enough space to cook, even if they decide to do so. The few who try to cook once in a while do it in the alleys in front of their rooms. This creates inconveniences for the sex worker resulting in most CSWs buying from food vendors.

Spending on rent and bills is the third on the expenditure list. Accommodation and other payments such as water and electricity take 22 percent of their earnings. Sex workers in general have challenges securing accommodation due to the nature of their work and the stigma associated with it. Most landlords are reluctant renting out their facilities to them. This makes them always desperate for accommodation. The few landlords who are ready to rent out their rooms to them therefore charge very exorbitant fees. This problem leads to overcrowding of CSWs in sub-standard accommodations. According to WAPCAS (2006), some adult sex workers rent out their rooms to the younger ones at very exorbitant fees. This also explains why about 60 percent of CSWs in the study live with their friends. When CSWs find landlords who are friendly, they invite their friends to live with them to share the cost of the accommodation and other fees. Some CSWs also secretly have roommates without the knowledge of their landlords, so that they can share the cost with them. If they are not fortunate enough and they are caught, then they lose their accommodation.

Family support accounts for 8.2 percent of the CSWs income. A good number of them (82.3%) reported that their family members do not know where they are. This means that they are not in touch with their families, accounting for the negligible remittances. Spending on alcohol accounted for 6.2 percent. This figure looks insignificant, and probably do not reflect the real situation on the ground because during the qualitative in-depth interview session, it was established that alcohol and drug intake was one of the coping mechanisms adopted by CSWs to overcome inhibitions to be able to work. It is, therefore, possible that CSWs could be spending a lot more on drugs and alcohol than indicated in the study.

Respondents may have under-reported due to the stigma associated with the intake of both drugs and alcohol by women in general in Ghana. Spending on medication accounted for 3 percent. Childcare is the least in the ranking, and this could be due to the fact that only 16 percent of the CSWs are mothers. It is also likely that it is not all the child mothers who necessarily support their children.

4.6.4 Duration of sex work practice

It can be observed in Table 4.9 that majority of the respondents have been in the trade for less than two years (up to 18 months) accounting for 87.7 percent. This observation is appreciated since there are children who may have entered the sex trade following their sexual debuts. As observed in Table 4.1, majority (82.3%) of the CSWs fall within the ages of 15-17 years and may possibly have just been initiated into sex and therefore the trade. Those who have been practicing for two years and above may be the 17-year olds who may have entered the trade at 15 years or below. The observed dwindling numbers after 19 months and above could also be due to migration to other places or quitting the trade as they approach adulthood with other professional options. It could also be that some of them might have stopped trading in sex, since all the participants in the in-depth interviews indicated they would stop the moment they save enough to either learn a trade or involve themselves in trading.

Table 4.9: Duration in sex work

Variable (Duration in sex work)	Number	Percent
Less than 6 months	34	15.9
6 – 12 months	103	46.8
13 – 18 months	55	25.0
19 – 24 months	13	5.9
Over 24 months	12	5.5
No response	2	0.9
Total	220	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

4.7 Summary

The findings of the study indicated that majority (82.3%) of CSW are aged between 15 to 17 years with 72.7 percent being Christians. Almost 16 percent have children with an overwhelming majority of 91.4 percent having never married. This is in conformity with they being children. Akans being the majority ethnic group in Ghana reflects in 45 percent of respondents being Akans and less than 10 percent non-Ghanaians.

Generally, they have low educational attainments, and many of them live in slum communities in Accra with 75.9 percent having migrated from other regions in the country to ply their trade in Accra. Majority (92.7%) indicated that they use condoms to protect themselves from infections and pregnancy. Not living within a family setting prior to engaging in sex work cannot be a predisposing factor as 96.3 percent ever lived with a family member.

The results further suggest that CSWs practise the roamer, seater and brothel types of sex work. They can have an average of 4-6 clients a day earning an average of 108.39 cedis.

CHAPTER FIVE

Drivers of Child Sex Work in Accra

5.1 Introduction

A number of studies have enumerated various reasons why children engage in sex work (Harcourt & Donovan 2005; Reid, 2010; Orchard, 2015; Orchard, 2007; Tremayne, 2001; Human Rights Watch, 2003; ILO/IPEC,2005; Mikhail 2002; Willis & Levy, 2002). This chapter examines the factors that drive children into sex work in Accra. The main reasons for children plying the sex trade are explained with a focus on the predisposing role of abuse and neglect of children.

5.2 Main reasons for getting involved in sex work.

In this study, CSWs enumerated various reasons why they got involved in the sex trade as shown in Table 5.1. The responses from 46.8 percent of the CSWs suggest that the children do not have responsible guardians to take care of their needs. Having to take care of themselves, looking for money to pay school fees, being homeless and having lost a job are some of the reasons respondents gave for their involvement in sex work. These suggest that these children fend for themselves and do not have parental support.

Peer influence ranked first with almost 40 percent of the children stating that their peers influenced them into becoming sex workers which is consistent with findings from a Ugandan study (Ministry of Gender, 2004). The finding further substantiates the linkage between lack of parental support and peer influence discussed earlier. At this age in the life of an adolescent, the approval of peers is very crucial as they begin to make more friends. In order to be accepted by one's peers, personal values begin to change to adapt group's values to avoid rejection. They also shift their reliance on their parents/guardians to their peers due to increased socialization (Sowah, 2016). Parental guidance is therefore of high priority at

this stage. Unfortunately, for these children, almost half (46.8%) lack parental support, their friends are all they have; resulting in being heavily influenced by their peers. At the adolescent age, children also involve themselves in all manner of things to explore and experiment because they have lots of energy at this time (Sowah, 2016). One of the behaviours that they engage in is the use of drugs, which is a positive correlate with engaging in increased risky sexual behaviours which occur concurrently (Cooper & Guthrie, 2007). It, therefore, becomes very easy for children to involve themselves in sex work when there is not much parental support with the children having to fend for themselves.

Table 5.1: Reasons for getting involved in sex work

Variable	Number (n=220)	Percent (%)
Supplement family income	21	9.5
Peer influence	87	39.5
To take care of myself	65	29.5
Look for school fees	4	1.8
I was homeless	29	13.6
I lost my job	5	2.0
To take care of my child	8	3.6
No response	1	0.5
Total	220	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Supplementing family income which accounted for 9.5 percent of the reasons for getting involved in sex work suggests that the child comes from a deprived background. They therefore have to resort to any means to help their family survive. However, the fact that just a few of them made that submission also suggests that it is not very common for children to practise sex work to support their families in Accra. In certain parts of India where the Devadasi type of child sex work is practised, the main reason for children going into that trade is to help support their families (Orchard, 2007). Other studies reported that families make their children engage in sex work to help maintain the family (Mushowe, 2018; Rekart, 2005; Busuttil, 2011).

The Gender Pathway Theory (GPT) described by Miller & Mullins (2009), supports the results of this study. According to the theory, there is a pathway of vulnerability that leads females into delinquent behaviour such as sex work. This pathway suggests that when children are abused and neglected, they run away from home and end up on the street. Without any employable skills, these girls have no choice but to join other children on the streets and one of the easy ways by which they can earn income is to engage in sex work. In this study, 13.6 percent of the respondents indicated that they are homeless. Living on the streets indicates that you must work to sustain yourself. Almost 30 percent submitted that they had to take care of themselves. However, jobs are not readily available on the streets for children who are unskilled, so somebody has to help them get a job, and their peers help them to get jobs that they are already involved in. The study therefore gives credence to the Gender Pathway Theory.

According to O' Donnell et al., (2002:7), "Certain demographic groups are most at risk of becoming involved in this sex work at any time (especially single mothers)". Out of the number of CSWs who have children (15.9%), 3.6 percent indicated that they got involved to be able to take care of their children. This finding supports the fact that early motherhood can predispose some young girls to sex work. All the child mothers in the qualitative study also reported that they got involved in sex work to be able to support their children.

5.3 Abuse and neglect

A number of studies have indicated that people who are involved in sex work come from abusive and neglectful childhood background (UNICEF, 2010; Wilson & Widom, 2010; Miller & Mullins, 2009). The findings of this study give credence to this assertion. Respondents were asked questions in retrospect to determine whether they were neglected, or suffered any form of abuse prior to their involvement in the sex trade.

Table 5.2 shows that majority (80.9%) of the CSWs in this study stated that they were either sometimes or many times neglected when they were growing up.

Table 5.2: Abuse and neglectful childhood

Variables ↗ Scales ↘	Neglect		Emotional Abuse		Physical Abuse		Sexual Abuse	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Never	21	9.6	30	13.6	2	0.9	63	28.6
Rarely	21	9.6	45	20.5	50	22.7	35	15.9
Sometimes	137	62.6	74	33.6	126	57.3	75	34.1
Many times	40	18.2	71	32.3	42	19.1	47	21.4
Total	219	100	220	100	220	100	220	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

More than half (65.9%) of respondents indicated that they were emotionally abused sometimes or many times, while 76.4 percent of the respondents reported of being either sometimes or many times abused physically when they were growing up. A study in Ouagadougou observed that children suffer sexual abuse prior to their engagement in sex work (Hounmenu, 2016). A little over half (55.5%) pointed out in this study that they either sometimes or many times experienced sexual abuse. From the results obtained, it can be concluded that child sex workers in Accra experienced a certain degree of neglect and abuse prior to their engagement in sex work.

5.4 Poverty

Two main variables are used as a proxy for poverty in the household of CSW, before they started sex work: the availability of food for household members, and whether people in the household go to bed hungry.

Table 5.3 shows that, approximately two thirds (64.5%) of the respondents indicated that in the past, their household members had fewer meals because there was not enough food. Out of that number, 92.7 percent indicated that they either often or sometimes ate fewer meals because there was not enough food.

Table 5.3: Childhood poverty

Variable	Yes (%)	Frequency of event					
		Rarely (1 or 2 times in a week)		Sometimes (3 to 10 times in a week)		Often (more than 10 times in a week)	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
In the past did you or any member of your household eat fewer meals because there was not enough food?	64.5	10	7.0	114	80.3	18	12.7
In the past did you or any member of your household go to sleep hungry at night because there wasn't enough food?	64.5	10	7.0	111	78.2	21	14.8

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Table 5.3 also shows that, about 65 percent of the respondents reported that in the past members of their households went to sleep hungry because there was not enough to eat. A significantly high percentage (93%) stated that this happened sometimes or often. The two variables gave same responses signalling that having less food is pervasive. This suggests that these children grew up in deprived/disadvantaged homes where people had fewer meals to eat or had to go to sleep hungry because there wasn't enough food. This finding substantiates most of the reasons given by the CSWs for entering the sex trade. If children who have no skill and are out of school have to take care of themselves, supplement family income, look for school fees, among other deprivation indicators, then they are very likely to end up in sex work with the influence of some peers who are already in the business. This confirms Scorgie et al.,'s (2012:924) submission that, "Many young African women who trade sex for food, money or shelter come from disadvantaged backgrounds". Mushohwe (2018) corroborates this finding by indicating that, the underlying cause of child sex work in Zimbabwe and elsewhere is poverty.

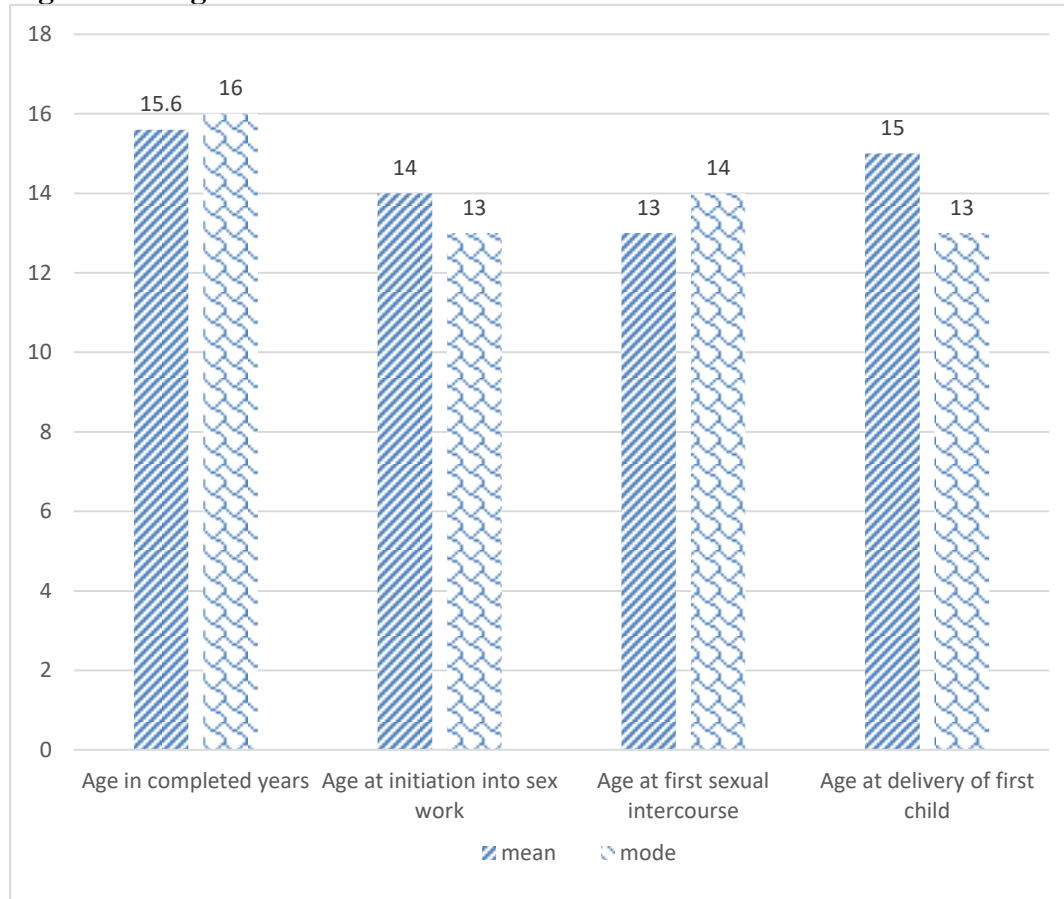
5.5 Early sexual debut, motherhood and initiation into sex work

Literature indicates that early sexual debut and early motherhood increase the risk of children entering the sex trade (Wilson & Widom, 2010; Onyango et al., 2012:17; Gysels et al., 2002).

5.5.1 Early sexual debut

In Figure 5.1, it can be observed that, the mean age at which respondents first got involved in sex work is quite close to the age of sexual debut, 13 and 14 years respectively. This implies that some of the children entered the sex trade shortly after they had sex for the first time or their sexual debut signified the onset of sex work.

Although the mean age at sexual debut is 13 years, most of them initiated sex around the age of 14. The mean age is relatively lower when compared to the national figure of 16 years for girls (GSS et al., 2014). This presupposes that, CSWs in Accra initiate sex earlier than their cohorts in the general population, and this has implications. People who initiate sex at younger ages are more likely to engage in sexual intercourse with casual partners and have multiple and concurrent partnerships (Uchudi, Magadi, & Mostazir, 2010a). Sawyer et al., (2012) further indicate that, adolescents who engage in early sexual debut are involved in several types of social vices such as stealing, fighting, use of controlled substances, school absenteeism and increased number of friends. These characteristics described above can easily predispose a child to sex work. According to Wilson & Widom (2010), initiating sex before age 15 was the single strongest predictor of entry into sex work. In Uganda, a study indicated that, child sex workers initiate sex at a tender age of 14 (Ministry of Gender, 2004).

Figure 5.1: Age and sexual related activities

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

5.5.2 Early motherhood

According to Chi Watts et al., (2015), Pregnancy can be physically draining at any age, so for young women who are emotionally and physiologically still developing and are often ‘alone’ or with little support, it can pose a lot of difficulties. Teenage motherhood can have negative health and social repercussions because it usually occurs at a critical developmental stage of a teenager’s life (Mushohwe, 2018). Therefore, CSWs who are also mothers are likely to encounter unique challenges.

Figure 5.1 shows that, the mean age at birth is 15 years. However, most of the children in this study became mothers at the age of 13. Coping with the increased responsibilities after childbirth and managing with the demands of schooling, taking care of a baby and probably working can be very challenging for any young mother. This child is very

likely to fall out of school since the school policies in most developing countries are unfriendly to pregnant adolescents (Hindin & Fatusi, 2009). At age 13, if a child is pregnant and out of school and comes from a disadvantaged background, the child may have to work to support her children and herself. According to ILO/IPEC (2005:30-31), “early motherhood, is a situation that mostly occurs in places where socio-economic conditions are extremely deteriorated, accompanied by high rates of unemployment, makeshift housing, nutritional problems, school expulsion and lack of basic psychosocial development of both mother and child”. Under these circumstances, if the child mother has no skill, there is a greater likelihood that sex work might be one of the few options open to her.

This finding is supported by a Ugandan qualitative study, where child sex workers reported that they began selling sex when they became pregnant as teenagers and had very limited options (Ministry of Gender, 2004). A study by Kafle et al., (2010:42) categorically stipulates that “increasingly, early parenthood means loss of education with lifelong loss of earnings”. Girls who find themselves in this situation often encounter “psychological problems, premature termination of education; which affects the socio-economic opportunities in life and predispose children to CSEC” (Ministry of Gender, 2004: 33). They also experience shame and embarrassment in societies where early pregnancy is frowned upon (Chi Watts et al., 2015).

During the in-depth interviews, all the child mothers reported that the fathers of their children do not play any role in the upbringing of their children. A 16-year-old child mother indicated that,

“I had to come to Accra with my baby when his father abandoned us after I delivered; I do not have support from anywhere”.

Another respondent, 16-year-old at Madina said,

“.....my child’s father travelled and I haven’t seen him again”

Lastly, a 17-year-old who had twins at Konkomba Market indicated that,

“Their father denied responsibility, so I have to take care of them by myself”.

It is, therefore, evident that these mothers are all single parents. Single motherhood can therefore predispose young mothers to the sex trade. The burden of childcare, which could enhance poverty among the unemployed single mother, could tilt one’s decision into sex work as a survival strategy. This is confirmed by an ILO Press release (1998) that for single mothers with children, sex work is often a more flexible, remunerative and less time-consuming option than factory or service work. “Certain demographic groups are most at risk of becoming involved in sex work at any time (especially single mothers)” (O’ Donnel et al., 2002:7).

5.6 Running away from home

Reasons for moving or migrating to present location also support the reasons why the children got involved in the sex trade. In Table 5.4, it can be observed that more than half (51.9%) of the respondents indicated that they moved to find jobs. This substantiates the earlier submission that CSWs do not have parental support or care, so they have to work to cater for their needs. About one-third stated that they ran away from home to their present location. Running away from home can, therefore, be one of the circumstances that predispose children to becoming sex workers. This assertion is supported by Reid (2010) and Adomako Ampofo (2007). Running away from home could result from either neglect resulting from poor parent/guardian care or abuse. These two broad conditions can easily lead a child to run away from home. Once the child leaves home, she is exposed to all the dangers on the street. They must work to sustain themselves, so they are ready to do anything including sex work.

Table 5.4: Reasons for moving or migrating to this area.

Variable	Number (n=214)	Percent
To look for a job	111	51.9
Security reasons	1	0.5
Running away from home	70	32.7
Convinced by friends	25	11.7
Just dumped in town	3	1.4
Sacked from the house	4	1.8
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

The submission above is supported by the Lifestyle Exposure Theory (Gottreson & Garofalo, 1978), which is one of the theories that underpin this study. The theory states that when children lack supervision and care due to poor parenting or run away from home due to abuse, they can involve themselves in certain lifestyles that can predispose them to becoming victims of crime. Such lifestyles include frequenting night clubs and partying at night, which expose children to the influence of alcohol and other harmful substances and the risk of being trafficked for involuntary prostitution.

5.7 School Problems

Education impacts many aspects of life, and this may include one's financial, social and health status. Having less education automatically implies being in a lower socio-economic status, where you earn less, which invariably influences your standard of living negatively. According to a study in Uganda, children who are out of school are likely to join the labour force early (Ministry of Gender, 2004). Hence, with little or no education, coupled with no skill, a child may have very limited options in the labour market.

The current study discovered that 86.8 percent of respondents dropped out of school. This is due to a number of reasons which are termed school problems in the study. Table 5.5 shows the various reasons why the children dropped out of school. Almost half (42.3%) of the respondents gave reasons that suggest that they were no longer interested in schooling (completed desired level, poor academic performance and loss of interest in studies). The

lack of interest in school could result from either condition pertaining in the home or the school environment. Financial constraints or poverty seem to be the next major reason why the children dropped out of school. Close to 30 percent gave reasons that suggest that they had financial difficulties. They communicated that the cost involved (20.1%), the need to work (3.2%) and the fact that they were orphaned (5.8%) were some of the reasons for dropping out of school.

Table 5.5: Reasons for dropping out of school

Variable (Reason)	Number(n=189)	Percent(%)
Completed desired level	1	0.5
To help with household chores	6	3.2
Need to work	6	3.2
Cost (fees and other school requirements)	38	20.1
Orphaned	11	5.8
Pregnancy	31	16.5
Poor Academic performance	50	26.5
School too far	1	0.5
Illness/disability (self)	1	0.5
To take care of sick family member	1	0.5
Loss of interest in studies	29	15.3
Was suspended/sacked	10	5.3
Relocated	1	0.5
Maltreatment at school	3	1.6

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Girls dropping out of school because of pregnancy ranked third on the list of reasons with 16.5 percent of children finding themselves in that situation. The children without support will have to work to support their children and themselves. With no skill, finding a decent well-paid job can be difficult so child mothers may be forced into selling sex.

Being suspended or sacked from school accounted for 5.3 percent. Helping with house chores and taking care of the sick which accounted for 3.7 percent are typical reasons for keeping the girl child out of school in some families in Ghana (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014). The other remaining reasons such as relocated, school too far and maltreatment at school were epiphenomenal.

5.8 Summary

This chapter dwelt on drivers of CSWs in Accra. It examined the main reason why children go into sex work; it also investigated whether CSW can result from neglect and abusive parenting/ child care.

Among the CSW population that was researched, it was observed that 46.8 percent were supporting themselves, which implies lack of parental support, resulting from neglect. Almost forty percent (39.5%) claimed they were influenced by peers and almost 10 percent had to work to supplement family income. Thirteen percent (13%) stated that they were homeless while 3.6 percent said they had to support their children, suggesting child motherhood.

Generally, it was observed that children in the study experienced abusive and neglectful childhood. Majority (80.9%) of the CSWs indicated that they were either sometimes or many times neglected when they were growing up. More than half, (65.9%) said they were emotionally abused, 76.4 percent reported physical abuse, whilst 55.5 percent stated sexual abuse.

Basically, the findings of the study suggest that the children come from poor disadvantaged homes, as 64.5 percent reported that in the past, household members had fewer meals because there was not enough to eat. Another 64.5 percent also reported that in the past members of their household went to sleep hungry because there was not enough to eat.

CHAPTER SIX

Factors affecting type of sex work practised among child sex workers

6.1 Introduction

From the analysis so far, two distinct categories could be identified among the CSWs. These are based on age and type of sex work practised. Regarding age, two categories were identified. Young adolescents (YA) aged 12-15 and old adolescents (OA) aged 16-17 years. In line of their practice, two types of sex workers may also be identified, namely seaters and roamers.

This chapter aims at further investigating probable differences between young and old adolescents' age groups and types of sex work practised. It highlights the results of the bivariate relationship between the characteristics, factors that drive CSW and what determines the practise of a particular type of sex work. This is considered necessary and important because of the possible differences in children who can consent to sex and those who cannot legally consent to sex. A logistic regression was fitted using the Enter Method with six predictor variables to further analyse the two types of CSW; the roamers and the seaters.

6.2 Bivariate relationship of between age and socio-demographic characteristics of CSWs

A total of 220 CSWs were interviewed. One hundred and twenty-three respondents, representing 56 percent of all respondents were old adolescents (OA) and 97 (44%) were young adolescents (YA). Table 6.1 highlights the results of the bivariate analysis of the relationship between age and the various socio-demographic characteristics of the CSWs.

From Table 6.1, there is a statistically significant relationship between the age of the CSW on one hand and religion, ethnicity and childbearing with respective p-values of 0.32, 0.009 and 0.000.

Table 6.1: Relationship between age of CSWs by socio-demographic characteristics

	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
Religion	%	N	%	N		
Christian	80.4	78	66.7	82	5.143	.032
Non-Christians	19.6	19	33.3	41		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		
Marital Status						
Ever married	6.2	6	10.6	13		
Never married	93.8	91	89.4	110	1.315	.335
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		
Ethnicity						
Akan	45.4	44	44.7	55		
Ga	18.6	18	7.3	9		
Ewe	14.4	14	17.1	21	13.441	.009
Mole Dagbani	5.2	5	17.9	22		
Other	16.5	16	13.0	16		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		
Ever had a child						
Yes	5.2	5	24.4	30		
No	94.8	92	75.6	93	14.931	.000
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		
Education						
Never attended	9.3	9	13.0	16		
Ever attended	90.7	88	87.0	107	.746	.522
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018.

The marital status of the respondents shows that most of them had never married or not in any form of cohabitation. The proportions show that only 6.2 and 10.6 percent of the young adolescents and the old adolescents respectively had ever been in any form of union. The results, however, are not statistically significant.

On the other hand, ethnicity shows a statistically significant relationship by age of CSW (p-value = 0.009). From among the YA group, the Akans represented the highest proportion of 45.4%. They were followed by the Ga with a proportion of 18.6 percent. The Mole/Dagbani ethnic group formed the lowest proportion (5.2%). Among the OA, the Akans again recorded

the highest proportion, forming 44.7 percent of that category. They were followed by the Mole Dagbani (17.9%) with the Ewe forming 17.1 percent. The Ethnic group with the smallest proportion in this category was the Ga (7.3%).

The analysis further indicates a statistically significant relation by age and childbearing experience (ever had a child) with a p-value of 0.000. More than nine out of every ten of the YA (94.8%) did not have any child while a little over three out of every four OA (75.6%) were without any child. This is to be expected because among the YA, childbearing is the lowest even in the general population in the country due to their very young ages of 12-15 years.

The educational level of the respondents shows that majority of them dropped out of school. Generally, CSWs have low educational status, and this is supported by a number of studies (Onyango et al., 2012; Ministry of Gender, 2004; WAPCAS, 2005; Scorgie et al., 2012). Among the YA, an overwhelming 90.7 percent were school dropouts compared to 87 percent of the OA. The results were, however, not statistically significant.

6.3 Reasons for getting involved in sex work.

The factors that drive children into sex work have already been discussed in Chapter four. They were mainly to supplement family income, the influence of peer pressure, to take care of themselves and other reasons such as loss of job, look for school fees, etc, which were epiphenomenal. The following factors were also investigated to see whether they influenced the entry of children into the sex trade: abuse (physical, emotional and sexual) and neglectful behaviour on the part of caregivercaregivers. Also, mediating variables such as early sexual debut, running away from home, child poverty, early motherhood and school problems were investigated.

6.3.1 Involvement in CSW by age among young and old adolescents

Table 6.2 shows that there is a statistically significant association (p-value = 0.001)

between the age of the CSW and the reason for getting involved in sex work. The main reason given by the YA was peer pressure. This was confirmed in the in-depth interviews as well. A 15-year-old CSW who lived at Agbobloshie, stated that she ran away from her employer when she was 14 years old. She had this to say:

“I lived with my friends after I ran away from home. They introduced me to the work (sex work)”. (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie)

Another respondent who was 16-year-old, but had been practising sex work for about a year indicated that,

“My friend introduced me to this work (sex work). We were working together till she left for Togo with her boyfriend”. (CC2; 16 years; Agbobloshie)

The OA mainly got involved in sex work by the desire mostly to take care of themselves and supplement family income. According to a 16-year-old respondent who lived at Konkomba, she accompanied a woman from Nigeria to Ghana in order to work to take care of herself.

“...she convinced me that she could get me a job as a waitress or cleaner in a hotel, I believed her and followed her to Ghana... because I had to take care of myself”. (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba)

It should be noted that the various reasons given by both groups for their involvement in the sex trade suggests a certain amount of negligence on the part of parents and caregivers.

Table 6.2: Percent of CSWs by age and reason for involvement in sex work

Main reason for involving yourself in sex work	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Supplement Family Income	7.2	7	11.4	14		
Peer Influence	51.5	50	30.1	37	19.133 ^a	.001
To be self-reliant (take care of myself)	26.8	26	35.8	44		
Homeless	14.4	14	12.2	15		
Other	0	0	10.6	13		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Peer pressure accounted for more than half (51.5%) of the YA entering commercial sex work as is shown in Table 6.2. Becoming self-reliant accounted for 26.8 percent of the YA's

reason for entering commercial sex work. Homelessness and supplementing family income respectively accounted for 14.4 percent and 7.2 percent as reasons for becoming sex workers. From among the OA, self-reliance was the main reason for becoming sex workers. The OA with this reason formed 35.8 percent. They were followed by those who yielded to peer pressure (30.1%) while those who were in the business to supplement the family income formed 11.4 percent. A proportion of 10.6 percent of the OA, however, gave other reasons for becoming sex workers.

6.3.2 Childhood neglect among young and old adolescents

Table 6.3 shows that there is a statistically significant association (p -value = 0.05) between the age of CSWs and childhood neglect. Although both groups experienced neglectful behaviour from caregivers when they were growing up, more children experienced it in the YA age group than the OA age group. In total, 92.8 percent and 88.5 percent among the YA and OA respectively, experienced some form of neglectful behaviour from their caregivers at one time or the other. This finding was confirmed by a 15-year-old CSW who lived at Agbobloshie. She stated that,

“both of my parents are dead; I have nobody to take care of me. My aunt is a good person, but she is poor ...” (CM7; 15 years; Agbobloshie)

For young sex workers in Africa whose parents have died, economic and food insecurity often presents sex work as the only survival option for them (Campbell, 2000 cited in Scorgie et al., 2012).

From among the YA, 69.1 percent suffered neglectful behaviour from caregivers sometimes, while 19.6 percent suffered it many times. Those who never suffered neglect accounted for 7.2 percent while 4.1 rarely suffered any neglect.

Table 6.3: Percentage of CSW by age and childhood neglect

Neglect	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Never	7.2	7	11.5	14		
Rarely	4.1	4	13.9	17	7.794	.050
Sometimes	69.1	67	57.4	70		
Many times	19.6	19	17.2	21		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	122		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

More than half (57.4%) of the old adolescents suffered neglectful behaviour sometimes, while those who suffered it many times formed 17.2 percent. Those who rarely suffered any neglect were 13.9 percent while OA who never suffered any neglectful behaviour from caregivers accounted for 11.5 percent.

6.3.3 Physical abuse among young and old adolescents

The relationship between age of CSWs and physical abuse is highly significant at a p-value = 0.000 (Table 6.4). Most CSWs suffered physical abuse at the hands of caregivers prior to engaging in the trade. More than half (51.5%) of YA reported having been abused sometimes while 32 percent of them suffered physical abuse many times. The YA who rarely or never suffered any form of physical abuse formed 16.5 percent.

Table 6.4: Percent of CSW by age and the experience of physical abuse

Physical abuse	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Rarely or Never	16.5	16	29.3	36		
Sometimes	51.5	50	61.8	76	19.785	.000
Many times	32.0	31	8.9	11		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

More than three out of every five (61.8%) of the OA suffered physical abuse sometimes while about a third (29.3%) rarely or never suffered any physical abuse. Those which suffered physical abuse many times formed only 8.9 percent.

6.3.4 Emotional abuse among young and old adolescents

The results in Table 6.5 indicate that there is a statistically significant association between age and emotional abuse among the CSW (p -value = 0.046). Comparing those who suffered emotional abuse sometimes to those who suffered it many times, the younger ones are more vulnerable recording 75.3 percent compared to 58.5 percent of the OA. A higher proportion made up of two in every five (40.2%) of the YA experienced emotional abuse many times with another 35.1 percent having suffered emotional abuse sometimes.

Table 6.5: Percentage of CSW by age and the experience of emotional abuse

Emotional Abuse	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Never	9.3	9	17.1	21		
Rarely	15.5	15	24.4	30	8.016	.046
Sometimes	35.1	34	32.5	40		
Many times	40.2	39	26.0	32		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Young adolescents who never suffered any emotional abuse formed 9.3 percent. A higher proportion of old adolescents (32.5%) suffered emotional abuse sometimes compared to 26 percent who suffered it many times. Another 17.1 percent of them however had never suffered any form of emotional abuse.

6.3.5 Sexual abuse among young and old adolescents

Table 6.6 shows that there is no significant relationship (p -value = 0.392) between age of CSWs and sexual abuse. Nevertheless, as many as 75.3% of the YA had ever been sexually abused. From interacting with them, it came out that sexually abusing girls when they are younger is more common than when they become older. A 17-year-old respondent who lived at Konkomba reported that when she was 10 years old, she experienced the following:

“Most of the time my father will drink and start touching me, until one day he had sex with me. It was so painful... whenever my stepmother travelled, he would have sex with me. When I resisted, he would beat me so much that I had no choice but to comply” (CC3; 17 years; Konkomba).

Table 6.6: Percent of CSW by age and sexual abuse experience

Sexual abuse	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Never	24.7	24	31.7	39		
Rarely	13.4	13	17.9	22	2.996	.392
Sometimes	37.2	36	31.7	39		
Many times	24.7	24	18.7	23		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Young adolescents who were sexually abused sometimes formed the highest proportion of 37.1 percent. Those abused many times constituted the next highest proportion of 24.7 percent. The young adolescents who had never been sexually abused before formed another 24.7 percent.

Just like the YA, the most sexually abused among the OA were those who were also abused sometimes forming 31.7 percent. Those abused many times represented 18.7 percent of the OA with another 17.9 percent rarely suffering from any form of sexual abuse. On the other hand, 31.7 percent of the OA never experienced any form of sexual abuse.

6.3.6 Age at first birth among young and old adolescents

In Table 6.7, age at first birth shows statistically significant association (p-value = 0.000) by the age of CSW. Both mean and median ages for the respondents tend to be the same. While the YA age group seems to have their first birth at age 13.4 years, the OA have theirs at age 14.6 years, with age 14.4 years being an average age at first birth among both groups.

Table 6.7: Percent of CSW by age and the age at first birth

Age at first birth	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
12 - 14	5.2	5	11.4	14		
15 - 17	0	0	13.0	16	17.439	.000
Never had any birth	94.8	92	75.6	93		
Total	100.0	97	100.0	123		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Only 35 of the respondents have ever had children. The disaggregation shows that only 5.2 percent of the YA had ever given birth. From among the OA, however, 24.4 percent had ever given birth. The breakdown shows that 13.0 percent of the OA gave birth between ages 15 years and 17 years while 11.4 percent had their first birth between 12 years and 14 years.

6.3.7 Childhood poverty by age among young and old adolescents

Table 6.8 shows no statistically significant association (p-value = 0.239) between childhood poverty that can drive children into becoming a CSW and the age of the CSW. The OA often slept at night hungry compared to the YA. The fact that some members of both age groups sometimes slept without food, points to poverty as a possible underlying cause for their entry into CSW. According to Scorgie et al., (2012), engaging in sex work is one of the survival mechanisms for poor children.

Table 6.8: Percent of CSW by age and childhood poverty

How often did you and your household go to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Rarely or Sometimes (below ten times a week)	89.4	59	81.6	62		
Often (more than ten times a week)	10.6	7	18.4	14	1.700	.239
Total	100.0	66	100.0	76		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

From Table 6.8, close to nine out of every ten YA (89.4%), rarely or sometimes slept without food while to the remaining 10.6 percent, sleeping without food occurred often. On

the side of the OA, 81.6 percent of them rarely or sometimes went to bed without food while 18.4 percent of them slept often without food.

6.3.8 Age at sexual debut among young and old adolescents

Table 6.9 shows a statistically significant association (p -value = 0.04) between age of CSWs and sexual initiation. The age at sexual initiation ranged from nine years to 16 years for both groups. For the YA, it ranged from 10 years to 15 years while the OA on the other hand had the minimum age at sexual initiation at nine years and maximum at 16 years.

The mean age at sexual debut for the YA was 12.5 years, while that of the OA was 13 years. The median age at sex debut, however, remained at 13 years for both categories of sex workers. It can be stated that sexual debut in general for CSWs is at very young ages. This is supported by a study in the U.S: according to Wilson & Widom (2010:228), relative to other problem behaviours assessed in their study, “initiation of sexual behaviour before age 15 was the single strongest predictor of entry into prostitution”.

Table 6.9: Percent of CSW by age and age at sexual debut

Age at sexual initiation	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
11 years & below	14.7	14	13.2	16		
12 years	34.7	33	19.8	24	13.467	.004
13 years	32.6	31	27.3	33		
14 years & above	17.9	17	39.7	48		
Total	100.0	95	100.0	121		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

From Table 6.9, the highest proportion (34.7%) of the YA had their sexual initiation at age 12. Those who had their first sex at age 13 followed, forming 32.6 percent. Another 17.9 percent had their first sex from 14 years and above while the YA who had sexual initiation below 12 years formed 14.7 percent.

The majority (39.7%) of the OA had their sex debut at age 14 and above. Those who had their sex debut at age 13 followed with a proportion of 27.3 percent. The OA who had their first sex at age 12 formed 19.8 percent while 13.2 percent of them had their first sex at age 11 and below.

6.3.9 Dropping out of school among young and old adolescents

The association between school dropout and the age of CSWs was noted to be statistically significant (p -value = 0.006) from Table 6.10. Loss of interest tends to be the major factor within both categories of CSW that accounted for dropping out of school.

Table 6.10: Percent of CSW by age and reason for dropping out of school

Reason for school drop out	12-15 (YA)		16-17 (OA)		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Orphaned	10.2	9	5.0	5		
Pregnancy	9.1	8	22.8	23	12.531	.006
Poor Academic Performance	35.2	31	18.8	19		
Loss of interest	45.5	40	53.5	54		
Total	100.0	88	100.0	101		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Loss of interest accounted for dropping out of school of 45.5 percent of the YA. This was followed by poor academic performance which also accounted for 35.2 percent of YA dropping out of school. Pregnancy was the reason for 9.1 percent of the YA dropping out of school while 10.2 percent dropped out because they were orphaned and could not get anybody to sponsor their education.

More than half (53.5%) of the OA dropped out of school because they lost interest in school. Pregnancy accounted for 22.8 percent of them dropping out of school while poor academic performance pushed 18.8 percent of them out of school. Only five percent of them dropped out because they were orphaned.

6.4 Bivariate relationship of CSWs by type of sex work and socio-demographic characteristics

As stated earlier, apart from their ages, the respondents can also be classified into two major groups. These are the Seaters (who stayed at one place where their customers came to patronize their services) and the Roamers (who moved around soliciting for customers or attending to the calls of their customers). Eighty-five respondents, representing 39 percent of all respondents were seaters and 135 (61%) respondents were roamers. Table 6.11 highlights the results of the bivariate analysis of the relationship between the various socio-demographic characteristics and CSW by type of sex work. Two of the socio-demographic characteristics; age and marital status showed statistical significance at $p\text{-value} = 0.001$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.002$ respectively.

It was noted that two 12-year old CSWs started work as seaters but none as roamers. This is an exceptional observation against the documented trend in Ghana among adult sex workers where the older ones are seaters and the younger ones are roamers (Nzambe & Asamoah-Adu, 2000). The explanation that can be deduced from this observation is that starting off as CSW at very young ages of 12-14 years demands some caution and learning on the job. In the case of those who are brought into the trade by older women referred to as “mothers” (the mothering concept is elaborated in Chapter 7) under whose tutelage they acquire the necessary skills, while in some cases being in debt bondage to the “mothers” necessitates their being seaters. However, as they gain some experience and perhaps after gaining their freedom by paying their debt, they would have attained older ages of 15-16, when they are able to venture into roamer type of the sex work.

The statistically significant relationship between type of CSW and marital status could probably be due to the fact that those who had ever married, divorced or widowed were mothers as well. Thus, a mother was more likely to be a seater because of childcare than being a free roaming sex worker. Additionally, being a child mother with its

accompanying responsibilities brings about some level of maturity to the CSW that may dictate more sedentary type of activities as a seater.

The other characteristics in Table 6.11, which are religion, ethnic group, number of children and education did not show any statistically significant differences between the two types of sex work. Those characteristics are evenly distributed among the two types of sex work as should be expected in the general population of sex workers including CSWs. From Table 6.11, a higher proportion (30.5%) of the Seaters were aged 17 years. These interestingly were followed by those aged 14 years and below forming 29.4 percent. Respondents aged 16 years formed 22.4 percent for the Seaters while 15 year-olds formed 17.6 percent of the Seaters.

The Roamers tend to have a seeming reverse pattern. Among the Roamers, the highest proportion of (32.6%) were aged 16 years while the next highest group were adolescents of age 15 years forming 31.9 percent. Roamers aged 17 years represented 25.2 percent. The least proportion of the Roamers that formed 10.4 percent were aged 14 years and below. This shows that as the Roamers age they tend to become Seaters.

As regards their religious affiliation, the two groups (Seaters and Roamers) tend to have virtually equal proportions. Christians formed 72.9 percent and 72.6 percent of the Seaters and Roamers respectively. The non-Christian Seaters on the other hand formed 27.1 percent while their Roamer counterparts represented 27.4 percent.

Table 6.11 Percent of CSWs by type of sex work and socio-demographic characteristics

Characteristics	Seater		Roamer		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Age						
14 years & below	29.4	25	10.4	14		
15 years	17.6	15	31.9	43	17.128	.001
16 years	22.4	19	32.6	44		
17 years	30.6	26	25.2	34		
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Religion						
Christian	72.9	62	72.6	98		
Non-Christians	27.1	23	27.4	37	.003	0.997
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Marital Status						
Ever married	16.5	14	3.7	5		
Never married	83.5	71	96.3	130	10.725	.002
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Ethnic Group						
Akan	38.8	33	48.9	66		
Ga	16.5	14	9.6	13		
Ewe	16.5	14	15.6	21	3.294	.510
Mole Dagbani	12.9	11	11.9	16		
Other	15.3	13	14.1	19		
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Ever had a child						
Yes	21.2	18	12.6	17		
No	78.8	67	87.4	118	2.860	.129
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Education						
Never attended	10.6	9	11.9	16		
Ever attended	89.4	76	88.1	119	.082	.831
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

The marital status of the CSW shows that the never married formed the majority in both categories. The Seaters had 83.5 percent of them as never married while the Roamers had an unmarried proportion of 96.3 percent.

Classification by ethnicity shows that the Akans dominated both the Seater and Roamer categories. This may be due to their majority in the general population of the country. A higher proportion of the Seaters (38.8%) were from the Akan Ethnic group. The Ga and the Ewe ethnic groups formed 16.5 percent each while other minority ethnic groups represented 15.3 percent of the Seaters. The ethnic group that recorded the least proportion among the Seaters was the Mole Dagbani (12.9%).

In relation to whether they have ever had any child, 78.8 percent of the Seaters were childless compared to 87.4 percent of the Roamers. Their school attendance also shows that 89.4 percent of the Seaters had never attended any school compared to 88.1 percent of the Roamers. This shows the high level of illiteracy among the CSWs. Reasons for school dropout as earlier explained indicate that being a school dropout as reported by previous studies (Wilson & Widom, 2010; Onyango et al., 2012:17; Gysels et al., 2002) is largely a major factor that accounts for many adolescents' entry into CSW, irrespective of the type of sex.

6.5 Involvement in CSW by type of sex work

Table 6.12 shows a statistically significant association (p -value = 0.004) between the two types of sex work and the reasons for their involvement in commercial sex work. Reasons for entering the trade showed some significant differences in the perceptions of the two types of sex workers. "To take care of myself", was the reason for majority of seaters. "To take care of myself" points to deprivation and or need to meet some personal responsibility like childcare. The reason for majority of the Roamers was peer pressure suggesting why most roamers went into the sex trade.

From Table 6.12, the main reason for engaging in commercial sex work for the highest proportion (45.9%) of the Seaters was to be self-reliant (to take care of myself). Peer pressure accounted for 34.1 percent of the Seaters entering the sex trade while homelessness was the reason for 11.8 percent. The family does not seem to be benefitting much from the CSWs because only 3.5 percent of the Seaters adopted sex work to supplement the family income.

Table 6.12: Percent of CSWs by type of sex work and reason for involvement in sex work

Main reason for involving yourself in sex work	Seater		Roamer		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Supplement Family Income	3.5	3	13.3	18		
Peer Influence	34.1	29	43.0	58	15.446	.004
To be self-reliant(take care of myself)	45.9	39	23.0	31		
Homeless	11.8	10	14.1	19		
Other	4.7	4	6.7	9		
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

The main reason for the Roamers to enter the sex trade was peer pressure which was reported by 43 percent of the respondents. Self-reliance accounted for 23 percent of the Roamers in the sex trade. Roamers who cited homelessness also 14.1 percent with 13.3 percent of them joining the trade to supplement the family income.

6.6 Drivers (abuse and neglect) of CSW by type of sex work

Table 6.13 shows statistically significant associations between neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse and the type of sex work the respondents engaged in. From the Table, 54.8 percent of the Seaters suffered neglect sometimes while 22.6 percent suffered neglect many times. Another six percent of the Seaters rarely suffered neglect compared to 16.7 percent who never suffered any form of neglectful behaviour from caregivers.

Among the Roamers, the majority (67.4%) suffered neglect sometimes. Those who suffered neglect many times, however, represented 22.6 percent and another 11.9 percent reported to have rarely been neglected. A proportion of 5.2 percent, however, indicated that they never experienced any neglectful behaviour from caregivers.

Physical abuse tends to be one of the commonest forms of abuse. It involves inflicting physical harm on the victim. From Table 6.13, 55.3 percent of the Seaters had gone through physical abuse sometimes. Another 17.6 reported to have endured physical abuse many times while those who rarely or never experienced any form of physical abuse were 27.1 percent.

The majority (58.5%) of the Roamers also suffered physical abuse sometimes while one out of every five (20%) Roamers suffered physical abuse many times. Roamers who rarely or never suffered any physical abuse, however, represented 21.5 percent.

Table 6.13: Percent of CSWs by type of sex work and the drivers (abuse and neglect) of CSW

	Seater		Roamer		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
Neglect						
Never	16.7	14	5.2	7		
Rarely	6.0	5	11.9	16	11.736	.008
Sometimes	54.8	46	67.4	91		
Many times	22.6	19	15.6	21		
Total	100.0	84	100.0	135		
Physical abuse						
Rarely or Never	27.1	23	21.5	29		
Sometimes	55.3	47	58.5	79	.932	.627
Many times	17.6	15	20.0	27		
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Emotional						
Never	17.6	15	11.1	15		
Rarely	25.9	22	17.0	23	13.918	.003
Sometimes	38.8	33	30.4	41		
Many times	17.6	15	41.5	56		
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Sexual abuse						
Never	30.6	26	27.4	37		
Rarely	27.1	23	8.9	12	24.335	.000
Sometimes	35.3	30	33.3	45		
Many times	7.1	6	30.4	41		
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		
Age at first birth						
12 - 14 Yrs	8.2	7	8.9	12		
15 - 17 Yrs	12.9	11	3.7	5	6.603	.037
Never had sex	78.8	67	87.4	118		
Total	100.0	85	100.0	135		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

Emotional abuse was sometimes suffered by 38.8 percent of the Seaters. Another 25.9 percent of them suffered it rarely while 17.6 suffered it many times. Another 17.6 percent never experienced any form of emotional abuse. The highest proportion (41.5%) of the Roamers experienced emotional abuse

many times. However, 30.4 percent of them indicated they experienced it sometimes while 17 percent rarely experienced it compared to 11.1 percent of them who never experienced any form of emotional abuse.

Seaters who sometimes went through sexual abuse made up 35.3 percent. Those who experienced it rarely represented 27.1 percent while 7.1 percent went through it many times. The remaining 30.6 percent, however, reported to have never experienced any form of sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse to 33.3 percent of the Roamers occurred sometimes and to another 30.4 percent, it occurred many times. While 8.9 percent of the Roamers rarely experienced it, 27.4 percent of them did not go through that experience at all.

Birth occurred to only 21.1 percent of the Seaters and 12.6 percent of the Roamers. Seaters within the 15 to 17-year age bracket had the highest proportion of 12.9 percent. The age group of 12 to 14 years among the Roamers, on the other hand, had the highest proportion (8.9%).

6.6 Drivers of CSW by type of sex work

Sleeping at night without food among the two types of sex work showed that they rarely or sometimes went to bed without food. Table 6.14 shows that only 20.5 percent of the Seaters went to bed often without food while 12.6 percent of the Roamers often went to bed hungry.

Table 6.14: Percent of CSWs by drivers and type of sex work

Variable	Seater		Roamer		χ^2	p-value
	%	N	%	N		
How often did you and your household go to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?						
Rarely or Sometimes (below ten times a week)	79.5	31	87.4	90		
Often (more than ten times a week)	20.5	8	12.6	13	1.388	.290
Total	100.0	39	100.0	103		

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

6.7: Multivariate Analysis

A binary logistic regression analysis was undertaken using the Enter Method with six predictor variables and type of sex worker (categorised as either Seater or Roamer) as the dependent variable. The Roamers were used as the target as against the Seaters. The predictor variables used are as follows:

Age of respondent, age at first birth, reason for dropping out of school, experiences of neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. This is as shown in Table 6.15.

The overall percentage of correctness is 71.4%. This indicates an appreciable level of correct prediction of the dependent variable based on the full model.

For the goodness of fit, the Hosmer and Lemeshow test shows a Chi-square of 11.292, DF = 8 with p-value of 0.186 which is not statistically significant at $p \leq 0.05$, indicating that the model adequately fits the data.

The pseudo R^2 used for this discussion is the Nagelkerke R^2 which records a value of 0.399, indicating that 39.9 percent of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the logistic model. The -2 Log Likelihood also shows 186.351 improvement over the null model.

As shown in Table 6.15, five of the predictor variables attained statistical significance.

These are whether respondent ever suffered neglect, ever suffered emotional abuse, age at first birth, age of respondent and ever suffered sexual abuse. The other predictor variable on why the respondent dropped out of school had no statistically significant effect on a respondent's engagement in the Roamer type of sex work.

Table 6.15: Binary logistic model for factors influencing type of CSW

	B	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
NEGLECT			.009	
Never	-.779	.939	.406	.459
Rarely	2.111	.913	.021	8.259
Sometimes	.674	.528	.202	1.961
Many times (RC)				1.000
EMOTIONAL ABUSE			.142	
Never	.517	.824	.530	1.678
Rarely	.733	.545	.179	2.080
Many times	1.130	.498	.023	3.097
Sometimes (RC)				1.000
AGE AT FIRST BIRTH			.054	
12 - 14 years	2.191	.985	.026	8.943
Never had any child	2.177	.970	.025	8.821
15 - 17 years (RC)				1.000
WHY DID YOU LEAVE SCHOOL			.578	
Orphaned	.868	.730	.235	2.383
Pregnancy	.567	.651	.383	1.764
Poor Academic Performance	.030	.488	.951	1.031
Loss of interest (RC)				1.000
AGE			.005	
14 years & below	-1.689	.544	.002	0.185
15 years	.043	.522	.935	1.044
17 years	.057	.549	.917	1.059
16 years (RC)				1.000
SEXUAL ABUSE			.003	
Never	.828	.611	.175	2.289
Sometimes	1.203	.525	.022	3.329
Many times	2.915	.798	.000	18.457
Rarely (RC)				1.000
Constant	-3.593	1.355	.008	.028

STATISTICS	
-2 Log Likelihood	186.351
Nagelkerke R	0.399
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test	
Chi-square	11.292
DF	8
Sig	0.186
Accuracy rate	71.40%

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

From the Table 6.15, age at first birth came out as the most important explanatory variable. This could result from the fact that, in the case of CSWs who have never had any children, they do not have all the responsibilities that accompany childcare. As a result, they may have fewer responsibilities and enough time to move around and solicit for clients; they are therefore more likely to become roamers as compared to the 15-17-year olds who have children. Also, having a child at an older age comes with some form of maturity, so older CSWs will probably desire to be responsible for the upkeep of their children as compared to the very young mothers who may still not be mature enough to appreciate the responsibilities that come with motherhood. Hence, the older CSWs who have children would prefer to practise a more sedentary type of sex work compared to the younger mothers who may not appreciate the responsibilities that come with motherhood or may have other people taking care of their children for them, so will be roaming around soliciting for clients.

Respondents who rarely suffered neglect are eight times as likely as those who suffered neglect many times to become Roamers. Those who suffered neglect sometimes are almost twice as likely as those who suffered neglect many times to become Roamers while those who had never suffered any neglectful behaviour on the part of caregivers (OR = 0.459) are 54.1 percent less likely compared to those who suffered neglect many times to become Roamers.

Respondents who suffered emotional abuse many times are three times as likely to become Roamers as those who suffered emotional abuse sometimes. Those who rarely suffered emotional abuse are twice as likely as those who suffered emotional abuse sometimes to become Roamers while those who had never suffered any emotional abuse prior to their involvement in the sex trade (OR = 1.6) were 1.6 times as likely as those who suffered emotional abuse sometimes to become Roamers.

The results pertaining to age at first birth showed little or no variation in becoming Roamers

among the 12-14 CSWs and the never given birth compared to others 15-17 years. Both the 12-14 and never given birth CSWs were almost 9 times as likely to become roamers as others whose first births occurred within the 15 to 17 year age bracket.

Respondents aged 14 years and below are 81.5 percent less likely to become Roamers compared to those aged 16 years. This could result from the fact that as mentioned earlier in the discussion, younger girls enter the trade at times under the tutelage of their older counterparts. As a result, they practise the seater type to learn the skills needed and also to save themselves from being abused until they become mature before they venture into the roamer type of sex work. Respondents aged 15 years and those aged 17 years, however, did not show any remarkable variation compared to those aged 16 years to become Roamers.

Respondents who suffered sexual abuse sometimes and those who had never suffered any sexual abuse were three times and twice respectively as likely to become Roamers as those who rarely suffered any form of sexual abuse. Respondents who suffered many sexual abuses were interestingly 18 times as likely to become Roamers as those who had never suffered any sexual abuse. The reason for this could be that, for those who have suffered sexual abuse many times, they may have developed some form of toughness which is described by the resilience theory as strengthening effect. They may, therefore, not be afraid to venture into the roamer type of sex work with all the challenges that may be associated with it. They are thus, more likely to be comfortable practising the roamer type of sex work compared to the seater type.

6.8 Summary

The bivariate results of the study showed that both the YA and the OA experienced almost the same levels of abuse and neglect from caregivers. However, it was observed that the reasons for entry into sex work by the YA mostly resulted from peer pressure whilst the reasons given by the OA for the decision to engage in the sex trade mostly suggested that

they wanted to be independent. Children who practised both the roamer and seater types of sex work were observed to have experienced various levels of abuse and neglect when growing up.

The results of the logistic regression further gave insights into the factors that influenced the roamer and seater types of CSW. Age at first birth came out as the most important explanatory variable. The analysis also showed that those who have never had any children and the YA were more likely to become roamers as compared to their older counterparts who had children. It was also noted that children who were abused many times by caregivers were more likely to become roamers for the reasons already presented.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Challenges and coping mechanisms of child sex workers

7.1 Introduction

Sex workers generally are noted to face a number of challenges in the course of their work (Sloss and Harper, 2004; Semple et al., 2015; Jeffereys, 2000; Rekart, 2005; Rössler et al., 2010). However, these challenges do not prevent them from plying their trade since they have strategies that help them cope.

This chapter is divided into two sections; the first part examines the challenges CSWs encounter while plying their trade and the second explores the strategies they employ to cope with the challenges.

All the information in this chapter is based on qualitative data collected from 10 in-depth interviews. As indicated earlier in chapter three (data and methodology section), five child sex workers are child mothers and the remaining five are not mothers. The children were selected based on their willingness and readiness to participate in the in-depth interviews after the quantitative questionnaire was completed.

Table 7.1 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the 10 respondents who participated in the in-depth interviews. Eight of the respondents are within the legal age of consensual sex of 16 years in Ghana with majority of them being Christians. With the exception of two foreigners, all the respondents are Ghanaians. Majority of the respondents ever went to school dropping out at various levels to ply their trade at Agbobloshie and Konkomba market. In conformity with the anonymity required for the practice of sex work, none of the respondents is a native of Accra or moved from a suburb within Accra. They all migrated from other regions with two being migrants from Nigeria. Except for one who lived

With the boyfriend prior to migrating to Accra, all others lived with a relative. At their current places of residence in Accra, most of them live on their own with only two living with workmates.

Table 7.1: Socio-demographic characteristics of in-depth interview participants.

Characteristics	Number (n=10)
Age	
15	2
16	6
17	2
Religion	
Christian	9
Muslim	1
Marital Status	
Never Married	9
Widowed	1
Ethnicity	
Akan	7
Mole Dagbani	1
Other (Non-Ghanaian)	2
Ever had a child	
Yes	5
No	5
Schooling Status	
Never attended	1
Left school	9
Living arrangement and migration status	
Agbobloshie and Konkomba	9
Madina	1
Area of residence before migration	
Ashanti Region	3
Central Region	4
Northern Region	1
Non-Ghanaian	2
Living arrangement before migrating	
Father (alone)	1
Mother (alone)	4
Grandparents	1
Boyfriend	1
Other relative	3
Current living arrangement	
Myself	8
Friend/workmate	2

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

7.2 Challenges faced by CSWs

Challenges faced by CSWs were identified and categorised into six broad areas. These are abuse, economic/financial, lack of social/societal support, health, security and motherhood challenges. Figure 7.1 presents a summary of the various themes and sub-themes of the challenges faced by CSWs. The coding frequencies for these challenges are presented in Appendix 5 (APP 5:173), while a sample of significant statements with the major themes and sub-themes are presented in Appendix 6 (APP 6:174-177). The various statements have prefixes such as “CC” and “CM”. “CC” represents CSWs who do not have children and “CM” represents CSWs who are mothers.

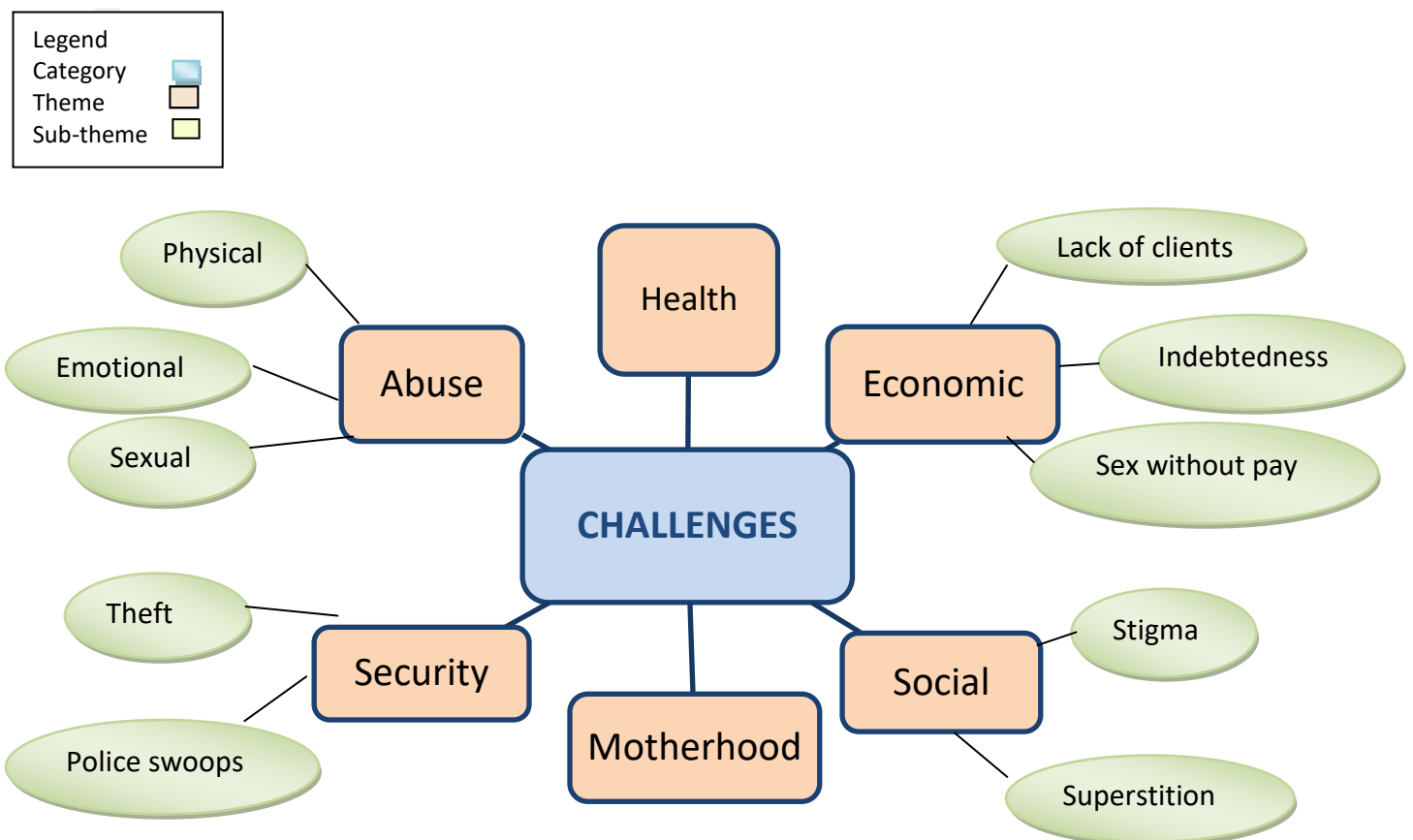


Figure 7. 1: Major themes for challenges faced by CSWs

7.2.1 Abuse

Abuse as a main challenge has three main sub-themes; they are physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Almost all, (8 out of 10) the participants have ever experienced at least one form of abuse, while one out of five have experienced multiple forms of abuse (APP 5:173). Abuse therefore is a notable challenge faced by CSWs. A study by Hengartner, Islam, Haker, & Rössler (2015) in Chittagong, Bangladesh affirms this finding by stating that participants in their study reported that they often or very often experienced severe sexual, physical and emotional abuse. In 13 Mexican cities, Semple et al., (2015) identified all three forms of violence against female sex workers (FSWs) as being prevalent.

Majority (7 out of 10) have ever experienced physical abuse (APP I:174). They indicated that clients often beat them up for no apparent reason. Clients sometimes made unreasonable demands such as demanding unprotected sex, and beat them up when they refuse. A 17-year-old CSW who resides at Agbobloshie stated,

“He beat me up badly, and abandoned me at the place” (CM8; 17years; Agbobloshie).

Physical abuse is not only limited to battery, there are certain actions that result in pain that are experienced by CSWs that can also be categorised under physical abuse. According to a 15-year-old CSW who lives at Agbobloshie,

“Some of the men have big penis, if you are unfortunate and you meet one like that, it can be very painful”. (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie)

In total, one out of five CSWs reported being sexually abused. They mentioned rape and clients taking advantage to “overuse” them once they pay for their services. A 16-year-old CSW at Madina claimed that after she and her client agreed on a fee, she accompanied him to his house;

“When he finished (having sex with her), he did not allow me to go away. He made his friends also have sex with me in turns. It was a very horrible experience.” (CM10; 16 years; Madina)

CSWs also reported emotional abuse; they are insulted and cursed by their clients, people who know what they do and their fellow sex workers. A 16-year-old CSW who resides at Konkomba Market indicated that,

“People treat you as if you are not a human being. The men insult you always”. (CM6; 16 years; Konkomba)

Cases of multiple abuses were also reported by three respondents. They complained of a combination of various forms of abuse. Some of them reported that they were physically and emotionally abused, whilst others were physically and sexually abused. A 16-year-old child mother, who lives at Agbobloshie recounted a situation that presented a multiple abuse incident. She had this to say:

“After having sex with both of us (she and her fellow sex worker friend), it was raining heavily. He just left us in the compound of his house for the rain to beat us the whole night... He opened the gate for us in the morning and gave us money for transport and asked us to leave.” (CM9; 16 years; Agbobloshie).

The CSWs had to endure the physical pain of the weather and also had to cope with the emotional pain of being treated like a less human being by being left out in the rain all night.

This finding corroborates previous researches (Wilson & Widom, 2010; Agnew 2004, 2005a, 2006 cited in Reid, 2010; Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014; Serafini, 2012; Willis & Levy, 2002; Adomako Ampofo, 2007:73; Semple et al., 2015), that sex workers across the globe are subjected to all forms of abuses. However, those under the age of 18 years experience the worst of these abuses. Due to the legal status of sex work in some countries, an adult sex worker may be able to access health care and also have greater potential to persuade clients to use condoms than children. They can seek some kind of redress when they are abused. In the case of the children, practising the trade is illegal

everywhere and it is always practised secretly. As a result, they have no means of redress, clients know and so abuse them knowing that they cannot seek redress (Willis and levy 2002).

7.2.2 Economic/financial

Situations that predisposed the CSWs to financial stress were lack of clients, sex without payment and high cost of living. Generally, CSWs were noted to encounter financial hardships as they ply their trade. Almost a third (3 out of 10) mentioned lack of clients as a challenge. There are times that clients are simply not available, and this affects their finances because most of them solely depend on the sale of sex. A 16-year-old child mother at Konkomba Market indicated that,

“There are days that you hardly get any one” (CM6; 16 years; Konkomba).

This situation is of concern to the average CSW because according to them, the cost of living at Konkomba Market and Agbobloshie where most of them reside is very high. A 16-year-old child mother categorically stated that,

“At this place (Konkomba Market) you need money to survive. If you don’t have money, you can’t even go to toilet, because you pay for everything” (CM6; 16years; Konkomba).

CSWs pay for their accommodation on weekly basis at almost all the sites with the exception of Madina, where they pay on daily basis. The use of bathrooms and toilet facilities is paid for on daily basis. Therefore, if a CSW fails to get clients for a day, the implications are enormous. They can be thrown out of their room and finding a new room can be very difficult for a sex worker. According to the CSWs, nobody likes to give their room out to a sex worker to live in because of the stigma associated with the trade. They must, therefore, try to pay for their accommodation religiously. Securing a client is, therefore, of utmost importance to the CSW in the sex industry in Accra.

Another financial challenge faced by some of the CSWs is indebtedness. During the data collection period, a particular system of recruiting children into sex work was discovered at Agbobloshie and Konkomba market. The system mimics child trafficking, referred to as the “mothering system” in this study because of the way it operates. The “mothering system” of sex work practice predisposes some of the CSWs to indebtedness. This system is mostly practised by the Nigerian adult sex workers in Ghana. When these women realise that they are getting too old to attract enough customers to sustain them, they get younger girls from Nigeria to come and live very close to them and work for them. The young girls refer to these older women as their “mothers”. Either the “mothers” or a third party brings the girl from Nigeria to Ghana. They also pay for the cost of moving from Nigeria to Ghana including their initial feeding and housing. These children are indebted to their “mothers” upon arrival in the country. They live with their “mothers” for a few days and start working under the strict supervision and instructions from the “mother”. The girls are usually supposed to pay an amount ranging from 3,500 (\$700) to 4,500 (\$900) cedis to get back their freedom. Once they are able to pay off their indebtedness, they are free to do what they want.

The challenge is that, these young girls find it very difficult to pay the amount involved. A 16-year-old Nigerian CSW, who lives at Konkomba reported that,

“I owe the woman who brought me here (to Ghana), I have to pay her 4,000 cedis (\$800), I give it to my “mother” to give it to her. I’m not sure I will be able to pay all that money”. (CC5; 16 years; Konkomba).

Some of these children are able to escape, whilst others have no choice but to stay and work till they are able to pay off their debt. As the debt accumulates, the likelihood of the child leaving the sex trade diminishes. This situation can, therefore, lead a child to stay in the sex trade for a long time, despite their dislike for the trade and the desire to leave it.

The refusal of clients to pay for services rendered is another challenge that the CSWs reported. Almost half (4 out of 10) of the participants indicated that they have ever encountered situations where clients refused to pay them or ran away with their money after service was rendered. This situation results in economic challenges. A 16-year-old child mother at Madina reported that,

“After everything they didn’t pay me anything” (CM; 16 years; Madina).

Another 16-year-old child mother who resides at Konkomba Market validated this assertion by stating that,

“They can have sex with you and just refuse to pay” (CM6; 16 years; Konkomba).

This finding is corroborated by a study in Uganda by the Ministry of Gender, (2004:58), that found that children in sex work face socio-economic problems such as public attitude, non-payment of fees after service is rendered and assault from customers. Bindman (1995) indicated that some clients who pay before service is rendered demand their money back because they were not satisfied.

7.2.3 Social/societal

All the CSWs stated that family members neither knew where they lived nor were aware of what they do for a living. They further communicated that they would be rejected by their loved ones if they knew that they practised sex work. This reveals the level of stigmatisation that is associated with child sex work in Ghana. Onyango et al., (2012:21) support this assertion by indicating in their study at Kumasi that female sex workers are sensitive to stigma and disrespect from those around them. A 16-year-old CSW who resides at Konkomba Market stated that,

“None of my people know where I am. I just left without informing my boyfriend or my family members” (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba).

Another 16-year-old child mother at the same location corroborated the report by stipulating that,

“My movements are very limited. I am always afraid that someone might recognize me and go back home and tell my family members. If that happens, I cannot go home again. Nobody will accept me back” (CM6; 16 years; Konkomba).

Stigmatization is not limited to CSW in Ghana. This finding is supported by a number of studies across the globe. According to Scorgie et al., (2012), sex work is heavily stigmatised in sub-Saharan Africa. In Ethiopia, a study by Reschke & Schröder (2011) revealed that, generally sex workers experience stigma and discrimination, but the case of the child sex worker is more apparent. Busza et al., (2014) further submit that CSWs are heavily stigmatised and discriminated against by society. Stigmatization according to Rekart (2005) can lead to all the three forms of abuse and result in criminalisation, denial of services and low self-esteem.

About one-third of the CSWs indicated that some of their challenges resulted from charms and other supernatural influences. The belief in the supernatural is quite prevalent among CSWs. It is claimed that due to lack of clients, some CSWs resort to spiritual means to attract more clients to themselves. In the process of these spiritual manipulations, other CSWs can get hurt. According to a 16-year-old child mother at Madina,

“Some girls also resort to spiritual means to destroy you if they realize that you attract a lot of men. You can just be falling sick all the time, so that you can’t work” (CM10; 16 years; Madina).

They believe that some of these charms are so powerful that they can prevent one from getting clients. It was further reported that in the course of working, one could be used for rituals. A 17-year-old CSW at Konkomba Market stated that,

“...you can be used for rituals if you are not careful” (CC3; 17 years; Konkomba).

Another respondent, a 16-year-old CSW who resides at Agbobloshie indicated that after work on a particular day,

“...When I returned home, I fell seriously sick. Then I consulted the Mallam (spiritualist) who told me that my womb has been removed by the boy...” (CC2; 16 years; Agbobloshie).

Statements such as the ones above indicate how much influence spiritual manipulations have in the day to day affairs of the CSW. WAPCAS (2006:13) corroborates this finding by stating that female sex workers are highly superstitious and associate any unusual happenings to supernatural power. According to Anarfi (1989:293), most sex workers perceive their health challenges in the light of suspicion and superstition, resulting in their inability to seek treatment at hospitals/clinics.

Generally, the conditions under which sex workers live are very poor. A study by Gangoli (2002), in Bombay reported that in the areas where sex workers reside and carry out their trade, there are piles of garbage on the pavement sidewalk with dirty and squalid surroundings. Their homes are made up of several tiny cubicles, often poorly lit, dirty with poor and inadequate sanitation. This report corroborates the findings of this study. At Agbobloshie, Komkomba, Railways and CMB areas, where most (70.5%) of the CSWs live, about 90 percent of the houses are either metal containers or wooden structures. Some have electricity while others do not. They have very narrow alleys in-between these structures that make movement difficult and slow. There are no drains; puddles of water can be seen all over the place, with heaps of garbage at various points. The place is generally overcrowded because many people, as well as vehicles share limited space. Overcrowding normally has negative consequences on the general health of residents in any neighbourhood. The pertaining living conditions pose challenges to some of the CSWs. A 16-year-old CSW who lives at Konkomba Market emphatically stated that,

“I don’t like this place (Konkomba Market), it is crowded and dirty. The bathroom is dirty all the time. We pay to use the place, but it’s not cleaned” (CC5; 16 years; Konkomba Market).

7.2.4 Health

Health-related challenges could result from other challenges that have already been stated such as being abused and poor living conditions. However, responses from the in-depth interviews revealed that unwanted pregnancies leading to abortions with unqualified persons can also result in health challenges. The issue of getting pregnant while using condom suggest that the children might not be very skilled in the use of condom. Such situations predispose them to other health complications. This finding is supported by Lau et al., (2002) cited in Busza, et al., (2014). According to the study, researches in China and Indonesia revealed that young sex workers are unlikely to use condoms successfully. Unplanned pregnancies resulting in unsafe abortions constitute another health risk that CSWs faced. A study by Gangoli (2002:90) in Bombay supports this assertion that “early pregnancies and frequent abortions by quacks or unqualified practitioners lead to a range of gynaecological problems”. This finding is also consistent with a study in Ouagadougou by Hounmenou (2016) that submitted that one out of every three children in sex work experienced unwanted pregnancy. A number of researches also attest to the fact that CSWs generally have health-related challenges (Willis & Levy, 2002; Onyango et al., 2012; Busza, et al., 2014; Spice 2007; Jeffereys, 2005; Serafini, 2012; ILO, nd: 2).

7.2.5 Security

Generally, security is of a major concern for CSWs. All respondents reported prevalence of theft in the communities they live. They reported of clients and “rough boys” in their neighbourhoods stealing from them. They further claimed they are aware that most of their clients are thieves, but they still patronise them because they need money to survive. A 15-year-old respondent who resides at Agbobloshie stated that,

“... they can have sex with you, refuse to pay and also steal all your money and your phone as well” (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie).

Another 16-year-old CSW from Konkomba Market validated this submission by reporting that,

“...when I woke up this morning all the money, I made last time (80 Cedis) had been stolen” (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba Market).

Finally, another 16-year-old child mother who resides at Konkomba Market also affirmed this by indicating that,

“Having a safe place to keep your money is also a problem. Everybody is stealing from their friend. There are many thieves here. They can even enter your room whilst you are there to steal from you” (CM6; 16 years; Konkomba Market).

Theft, therefore, is a predominant feature in communities where CSWs live.

According to literature, “the actions of the police are often seen as both an enemy and a friend” (Belcher & Herr, 2005). The actions of the police at times make the CSWs feel unsafe. The police sometimes go to the restaurants or clubs they work and just arrest them and put them behind bars. One respondent indicated that police swoops are very rampant in most of the areas where they ply their trade. They feel unsafe when they stand by the road side to solicit clients because of the actions of the police. A 15-year-old child mother reported that,

“The police just come in at any time and then arrest us and put us in cells for no reason” (CM7; 15 years; Agbobloshie).

This finding is supported by a report by WAPCAS (2006), that female sex workers often encounter police raids and harassment.

CSWs were noted to be aware of the dangers involved in the work they do. More than half (6 out of 10) of respondents indicated how unsafe, sad and bad they felt about the work they do. They indicated that having sex with a total stranger can be difficult and very scary because

one could be harmed in the process. A 16-year-old child mother at Agbobloshie had this to say,

“The work is dangerous; anything can happen to you. You can even be killed. I always pray to God to keep me safe. If something bad happens to me, what will happen to my child”? (CM9; 16 years; Agbobloshie).

Some respondents were very emotional and could not keep themselves together. Amidst tears, a 16-year-old Nigerian girl reported that,

“... I feel so sad for myself and it pains me to see what I have gotten myself into” (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba Market).

This finding is consistent with an ILO report that states that CSWs feel humiliated, guilty and sad (ILO, nd:1).

Some clients are reported to be very violent, while others look strange sometimes. This situation makes the CSWs feel unsafe.

7.2.6 Motherhood Challenges

Child sex worker who are mothers were noted to encounter childcare challenges. All CSWs who are mothers claimed they do not have enough time to take care of their children. This is validated by a study by Anarfi (1989:131) in Abidjan, the capital of Cote d’Ivoire; that sex workers have very little or no care at all for their children so long as they have enough clients to work for money. The children of four out of five child mothers are being raised by relatives in their respective hometowns. A CSW who lives with her child at the “Efo bar”, a brothel at Agbobloshie encounters unique challenges as compared to the other mothers. In order to be able to ply her trade and have enough rest during the day, her child attends both day and night school. She sends her child to a care taker in the night and picks him up at dawn (not later than 5:00 am). She must always ensure that she picks up the child on time. After picking the child, they both go to bed for a few hours, then she wakes up to

prepare him for school. It is only when the child goes to school after 8:00 am that she finds some time to sleep. Living with her child makes her incur extra childcare cost and also reduces the hours that she can work to earn more money. The 16-year-old child mother, who lives with her child at a brothel in Agbobloshie, explained that,

“If I forget or I’m late to pick up my child at Atta Maame, she will double the charge. Childcare at this place is very expensive. I have to make sure that I pick him up at 5am, otherwise I’m in trouble. I have to pay double to Atta Maame, which is 10 Cedis. It is very expensive” (CM9; 16; Agbobloshie).

With regard to those whose children are with other relations, their major challenge is constant demand for money from the care-givers of their children. This situation prevents them from being able to save. A 17-year-old child mother at Agbobloshie indicated that,

“No matter the amount I send to my Aunt, she keeps calling me demanding more money. At times I become fed up with her. I have to borrow at times and send to her because of my child. I can’t save or buy anything. I also don’t want to bring my child into this environment. It is not a good place to raise a child” (CM7; 17 years; Agbobloshie).

This is supported by a 16-year-old child mother at Madina.

“I send her 100 cedis every week. Although she complains that it’s not sufficient, I can’t send her more than that” (CM10; 16; Madina).

Two out of the five CSWs who have children stated that their children were always sick. They believed that this is as a result of their inability to take care of their children properly due to the demands of their work. They believed that if they had the time to take care of them, they would be healthier. A 16-year-old CSW in Agbobloshie had this to say

“My child falls sick very often, I think it’s because I don’t take good care of him. I don’t have enough time to take care of him because of my work. I always take him to the drug store when he falls sick”. (CM9; 16 years; Agbobloshie).

Another 16-year-old at Madina affirmed this,

“The problem I have with my child is that he falls sick too much, so I spend a lot of money on him. I wish I could be with him and take care of him myself, but I cannot combine this work with childcare” (CM10; 16 years; Madina).

The child mothers experience their own unique challenges as well as all the other challenges mentioned by those who do not have children. This implies that CSWs who have children are more challenged than those who do not have children.

7.3 Coping mechanisms for challenges encountered by CSWs

Despite all the challenges faced by CSWs in the course of plying their trade, they are able to stay in business to sustain themselves. This is because they employ some techniques that enable them cope with the challenges. Figure 6.2 presents a summary of the various themes and sub-themes of the coping mechanisms employed by CSWs.

This study tried to identify coping strategies for each of the challenges they reported. For some of the challenges, they are able to adopt effective coping strategies. However, they confessed that they could not cope with all challenges.

The coding frequencies for coping mechanisms are presented in appendix 7 (APP 7:178), while a sample of significant statements with the major themes and sub-themes are presented in appendix 8 (APP: 179-181).

The coping strategies were subtitled: Abuse reduction, use of drugs and alcohol, belief in the supernatural, coping with economic/financial challenges, good social support, safeguarding techniques and coping with health challenges.

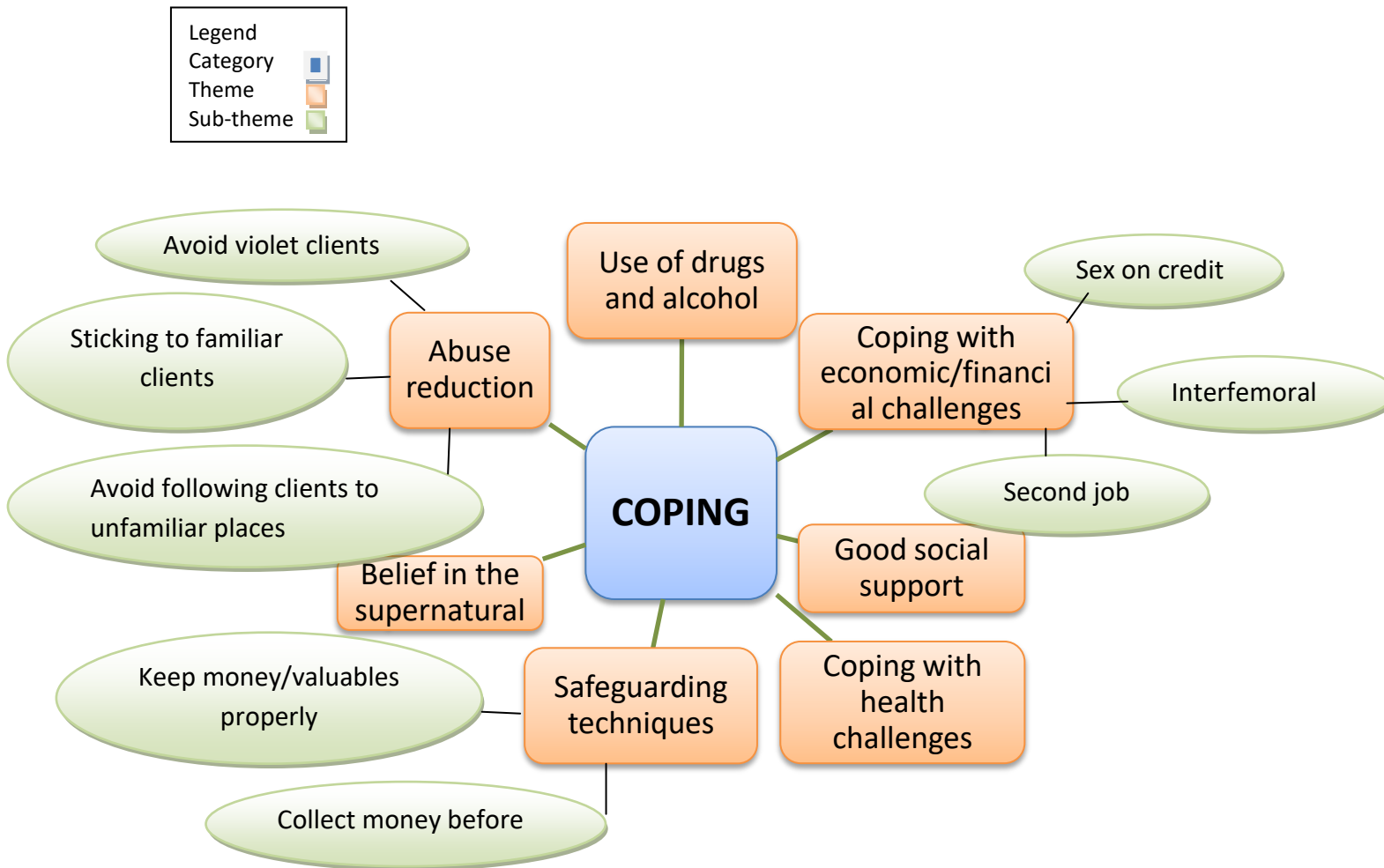


Figure 7. 2: Major themes for coping mechanisms used by CSWs

Source Fieldwork 2018

7.3.1 Abuse Reduction

In order to prevent themselves from being abused by their clients, three out of ten indicated that they avoided violent clients. Some CSWs are aware of those who are capable of abusing them through past experiences. They stay away from clients they know can be violent. A 16-year-old CSW at Konkomba Market stated that,

“...I didn’t do anything about it (being abused by a client); I stay away from him whenever he comes here” (CC5; 16 years; Konkomba Market)

CSWs often share information on who is violent or otherwise with each other to protect themselves from being hurt. A 16-year-old CSW who has a “mother” had this to say,

“With the help of my “mother” here, I am able to stay

away from rough (violent) men. She often advises me on whom to reject and also teaches me how to be polite with my clients, so that I don’t get abused” (CC5; 16 years; Konkomba Market)

Half of the respondents also stated that they only stick to familiar clients. These are clients they have already had some encounter with and knew they will be safe with. A 16-year-old CSW with a child at Agbobloshie indicated that,

“Nowadays, I always go out with people I know to avoid trouble” (CM9; 16 years; Agbobloshie).

Another 16-year-old child mother from Madina corroborated this report by indicating that,

“I make sure that I am very familiar with a client before I follow them anywhere” (CM10; 16 years; Madina).

They take these actions to avoid being abused by clients. Regular clients treat them well and give them some respect.

Fifty percent of CSWs also indicated that they never follow clients to unfamiliar places. They consider it a very dangerous act. They claimed some of their colleagues had either lost their lives or been seriously abused by following clients to unfamiliar places. A 15-year-old CSW at Agbobloshie submitted that,

“I don’t go with people to their homes or places I don’t know; it can be very dangerous. One girl got killed about 2 weeks ago. We were here when they brought her dead picture to show to us” (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie).

Another CSW also had this to say,

“I only work at familiar bars. I have clients I visit at home. I also have clients that I have established some kind of relationship with. They call me and I go to their homes. It’s not everyone that I follow to the house” (CC3; 17 years; Konkomba Market).

CSWs will either have sex with clients in their brothel room, or at a hotel where they are very familiar with to avoid being abused. In their own rooms, there are always people around, so it is difficult for someone to abuse a CSW and walk out safely. Their friends and some other men around will help them when they shout, so the possibility of being abused in their own room or neighbourhood is very limited. They are also well known in the hotels that they frequent. They often make friends with the staff, so they feel safe in these places. One CSW reported this,

“I prefer to use the rooms provided by familiar hotels or a place I have rented myself. If I don’t know where a client is taking me, I don’t go” (CM10; 16 years; Madina).

7.3.2 Use of drugs and alcohol

In order to overcome emotional and psychological abuse, they usually resort to the use of drugs and alcohol. One respondent revealed that they take a lot of drugs and alcohol to be able to cope with their emotional and psychological challenges. She emphatically stated that,

“As for the drugs we all take it; anyone who tells you they don’t smoke is a liar. Smoking and drinking help us to break inhibitions, we can’t do this work without drinking. The nature of the job is such that if you don’t “sniff small”, you cannot do it. The work is very difficult; you have to “sniff” so that you can be bold to do the work”. (CM6; 16 years; Konkomba Market).

A number of studies support this finding. In a Ugandan study, it was reported that drugs and alcohol play a dual role as benefit and as mood changer to absorb the shock, stress and trauma arising from the practice (Ministry of Gender, 2004:58). Semple et al., (2015:9) also indicated that in order to cope with the negative consequences of their trade, female sex workers may voluntarily engage in alcohol use before or during sex with clients. Researches in South Africa also find that, alcohol and other drugs are normally used by sex workers to increase courage to approach clients, lower inhibitions and generally help them cope with the stresses associated with the work (Pauw & Brener, 2005; Trotter, 2008). *“Once you are on*

the stuff, then it helps to numb the pain of your life”, a statement from a sex worker in a qualitative study in the U.S (Belcher & Herr, 2005:119).

However, the use of drugs may result in the inconsistent use of condoms (Rekart, 2005), which may have some negative outcomes on the health of the CSW. Other studies also report that, the use of drugs and alcohol is actually what gets some people to enter the sex trade in the first place, and also keeps them in the trade to sustain their addictions (Belcher & Herr, 2005).

7.3.3 Belief in the Supernatural

Religion is another outlet for the release of emotional and psychological stress. Statements made during the interviews suggested that CSWs rely on the supernatural for some form of consolation and protection. A 16-year-old at Agbobloshie indicated that,

“the work is dangerous... I always pray to God to keep me safe”

Another 17-year-old also stated that,

“by the Grace of God, I make enough money to remit to my Aunt to take care of my son ...I pray to God always to protect me and help me in everything I do”

Spirituality helped sex workers to reduce their numb feeling (Terrylynn et al., 2005). In a study in the U.S, it was reported that sex workers felt they had a complex relationship with God. On the one hand, many of them felt God “cheated” them, yet many of them also felt that God kept them “safe” (Belcher & Herr, 2005).

7.3.4 Coping with financial challenges

In order to cope with economic challenges such as financial difficulties, CSWs resorted to any of three strategies: the practice of interfemoral, offering sex on credit and having a second job.

7.3.4.1 Interfemoral

To meet the request for unprotected sex for extra income, interfemoral is offered to clients high on drugs or very drunk. This is a practice where sex is performed between the thighs. Two out of ten mentioned the practice of interfemoral. They indicated that when the clients are very high on drugs or are very drunk, they cannot tell the difference between vaginal and thigh sex. They therefore exploit their clients by holding their thighs tightly together and aiding the penis in-between them. They use this method for those who want unprotected sex, and take extra money from them. A 15-year-old CSW at Agbobloshie stated that,

“... some of them come when they are drunk and very high. You will charge them for raw (unprotected) sex because they will insist that they want sex without condom. Then you will let them “chop your thigh”, you press your thighs together tightly then you aid their penis in-between your thighs” (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie).

This statement is validated by a 17-year-old CSW at Konkomba Market,

“When we are desperate, we sometimes compromise and have sex with those people who are very drunk and high on drugs. You have to be smart when you do that. We have a way of putting our thighs together so tight that they cannot penetrate the vagina. They are only “chopping the thigh”, but they believe it’s the vagina. We can satisfy our clients very well by doing that. You can even charge them more for not using condom” (CC3; 17 years; Konkomba)

However, the practice of interfemoral can expose the girls to some health challenges. Bruises inside the thighs can still lead to some kinds of STIs, which may compromise their health.

7.3.4.2 Sex on Credit

Another strategy to cope with financial hardship is to offer sex on credit. Two CSWs indicated that there were days that one had no choice but to offer sex on credit. They believed that the client will definitely pay in future when you needed money. They also claimed that, when you offer sex on credit, the clients always come back.

“I prefer to give sex on credit to a man who won’t beat me than to one that will beat me. If I’m broke, I will credit it, by all means one day he will come and pay because he will want sex on credit again” (CM6; 16 years; Konkomba Market).

7.3.4.3 Second Job

In order to supplement her income, one CSW claimed she is a hair dresser; she practised her trade on her colleagues. However, she earns very little from practising the hairdressing. Her main work is sex work, but she supplements it with hair dressing whenever the opportunity presents itself. She intimated that,

“I learnt hair dressing in Cape Coast before I migrated to this place (Agbobloshie) to start this work (sex work). I practise it here. I do the hair of most of the sex workers around here, but it’s not lucrative. They do their hair once in a while. I get money from the sex work more than the hairdressing” (CM8; 17 years; Agbobloshie)

7.3.5 Good Social Support

The practice of sex work has the tendency to keep people isolated from their families and loved ones. CSWs usually seek support by depending on each other. Four out of ten CSWs depend on their friends for the social support. They borrow from each other when the need arises and talk to each other about the challenges they individually encounter. A 16-year-old from Agbobloshie reported that,

“The friend that I live with is very helpful. We share everything. I tell her all my problems and she tells me hers... we borrow from each other when we are broke...”. (CC2; 16 years; Agbobloshie).

Some of them share rooms to support each other by sharing the bills. A 17-year-old CSW who lives at Konkomba stated that,

“I share a room with my friend, and we get on very well”. (CC3; 17 years; Konkomba).

Finally, those of them who are involved in the “mothering” system depend a lot on their “mothers” to help navigate the trade. A 16-year-old who resides at Konkomba market communicated that,

“She protects me from all the bad guys around here” (CC5; 16 years; Konkomba)

7.3.6 Safeguarding Techniques

During the in-depth interview session, three out of ten reported that in order to safeguard their money and other valuables from being stolen, they hide them at places that cannot be easily found. One person indicated that she always collects her money before sex and gives it to someone else to keep.

“I always give my money to friends to keep away from the room that I take the client. I collect the money after I have finished work for the day. In the case of the “rough boys” who attack us, there isn’t much we can do about it. We always have to hide our phones very well on our body all the time. If you are lucky, they will not find it on you”. (CM7; 15 years; Agbobloshie)

Another respondent indicated that she saves with a “susu man” (informal savings) who comes on daily basis. Another, aged 17 who resides in Agbobloshie stated that she uses regular clients all the time, so she is paid by mobile money even before service is rendered.

“I have a lot of regular clients; some even pay with mobile money. If I don’t know you well, I take my money and give it to a friend to keep even before I start with you” (CM8; 17 years; Agbobloshie).

Usually, when they are arrested by the police, those involved come together, contribute and pay some money to the police for them to be released. According to Bindman & Doezman (1997), sometimes, sex workers prevent arrest by bribing the police. As much as this causes fear, panic and insecurity among them, it also causes financial loss to the CSWs.

7.3.7 Coping with Health Challenges

In order to stay safe from infections and sexually transmitted infections, one CSW indicated that she tries to use condoms:

“I protect myself with condoms and try to cope with the situation for now” (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba)

Respondents further indicated that they experience other health challenges such as aborting unplanned pregnancies, being beaten up and sustaining injuries and some other health challenges. However, they do not have any coping strategies for some of these challenges.

7.4 Summary

As has been indicated by other studies CSWs have challenges. This study found out that there are six main challenges they encounter in the course of plying their trade.

They, however, employ a number of strategies to cope with the challenges; alcohol and drug use is a major strategy to break inhibition. To prevent infection, condom use is practised but when there is the urgent need to indulge in unsafe sex, interfemoral is practised. They only deal with familiar clients and go to familiar places to safeguard themselves. They however admitted that they do not have strategies to cope with all the challenges they face.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study, its findings, conclusions and recommendations for policy consideration and future studies. The study aimed at understanding who child sex workers are and what pushes them into sex work, bringing out the problems they encounter and how they cope with these problems.

Specifically, the study investigated the characteristics of child sex workers, examined the drivers of child sex work, identified the challenges child sex workers encounter in the course of their work and how they cope with their challenges. A pre-field work study indicated that child sex workers can be located in the following areas in the city of Accra: Konkomba market, Agbobloshie, Abuja, CMB, Railways, Dome, St Johns, Madina, Okaishie, druglane, Awoshie, Mangoase, Chorkor and Korle Gonno. The study was therefore undertaken in these selected areas.

A conceptual framework was designed to guide the work and three theories were used in this study. They were the Eco Development Theory, the Lifestyle Exposure Theory and the Resilience Theory. These theories helped with the understanding of the concepts and definitions and also gave general ideas on the issue to guide the research.

The study used both qualitative and quantitative data to answer the research questions. The Respondent Driven Sampling methodology was used to collect data from 220 CSWs which was used to investigate the characteristics and the drivers of child sex work while an in-depth interview guide was used to conduct interviews on ten child sex workers to ascertain the challenges they faced and how they coped with them. Five respondents were child

mothers and the other five had no children. Quantitative data were analysed by using descriptive and explanatory analysis using simple counts, percentages, measures of central tendency, cross-tabulations and the binary logistic regression. Thematic network analysis was used in analysing the qualitative data. The summary of the key findings are presented in the next session.

8.2 Summary

The analysis of the quantitative data found out that majority (82.3%) of the CSWs fall within ages 15-17. The finding is consistent with the findings of the qualitative results. All the respondents for the qualitative study aged between 15-17 years. Seven out of ten respondents in both quantitative and qualitative studies indicated they were Christians. The next highest group were the Muslims, who accounted for a little over a quarter (25.5%) in the quantitative study. Traditional and other worshippers accounted for 1.9 percent.

Majority (91.4%) of respondents had never married, while 4.5 percent were cohabiting. Less than 2 percent (1.4%) of the CSWs were either married or widowed. Divorcees accounted for 2.7 percent. As expected, Akans being the largest ethnic group in Ghana accounted for close to half (45.0%) of the respondents, dominating the population of CSWs in Accra. Ewe's followed with 15.9 percent, Gas and the Mole-Dagbanis accounted for 12.3 percent each, while other ethnic groups put together accounted for 14.5 percent.

The findings of the study show that generally, CSWs have very minimal educational attainments. While 11.4 percent never attended school, majority (86.8%) are school-drop-outs, only 1.8 percent are currently in school. A little over a third (32%) of CSWs who have never been to school stated reasons such as, being sick, orphaned and the cost of education. More than half (56%), of those who never attended school reported that they do not know why they never attended school.

It was observed that seven out of ten respondents live at either Agbobloshie and Konkomba market, Abuja and CMB or Railways suburbs in Accra. Close to half (45.4%) of CSWs reside in Agbobloshie and Konkomba market alone. Almost all (97.3%) of respondents migrated from elsewhere to ply their trade at their present location. In total, 75.9 percent migrated from other regions in Ghana, while 15 percent migrated from within the Greater Accra Region. Migrants from other neighbouring West African countries (Nigeria, Togo and Mali) constituted 6.4 percent of the respondents. Only 2.7 percent of CSWs have never migrated. Before migrating to their present location, one out of five CSWs lived with both biological parents whilst two out of five lived with either their father or mother. All together 60 percent of CSWs lived with either both parents or one single parent and 36.4 percent lived with other relations. Currently, more than half (59.1) of the CSWs live with a work mate or friend.

The study established that majority (84.1%) of the children have never given birth. On the whole about 40 percent reported of ever having an abortion. Majority (95%) of the respondents indicated the use of contraceptive; the pill or condoms. Although half (51%) have ever had an STI, their knowledge of STI is very high at 92 percent reflecting in same percentage patronising condoms as a means of STI prevention. Only about 15 percent seek treatment at the hospital or clinic when they have health issues, while majority (69%) buy off the counter drugs at the chemist in their localities.

This study suggests CSWs in Accra practise the seater, roamer and other unspecified type of sex work. On a typical day, a CSW can have an average of 4 to 6 clients, a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 10. It should be noted that there are days that they do not have any clients at all. It was discovered that although CSWs lacked clients at times, they managed to earn an average of 108.39 cedis (\$27) a day when they secured enough clients.

Among the CSW population investigated, reasons given for engaging in the sex trade were as follows; 46.8 percent indicated they were working to support themselves, almost forty percent (39.5%) indicated that they were influenced by peers and 10 percent had to work to supplement family income. Thirteen percent (13%) reported that they were homeless while 3.6 percent said they had to support their children, suggesting child motherhood.

The findings of the study further suggest that children in the study experienced abusive and neglectful childhood. Majority (80.9%) of the CSWs indicated that they were either sometimes or many times neglected when they were growing up. More than half, 65.9 percent said they were emotionally abused, 76.4 percent reported physical abuse, whilst 55.5 percent stated sexual abuse.

Childhood poverty was also identified as one of the main drivers of child sex work. It was observed that the children come from poor disadvantaged homes, as 64.5 percent reported that in the past, household members had fewer meals because there was not enough to eat. Another 64.5 percent also reported that in the past members of their household went to sleep hungry because there was not enough to eat.

It was further observed that the children-initiated sex quite early in life resulting in early motherhood for those children. These two factors also acted as drivers into child sex work.

The bivariate results of the study showed that both the YA and the OA experienced almost the same levels of abuse and neglect from caregivers. However, it was observed that the reasons for entry into sex work by the YA mostly resulted from peer pressure whilst the reasons given by the OA for the decision to engage in the sex trade mostly suggested that they wanted to be independent. Children who practiced both the roamer and seater types of sex work were observed to have experienced various levels of abuse and neglect when growing up.

The logistic regression findings further gave insights into the factors that influence the roamer and seater types of CSW. Age at first birth came out as the most important explanatory variable. The analysis also showed that those who have never had any children and the YA were more likely to become roamers as compared to their older counterparts who had children. It was also noted that children who were abused many times by caregivers were more likely to become roamers.

The qualitative data analysis revealed that CSWs encountered numerous challenges in the course of their work. They were physically, emotionally or sexually abused at times. They also reported facing economic hardships which resulted from indebtedness, the inability to secure clients at certain times and the refusal of clients to pay for services rendered. Social and societal problems, such as being stigmatised and discriminated against and also experiencing negative spiritual encounters were also reported. They mentioned how insecure they were because of the high incidence of theft from both their clients and colleagues and how police swoops rendered them vulnerable. Health challenges were also reported. The child mothers reported unique challenges that resulted from their combining the trade with raising their children by themselves or with the help of other relations.

Despite all the challenges they face, the children still engage in the practice. This is because they adapt certain coping mechanisms that help them to ply their trade. In order to ensure that they prevent or reduce abuse, they reported that they stuck to regular clients and also do not follow their clients to unfamiliar places. They also collected their money before they rendered service to a client in order to avoid non-payment after service is rendered. They resort to the use of interfemoral to get more money although it compromises their health. It was also observed that they rely on each other for social support. Some believe in the supernatural which helps them to cope emotionally. The use of drugs and alcohol is also employed to calm their emotions and made them break inhibitions so that they can be bold to

do their work confidently. They do their best to safeguard their property, however they reported that there were certain challenges that they could not do anything about. They just learn to live with issues such as police swoops, staying away from family members and being stigmatised.

Generally, the findings of the study conform to the theories that were used in the study, namely the Eco Developmental theory, the Lifestyle Exposure theory and the Resilience theory. The qualitative data suggest that neglect and abuse by caregivers can lead children to adopt unhealthy behaviour which can result in deviant behaviours such as sex work. This is in line with the Eco Development theory. Also, the Lifestyle Exposure theory states that certain lifestyles in children coupled with inadequate parental control may lead children into sex work. The qualitative data confirms this assertion. The practice of the sex trade by children despite all the daunting challenges is supported by the Resilience theory which postulates that, “exposure to stresses or adversities may either increase vulnerabilities through a sensitization effect or decrease vulnerabilities through a steeling effect” (Rutter, 2012:337). The strengthening or steeling effect is what makes a child decide to continue engaging in sex work despite all the challenges associated with the trade.

Integrating these theories in this study enabled the researcher gain an in-depth understating of the characteristics of children who engage in the sex trade, what drives them into the trade, the challenges they encounter and how they are able to cope with the challenges.

8.3 Conclusion

Child Sex Work (CSW) is one of the worst forms of child labour (IPEC/ILO, nd), and it has received the least attention among all sexual offences committed against children globally (Mushohwe, 2018:2). Although a number of studies have been conducted in the area of adult

sex work in Ghana, the situation is not the same for the child sex worker. Some studies in the area of street children, child migrants and adult sex work allude to the fact that the phenomenon of CSW exists (Adomako Ampofo, 2004; Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection & UNICEF, 2014). Anecdotal reports from the media and Non-governmental organizations further indicate that the phenomenon is rife in the country (Daily Graphic: November 19, 2008; October 30, 2008; Ghana web: October 29, 2010; Ghana Business News: August 10, 2015). However, the anonymity of the phenomenon in the public space has resulted in limited studies in the area.

This study, therefore, sought to provide reliable information and a sound analysis on the scope and characteristics of young girls less than 18 years who are engaged in sex work. It also tried to enhance literature by providing information on issues that pertains to children in the sex work industry and their older counterparts in Ghana: with implications for sub Saharan Africa (SSA) and finally brought to bear the possible devastating effects of sex work on children. The study also had some policy implications, such as aiding in the ongoing transformation of the child protection system by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and also accelerate the attainment of some of the UN Sustainable Development Goals – (3, 8, and 16). This study sort to address these research gaps by understanding who child sex workers are and what pushes them into sex work; bringing out the problems they encounter and how they cope with these problems.

The findings of the study indicated that majority of CSW are aged within 15 to 17 years and were also Christians. An overwhelming majority had never married with about 15 percent being mothers. Akans being the majority ethnic group in Ghana reflects in 45 percent of respondents being Akans and less than 10 percent non-Ghanaians. Generally, they have low educational attainments, and many of them live in slum communities in Accra with 75.9 percent having migrated from other regions in the country to ply their trade in Accra.

The results further suggest that CSWs practice the roamer, seater and some other types of sex work.

The study observed that children who experienced abusive and neglectful childhood, and peer pressure were the major factors that predisposed children to sex work. Other factors that predisposed children to sex work were poverty, early sexual debut, early motherhood and school problems.

As indicated in other studies (Sloss & Harper, 2004; Semple et al., 2015; Jeffereys, 2000; Rekart, 2005; Rössler et al., 2010) CSWs have challenges. They therefore employ a number of strategies to cope with the challenges, however, they reported that they do not have strategies to cope with all the challenges they face.

8.4 Recommendations

Deductions from the study clearly show that the girl-child is at risk of early sexual debut and early motherhood. These sexuality issues are further exacerbated by poverty at the household level leading to neglect and abuse. Without parents and some national social intervention strategies the girl-child can easily be lured out of the home and predisposed to peer influences usually resulting in early sex and the concomitant consequences.

Three major observations worthy of note that should guide recommended strategies to curb child sex work are:

1. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the CSWs are school drop-out while more than half (56%) never went to school and had no reason for not going to school.
2. The study revealed that 60 percent of the CSWs prior to engaging in the trade either lived with both parents or a single parent (either their mother or father). Additionally, 36.3 percent lived with a relative/family member. Therefore, not living with a parent or a family member

is not a CSW predisposing factor but various deductions from the study such as neglect, abuse and poverty point to parental or guardian irresponsibility.

3. Though migration is a known feature for engaging in the sex work trade (Van, 2007; Mikhail, 2002; Onyango et al., 2012; Anarfi, 1993), 97.3 percent of the CSWs having migrated would suggest efforts aimed at curbing the migration of children. The attention of caregivers and appropriate community, district and national agencies should be engaged to address child migration. Based on the above enumerated points, the following recommendations are suggested:

8.4.1 Strategies to keep the girl-child in school

Emanating from the general perception that “knowledge is power,” an educated person is generally equipped to adapt better in life including managing and controlling his or her sexuality. Policies such as encouraging teenage mothers to possibly go back to school and allowing pregnant teenagers to write various exams are in the right direction. These policies should be entrenched and enforced by law. Reducing entry aggregates for the girl-child to senior high schools and tertiary institutions would further aid the retention of the girl-child in school. Some incentives for the girl-child to remain in school such as the meeting of some peculiar needs should be considered. The current free-senior high school policy seems to be in the right direction, but where the policy is met with challenges or constraints benefits should be skewed towards the girl-child in terms of priority in the allocation of limited resources. Additionally, vocational and handicraft type institutions with the girl-child in mind need to be established in communities/districts to engage less academically inclined female students at the second cycle levels. Finally, parents/guardians who fail to ensure the education and retention of the girl-child in school should be held accountable.

8.4.2 Parental/guardian irresponsibility

This needs to be addressed through law and enforcement. Parental education on the peculiar vulnerabilities of the girl-child is crucial to curbing child neglect and abuse in the home. The social welfare department despite their numerous constraints and challenges need to be trained and resourced to keep track of homes with teenage girl-children in the communities, especially the exclusive, isolated and deprived communities and districts. Child support for single mothers should be of prime concern of appropriate duty bearers. The triad of State, family and child as enunciated by ILO/IPEC, (2005) as shared responsibilities towards the welfare of children need to be adopted, implemented and enforced by law.

Additionally, traditionally accepted ways of child discipline such as food deprivation, tedious chores, smearing private parts with burning substances such as pepper, ginger, etc need to be researched into and parents sensitized; as these can drive children out of the home predisposing them to peer influence which leads to deviant behaviours including child sex work.

8.4.3 Curbing migration of teenagers

There is the need to address the migration of children, especially for the girl-child. Perhaps social workers could be made to register birth of the girl-child and follow-up to register them at their various homes and keep monitoring and accounting for each child yearly till they attain adulthood at 18 years.

In order to have a holistic understanding and know the extent of CSW in Ghana, it is recommended the research is replicated across the country especially in regional capitals, tourist destinations, major market and bus terminals, hospitality centres among other suspected conducive environs where the trade has the potential to thrive. These studies should involve non sex work girls of similar ages to make room for comparisons to be made.

The results can inform policy by giving accurate information on how pervasive the CSW issue is. With accurate information obtained, the children of CSWs can be taken in by the social welfare department into homes while their mothers are given access to some kind of livelihood empowerment opportunities. Those who wish to go back to school or learn a trade could be assisted by either the state or NGOs that have the capacity to help them.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Child Sex Work in Accra: Drivers, Characteristics and Coping Mechanisms

SECTION 1

Identification Particulars	
1.Area	
2.Name of interviewer:	Signature:
3.Starting time:	
4.Ending time:	
5.Date	

Hello, my name isI'm a student of the University of Ghana. We are conducting a survey on the activities of child sex workers in the city of Accra. This information will help in the formulation and implementation of policies that will help put in place good intervention measures for children who find themselves in the sex trade. I would be most grateful if you participate in this survey by answering some questions that relate to the work you do, your experiences when growing up and the kind of challenges you encounter when working. Whatever information you provide will be kept very confidential. Your name will not be written on this form, and will never be used in connection with any of the information you give me. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer, and you may end this interview at any time you want to. However honest answers to the questions will be greatly appreciated. This discussion will take about 30 to 40 minutes. Thank you.

Would you like to ask any questions?

Please may I begin now?

Respondent agrees to interview...1

Respondent disagrees to interview...2

(Signature of interviewer certifying that informed consent has been verbally given by participant's advocate and assent by the respondent)

TABLE A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A1	Age in Completed years	
A2	What is your Religion?	1.Christian 2. Muslim 3. Traditional 4. Other
A3	What is your Marital Status?	1. Married 2. Never Married 3. Divorced 4. Widowed 5. Co-habiting
A4	What is your ethnic group?	1. Akan 2. Ga 3. Ewe 4.Mole Dagbani 5.Other (Specify).....
A5	Have you ever had a child?	1. Yes 2. No (Skip to A8)
A6	How many children do you have?	
A7	How old were you when you had your first child.	
A8	What is your current schooling status?	1.Never attended 2. Left School (Skip to A10) 3. Currently attending (Skip to A11)
A9	What is the reason for not attending school (Skip to A12)	1. Too young 2. Sick 3. Disabled 4. Indifferent 5. Orphaned 6. Cost (fees and other school requirements) 7. Insecurity 8. Need to work 9. School too far 10.Don't know 11. Other (Specify).....
A10	Why did you leave school?	1. Completed desired level 2. To help in the household chores 3. Need to work 4. Cost (fees and other school requirements) 5. Orphaned 6. Pregnancy 7.Internal displacement 8. Poor Academic Performance 9. School too far 10. Illness / Disability (Self) 11. To take care of ill family members

		12. School not suitable or safe 13. Loss of interest in studies 14. Other (Specify).....
A11	What is your highest level attained?	1. Primary 2. JHS 2. SHS 3. Tertiary 4. Other
A12	Did you ever receive any informal training in a trade or skill?	1. Yes 2. No (Skip to B1)
A13	What kind of training?	1. Hairdresser 2. Dressmaking 3. Catering 4. Other (Specify).....

GENERAL INFORMATION

SECTION 2

TABLE B: HOUSING, POVERTY AND INSECURITY

B1	Where do you stay in this area?	
B2	How long have you stayed at your current residence?	
B3	Where were you staying before moving to this place?	1. Never Moved (Skip to B9) 2. Same Region 3. Another Region (Specify)..... 4. Another Country(Specify) 5. Other Specify.....
B4	What made you Move/ Migrate to this new place?	1. To look for a job 2. Security reasons 3. Running away from home 4. Convinced by friends 5. Just dumped in town 6. Studies 7. Other (Specify).....
B5	Who were you living with before you migrated?	1. Both Parents 2. Father (alone) 3. Mother (alone) 4. Myself 5. My employer 6. Grand Parent(s) 7. Friend / Workmate 8. Other Relative 9. Other (Specify).....
		1. Both Parents 2. Father (alone) 3. Mother (alone)

B6	Who are you living with now?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Myself 5. My employer 6. Grand Parent(s) 7. Friend / Workmate 8. Other Relative 9. Other (Specify).....
B7	Do your parents / guardians know where you stay?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No
B8	Has any family member tried to move you from where you live now?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No
B9	How many rooms are at your parent/guardians' home?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One 2. Two 3. Three 4. Four or more
B10	What is the main material of the floor at your parent/guardians' home?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concrete 2. Cement 3. Earth 4. Wood 5. Other (Specify).....
B11	What is the main material of the roof at your parent/guardians' home?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thatched 2. Iron sheets 3. Asbestos 4. Tiles 5. Grass 7. Other (Specify).....
B12	What is the main material of the wall at your parents/guardians' home?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thatched 2. Mud 3. Aluminium sheets 4. Wood 5. Cement Blocks 6. Stone 7. Other (Specify).....
B13	In the past, (before you started engaging in sex work) did you worry that your household would not have enough food?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No (skip to B15) 2. Yes
B14	How often did this happen?(Don't read options)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rarely (once or twice in a week) 2. Sometimes (three to ten times in a week) 3. Often (more than ten times in the week)
B15	In the past did you or any other household member have to eat fewer meals in a day because there was not enough food?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No (Skip to B17) 2. Yes
B16	How often did this happen?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rarely (once or twice in a week) 2. Sometimes (three to ten times in a week) 3. Often (more than ten times in the week)
B17	In the past did you or any household member go to sleep at night hungry because there	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No (Skip to C1) 2. Yes

	wasn't enough food?	
B18	How often did this happen?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rarely (once or twice in a week) 2. Sometimes (three to ten times in a week) 3. Often (more than ten times in the week)

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

TABLE C

<p>Sometimes, when children and adolescents are growing up, they see people (like natural parents / stepparents/ adoptive parents/caregivers/older brothers/aunts and uncles or sisters/cousins), in their home or near their homes behaving in ways that make them feel uncomfortable or even frightened. In the past did you experience any of these before you started this work.</p>		
C1	Did anyone in your home use drugs and / or alcohol and then behaved in a way that frightened you?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C2	Did you see adults in your home shouting and yelling at each other (arguing) in a way that frightened you?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C3	Did you see adults in your home hit kick, slap, punch each other or hurt each other physically?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C4	Did you see anyone in your home use knives, guns, stick, rocks or other things to hurt or scare someone else inside home?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C5	Did anyone close to you, family, friend or neighbour get killed by someone in real life (not the TV, video or film) on purpose near your home?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
<p>In the past (<i>before you started engaging in sex work</i>) did anyone in your family and living in your home.</p>		
C6	Scream at you very loud and aggressively?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times

C7	Called you names, said mean things or cursed you?	2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C8	Made you feel ashamed/ embarrassed you in front of other people in a way you will always feel bad about?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C9	Said that they wished you were dead/had never been born?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C10	Threatened to leave you forever or abandon you?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C11	Locked you out of the home for a long time?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
<p><i>Sometimes, when children are growing up, people who are responsible for caring for them (for example parents/stepparents/adoptive parents/other cares/and uncles) do not know how to care for children properly, and the children do not get what they need to grow up healthy. Have any of these things happened to you in the past?(before you started engaging in sex work)</i></p>		
C12	Did you feel that you did not get enough to eat (went hungry) and/or drink (were thirsty) even though there was enough for everyone?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C13	Had to wear dirty, torn clothes or clothes that were not warm enough/too warm, shoes that were too small even though there were ways of getting better / new ones?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C14	Felt that you were not important?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C15	Felt that there was never anyone looking after you, supporting you, helping you when you most needed it?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
<p>Sometimes people that live in the same home as children and adolescents can hurt them</p>		

<p>physically. Thinking about yourself, in the past year (before you started engaging in sex work), did anyone in your home (for example natural parents/grandparents /stepparents /adoptive parents/ caregivers/ aunts and uncles/ older brother or sisters or cousins) do something such as:</p>		
C16	Pushed, Grabbed, or Kicked you?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C17	Hit, beat, or spanked you with a belt, paddle, a stick or other object?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C18	Choked you or tried to drown you?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C19	Burnt or scalded you, (including putting ginger or peppers in your anus)?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C20	Locked you up in a small place, tied you up, or chained you to something?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C21	Pulled your hair, pinched you, or twisted your ear?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
<p>Sometimes adults do sexual things to children or show sexual things to children and adolescents. Thinking about yourself, have anyone (for example parents/stepparents/adoptive parents/ caregivers/aunts or uncles/older brother or sisters or cousins) done any of these things to you in the past?</p>		
C22	Make you upset by speaking to you in a sexual way or writing sexual things about you?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C23	Made you watch a sex video or look at sexual pictures in a magazine or computer when you did not want to?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C24	Made you look at their private parts or	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many times 2. Sometimes

	wanted to look at yours?	3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C25	Touched your private parts, or made you touch theirs?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response
C26	Tried to have sex with you when you did not want them to?	1. Many times 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never 5. No response

SECTION 5

TABLE: Work Related Information

D1	What was the main reason why you got involved in sexual activity of this nature	1. Supplement Family Income 2. Peer Influence 3. To be self-reliant (take care of myself) 4. Look for school Fees 5. Homeless 6. Loss of job 7. Others (Specify).....	
D2	How long have you been doing this type of work?	1. Less than 6 months 2. 6 – 12 months 3. 13 – 18 months 4. 19 – 24 months 5. Over 24 months	
D3	How old were you when you first had sexual intercourse?		
D4	How old were you when you were first exposed to sexual activity of this nature?		
D5	What are the factors that pushed you to get involved in sexual activities of this nature?	1. Supplement Family Income 2. To be self-reliant (take care of myself) 3. Look for school Fees 4. Homeless 6. Peer pressure 7. Pressure from employer 8. Other (Specify).....	
D6	What are the factors that attracted you to get involved in sexual activities of this nature? (<i>Multiple responses expected</i>)	1. Peer Influence 2. Earn More money 3. Have fan 4. Homeless 5. Workplace conditions 6. Others (Specify).....	

D7	Where do you get your clients? (Multiple responses expected)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self – at Home 2. Self – On Street 3. Self – At Restaurants/Bar/Lodges 4. Self – Phone Contacts 5. Pimp / Brokers 6. Friends 7. Self - Night club 8. Brothel Owners 9. Others (Specify)..... 	
D8	Where do you mostly have sexual intercourse? (Multiple responses expected)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At employers House 2. On the street 3. Brothel 4. Lodges, Hotels, bars 5. Bush 6. Own home 7. Clients home 8. Others (Specify)..... 	
D9	What is the mode of payment? (Multiple responses expected)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Money 2. Food 3. Shelter 4. School fees/School supplies 5. Transport 6. Entrance to clubs / Cinemas 7. Alcohol 8. Others (Specify)..... 	
D10	Who negotiates how much to be paid by the Customer? (Multiple responses expected)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self 2. Brothel owner 3. Pimp 4. Friends 5. Parent / Guardian 6. Others (Specify)..... 	
D11	How much do you earn on a typical day?		
D12	How many Customers do you take on a typical day?		
D13	Other than yourself, who benefits from the proceeds you get? (Multiple responses expected)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. None 2. Brothel Owner 3. Pimp 4. Friends 5. Parents / Guardians 6. Others (Specify)..... 	
D14	How do you use the money you earn? (Multiple responses expected)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay own school fees 2. Rent/bills 3. Clothing 4. Alcohol 5. Drugs 6. Food 7. Support family 8. Others (Specify)..... 	

D15	Is there any member of your family / household who is involved in sexual activities of this nature	1. Yes 2. No (Skip to E1)	
D16	How are you related to this person?	1. Mother 2. Father 3. Sister 4. Brother 5. Others (Specify).....	

SECTION 6

Challenges and Coping Mechanisms

E1	Have you ever suffered any physical harm as a result of engaging in commercial sexual activities	1. Yes 2. No (Skip to E4)	
E2	What was the nature of the harm?	1. Beaten by customer 2. Assaulted by clients' wife / Partner 3. Raped 4. Physical harassment by police 5. Assaulted by a fellow sex worker 5. Other (Specify).....	
E3	What action did you take after the physical harm?	1. Took no action 2. Reported to Police 3. Reported to fellow sex workers 4. Went for medical care 5. Other (Specify).....	
E4	What are some of the actions that you take that helps you cope with the challenges of this job?	1. Take no action 2. Talk to friends in the trade 3. Pray about it 4. I'm used to them 5. Other (Specify).....	
E5	Do you know of any disease that can be transmitted through sexual intercourse?	1. Yes 2. No	
E6	Have you ever suffered from a sexually transmitted disease (STD)?	1. Yes 2. No (skip to F8)	
E7	If yes, where did you seek help from when you got the disease?	1. Clinic 2. Hospital 3. Drug shop 4. Traditional healer 5. Did not seek any help 6. Other (Specify).....	
E8	What precautions do you take to guard against STDs?	1. Condom 2. Use only trusted customers 3. Medical check-up	

		4. None 5. Other (Specify).....	
E9	Did you use a condom when you last had sex?	1. Yes 2. No	
E10	How often do you engage in sexual activities without using a condom?	1. Use it all the time (skip to E12) 2. Sometimes 3. Most of the times 4. Never use it.	
E11	Under what circumstances do you engage in sexual activities without using a condom? <i>(Multiple responses expected)</i>	1. When a customer pays a lot of money 2. When dealing with a regular customer 3. When a customer looks healthy 4. Other (Specify).....	
E12	Have you ever heard of a disease called AIDS?	1. Yes 2. No (skip to E16)	
E13	Have you ever had an HIV test?	1. Yes 2. No (skip to E16)	
E14	What prompted you to go for the HIV test?	1. Fell sick 2. Had unprotected sex with person did not trust 3. Convinced by my partner 4. Just wanted to know my status 5. Other (Specify).....	
E15	Did you get your HIV results?	1. Yes 2. No	
E16	What precautions do you take against unwanted pregnancies?	1. Pills 2. Condoms 3. Rhythm 4. Withdrawal 5. IUD (coil) 6. Vasectomy 7. Abortion 8. None 9. Others (State).....	
E17	How many times have you had abortions?	1. Never 2. Once 3. Twice 4. More than twice	

SECTION 7

TABLE G: Social Networking

G1	How many child sex workers do you know?		
G2	How many of them have you seen or met in the past one month?		
G3	About how many of them would you say identify themselves as sex workers?		
G4	About how many of them do you think you can recruit into this study?		

Thank you very much for your time.

Interviewer only

H1	What is the number of the coupon retrieved	
H2	What are the numbers of coupons given out to the respondent	1. 2. 3.

Appendix 2

Child sex work in Accra: Drivers, Characteristics and Coping Mechanisms.

In-depth semi structured interview guide

1. Can you please tell me something about yourself?
2. What is your religion? Do you practice it? How often do you go to church/mosque?
Probe
3. Are you currently in school? If no, why? If yes, how do you combine schooling with your work? Probe
4. How many children do you have? (If none, skip to question 12)
5. How old were you when you had your first child?
6. Do your child/children live with you presently? Probe
7. Who is responsible for their upkeep? Probe
8. What challenges do you face combining your work with childcare?
9. How are you able to cope with the challenges you mentioned? Probe
10. Does your child/children's father play any role in their life? Probe
11. Was your child/children born before or after you started engaging in sex work?
12. Do you intend having any more children? why (probe and skip to 13)
13. Do you intend to have any in future? How many? Why that number?
14. What do you hope to do in future? Do you intend to quit this job? Do you have any marriage plans (if not already married)? Probe
15. Does any family member know what you do? How do they relate/treat you? Probe
16. Could you kindly mention any other challenges you encounter in the cause of your work that you haven't mentioned already?
17. How do you cope with them? Probe

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME. HAPPY NEW YEAR

Appendix 3

Sample of Coupon

CSW Project	1 Coupon Number
Contact No. 0244571956	
Area in Accra.....	
Thank you for participating	4,5,6 Numbers given out

Appendix 4

Ethical approval from University of Ghana



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES (ECH)

P. O. Box LG 74, Legon, Accra, Ghana

24th March, 2017

My Ref. No.....

Ms. Elsie Gaisie-Ahiabu
Regional Institute for Population Studies
University of Ghana
Legon

Dear Ms. Gaisie-Ahiabu,

ECH 103/16-17: CHILD SEX WORK IN ACCRA: DRIVERS, CHARACTERISTICS AND COPING MECHANISMS

This is to advise you that the above reference study has been presented to the Ethics Committee for the Humanities for a full board review and the following actions taken subject to the conditions and explanation provided below:

Expiry Date: 14/03/18
On Agenda for: Initial Submission
Date of Submission: 13/02/17
ECH Action: Approved
Reporting: Bi-Annually



Please accept my congratulations.

Yours Sincerely,

Rev. Prof. J. O. Y. Mante
ECH Chair

CC: Prof. Samuel Codjoe, Regional Institute for Population Studies

Appendix 5: Coding frequencies for challenges faced by CSWs

Challenges faced by CSWs	CC 1	CC 2	CC 3	CC 4	CC 5	CM 6	CM 7	CM 8	CM 9	CM 10	No.
Abuse											
Physical	*		*		*	*	*	*	*		7
Emotional					*				*		2
Sexual	*									*	2
Economic challenges											
Lack of clients	*		*			*					3
High cost of Living/ depth			*	*	*	*					4
Sex without pay	*		*			*			*		4
Social/societal challenges											
Strained family relationship/stigmatization	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	10
Superstition		*	*							*	3
Poor/insanitary living conditions					*						1
Insecurity											
Police swoops							*				1
Theft	*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	8
Violent/wicked clients			*	*	*			*	*	*	6
Feeling unsafe/sad/emotional/bad				*	*	*		*	*	*	6
Health challenges											
Unprotected sex	*										1
Unwanted pregnancy	*										1
Motherhood challenges											
Childcare						*	*	*	*	*	5

Appendix 6: Major themes for challenges of CSWs

Theme	Sub-theme	Number of responses	Sample of significant statements
Abuse	Physical	7	<p><i>“He beat me up badly, and abandoned me at the place”</i> .(CM8;17;Agbobloshie)</p> <p><i>“Some of the men have big penis, if you are unfortunate and you meet one like that, it can be very painful”</i>. (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie)</p> <p><i>“After having sex with both of us, it was raining heavily. He just left us in the compound of his house for the rain to beat us the whole night..... He opened the gate for us in the morning and gave us money for transport and asked us to leave. He paid us what we charged. .”</i> (CM9;16 years; Agbobloshie)</p>
	Emotional	1	<i>“People treat you as if you are not a human being. The men insult you always”</i> . (CM6; 16years; Konkomba market)
	Sexual	2	<i>“When he finished, he did not allow me to go away. He made his friends also have sex with me in turns. It was a very horrible experience”</i> . (CM10; 16 years; Madina)
Economic/financial	Lack of clients	3	<i>“There are days that you hardly get any one”</i> (CM6; 16years; Konkomba market)
	High cost of living / depth	3	<p><i>“I owe the woman who brought me here (Ghana), I have to pay her 4,000 cedis, I give it to my “mother” to give it to her. I’m not sure I will be able to pay all that money”</i>. (CC5; 16 years; Konkomba market)</p> <p><i>“At this place (Konkomba market) you need money to survive. If you don’t have money, you can’t even go to toilet because you pay for everything”</i>. (CM6; 16years ;Konkomba market)</p>
	Sex without pay	4	<i>“They can have sex with you and just refuse to pay”</i> (CM6; 16years; Konkomba market)

			<i>“After everything they didn’t pay me anything” (CM10;16; Madina)</i>
Social/societal challenges	Strained family relationship/stigmatisation	10	<p><i>“None of my people know where I am. I just left without informing my boyfriend or my family members”. (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba market)</i></p> <p><i>“No member of my family knows that I’m into sex work” (CM7; 15 years; Agbobloshie)</i></p> <p><i>“My movements are very limited. I am always afraid that someone might recognize me and go back home and tell my family members. If that happens, I cannot go home again. Nobody will accept me back” (CM6; 16years; Konkomba market)</i></p>
	Superstition	3	<p><i>“When I returned home, I fell seriously sick. Then I consulted the mallam (spiritualist) who told me that my womb has been removed by the boy”(CC2; 16 years; Agbobloshie)</i></p> <p><i>“....you can be used for rituals if you are not careful”(CC3; 17 years; Konkomba market)</i></p> <p><i>“Some girls also resort to spiritual means to destroy you if they realize that you attract a lot of men. You can just be falling sick all the time, so that you can’t work”. (CM10; 16 years; Madina)</i></p>
	Poor living conditions	1	<i>“I don’t like this place (Konkomba market), it is crowded and dirty. The bathroom is dirty all the time. We pay to use the place, but it’s not cleaned”. (CC5;16 years; Konkomba market)</i>
Security	Police swoops	1	<i>“The police just come in at any time and then arrest us and put us in cells for no reason”. (CM7; 15 years; Agbobloshie)</i>
	Theft	8	<p><i>“they can have sex with you, refuse to pay and also steal all your money and your phone as well”. (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie)</i></p> <p><i>“I woke up this morning all the money I made last time (80 Cedis)</i></p>

			<p><i>has been stolen</i>". (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba market)</p> <p><i>"Having a safe place to keep your money is also a problem. Everybody is stealing from the friend. There are many thieves here. They can even enter your room whilst you are there to steal from you"</i>.</p> <p>(CM6; 16years; Konkomba market)</p> <p><i>"You have to hide your money very well otherwise the customers and the boys around will steal everything from you"</i>. (CM8;17 years; Agbobloshie)</p>
	Violent/wicked clients	6	<p><i>"He threatened to kill me with a knife. He even put it at my neck as if he was going to cut it"</i> .(CM8;17 years; Agbobloshie)</p>
	Feeling unsafe/sad/bad/emotional	6	<p><i>"I feel very unsafe, I am afraid that something bad can happen to me at any time"</i> (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba market)</p> <p><i>"I feel so sad for myself and it pains me to see what I have gotten myself into"</i> (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba market)</p> <p><i>"The work is dangerous, anything can happen to you. You can even be killed. I always pray to God to keep me safe. If something bad happens to me, what will happen to my child"?</i> (CM;9;16 years; Agbobloshie)</p>
Health challenges	Unprotected sex	1	<p><i>"I try to wear condom all the time but some of the customers at times do not agree. When they force me, sometimes I have sex with them without wearing the condom. Sometimes, the condom can bust"</i>.(CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie)</p>
	Unwanted pregnancy	1	<p><i>"You can easily get pregnant, it happened to me once. I think the condom bust or something. I'm not too sure what happened"</i> .(CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie)</p>

<p>Motherhood challenges</p>	<p>Childcare</p>	<p>5</p>	<p><i>“If I forget or I’m late to pick up my child at Atta Maame, she will double the charge. Childcare at this place is very expensive. I have to make sure that I pick him up at 5am, otherwise I’m in trouble. I have to pay a double to Atta Maame, which is 10 Cedis, it is very expensive”</i>. (CM9;16years; Agbobloshie)</p> <p><i>“My child falls sick very often, I think it’s because I don’t take good care of him. I don’t have enough time to take care of him because of my work. I always take him to the drug store when he falls sick”</i>. (CM9;16years; Agbobloshie)</p> <p><i>“The problem I have with my child is that he falls sick too much, so I spend a lot of money on him. I wish I could be with him and take care of him myself, but I cannot combine this work with childcare”</i> (CM10; 16; Madina)</p> <p><i>“No matter the amount I spend to my aunt, she keeps calling me demanding money. At times I become fed up with her, I have to borrow at times and send to her because of my child. I can’t save or buy anything. I also don’t want to bring my child into this environment. It is not a good place to raise a child”</i>. (CM7;15years; Agbobloshie)</p>
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Appendix 7: Coding frequencies for coping mechanisms of CSWs in Accra

Coping mechanisms employed by CSWs	CC 1	CC 2	CC 3	CC 4	CC 5	CM 6	CM 7	CM 8	CM 9	CM 10	No.
Abuse reduction											
Avoiding violent clients					*	*				*	3
Sticking to particular/familiar clients		*	*					*	*	*	5
Avoid following clients to unfamiliar places	*		*			*		*		*	5
Use of drugs and alcohol						*					1
Believe in the supernatural							*	*			2
Good social support	*	*	*		*						4
Coping with financial challenges											
Interfemoral	*		*								2
Having sex on credit						*					1
Having another job							*				1
Safeguarding techniques											
Keep money /valuables properly			*				*	*			3
Collecting money before sex								*			1
Coping with health challenges				*							1

Appendix 8: Major themes for coping mechanisms of CSWs

Theme	Sub-theme	Number of responses	Sample of significant statements
Abuse	Avoiding violent clients	3	<p><i>“I stay away from him whenever he comes here” (CC5;16 years; Konkomba)</i></p> <p><i>“With the help of my “mother” here, I am able to stay away from rough (violent) men. She often advises me on whom to reject and also teaches me how to be polite with my clients, so that I don’t get abused” (CC5;16 years; Konkomba)</i></p>
	Sticking to particular/familiar clients	5	<p><i>“I have my own private clients”(CC2; 16 years; Agbobloshie)</i></p> <p><i>“Nowadays, I always go out with people I know to avoid trouble” (CM9;16; Agbobloshie)</i></p> <p><i>“I make sure that I am very familiar with a client before I follow them anywhere” (CM10; 16; Madina)</i></p>
	Avoid following clients to unfamiliar places	5	<p><i>“I don’t go with people to their homes or places I don’t know, it can be very dangerous. One girl got killed about 2 weeks ago. We were here when they brought her dead picture to show to us” (CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie).</i></p> <p><i>“I only work at familiar bars. I have clients I visit at home. I also have clients that I have established some kind of relationship with. They call me and I go to their homes. It’s not everyone that I follow to the house” (CC3; 17 years; Konkomba)</i></p> <p><i>“I prefer to use the rooms provided by familiar hotels or a place I have rented myself. If I don’t know where a client is taking me, I</i></p>

			<p><i>don't go</i>". (CM10; 16; Madina)</p> <p><i>"I ply the trade only in this brothel (Afo Bar), I hardly go out"</i> (CM6; 16years; Konkomba)</p>
Social/societal	Having supportive/dependable friends/ "mother"	4	<p><i>"Friends around here are very supportive. We stick together and help each other at all times".</i>(CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie)</p> <p><i>"The friend that I live with is very helpful. We share everything. I tell her all my problems and she tells me hers..... we borrow from each other when we are broke".</i>(CC2; 16 years; Agbobloshie)</p> <p><i>"I share a room with my friend and we get on very well".</i> "(CC3; 17 years; Konkomba)</p>
Economic/financial	Interfemoral	2	<p><i>"You see, some of them come when they are drunk and very high. You will charge them for raw (unprotected) sex because they will insist that they want sex without condom. Then you will let them "chop your skin" or "chop your thigh" you press your thighs together tightly then you aid their penis in-between your thighs".</i>(CC1; 15 years; Agbobloshie) "</p> <p><i>"When we are desperate, we sometimes compromise and have sex with those people who are very drunk and high on drugs. You have to be smart when you do that. We have a way of putting our thighs together so tight that they cannot penetrate the vagina. They are only "chopping the thigh", but they believe it's the vagina. We can satisfy our clients very well by doing that. You can even charge them more for not using condom" (CC3; 17 years; Konkomba)</i></p>
	Having sex on credit	1	<p><i>"I prefer to give sex on credit to a man who won't beat me than to one that will beat me. If I'm broke I will credit it, by all means one</i></p>

			<i>day he will come and pay because he will want sex on credit again". (CM6; 16years; Konkomba)</i>
	Having another job	1	<i>"I learnt hair dressing in Cape Coast before I migrated to this place (Konkomba) to start this work (sex work). I practice it here. I do the hair of most of the sex workers around here, but it's not lucrative. They do their hair once in a while. I get money from the sex work more than the hairdressing" (CM7;15years;Agbobloshie)</i>
Emotional/psychological	Using drugs and alcohol	1	<i>"As for the drugs we all take it, anyone who tells you they don't smoke is a liar, smoking and drinking helps us to break inhibitions. We can't do this work without drinking. The nature of the job is such that if you don't sniff "small", you cannot do it. The work is very difficult; you have to "sniff" so that you can be bold to do the work". (CM6; 16years; Konkomba)</i>
Safeguarding techniques	Keep money/valuables properly.	3	<i>"I always give my money to friends to keep away from the room that I take the client. I collect the money after I have finished work for the day. In the case of the "rough boys who attack us, there isn't much we can do about it. We always have to hide our phones very well on our body all the time. If you are lucky, they will not fine it on you". (CM7;15years; Agbobloshie)</i>
	Collecting money before sex /mobile money	1	<i>"I have a lot of regular clients some even pay with mobile money. If I don't know you well, I take my money and give it to a friend to keep even before I start with you". (CM8;17years; Agbobloshie)</i>
Health	Protect myself with condoms	1	<i>"I protect myself with condoms and try to cope with the situation for now" (CC4; 16 years; Konkomba)</i>

