

AREAS OF MALE DOMINANCE: EXPERIENCES OF MARRIED WOMEN IN THE MOZANO COMMUNITY IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this study was to assess the experiences of married women on male dominance in Mozano Community in the Central Region of Ghana. The study therefore sought to ascertain the ways married men dominate their wives. Qualitatively, phenomenological design with one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions were employed for collection of data. The population for the study was the married couples in Mozano community. Since Mozano attracts pilgrims and visitors on daily basis, only couples who attend Mozama Disco Christo Church (MDCC) and are permanent residents in Mozano were purposively sampled for the study. In terms of the study, the researchers ensured that the participants meet the following inclusion criteria: (1) availability and willingness to participate in the study; (2) couples who have married for five years and above; and (3) permanent residents in Mozano who attend the MDCC. The study involved 20 participants. This comprised fifteen married women and five married men who were heads of their households. The study revealed that most men dominate their wives in the area of reproduction because most women are ignorant of their reproductive rights. Most men decide on the number of times they will have sex, the number of children they will have and when to have a child without the consent of their wives. Most men see no need to involve their wives in decision making because they think women on their own cannot take or contribute to any meaningful or responsible decision. Religious factors and the doctrines of the MDCC have contributed to male dominance on married women in the community and lack of descent and profitable jobs for women in the community have made them to be dominated by their husbands. It was therefore recommended that married women in the Mozano community should make a personal choice to develop their capabilities to the maximum degree without regard for culturally and religious obstacles. There is also the need for gender education by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to organise seminars and symposia for men in the Mozano community on the need to involve their wives in decision making at all levels.*

KEYWORDS: Ghana, Male Dominance, Married Women, Mozano Community, Women Empowerment

INTRODUCTION

Globally, men have dominated policy development (Taylor, 1997). Gender inequality which led to male dominance resulted in the establishment of the UN Commission on the Status of Women as intergovernmental body in 1946, with the duty of monitoring gender equality and promotion of human rights around the world. In addition, several women's conference was held to discuss gender issues relating to inequality. Example of such conference includes the Beijing conference. The Beijing conference held in China on September 1995 became a popular women's conference worldwide with the vision of empowering women.

Several years after the adoption of the Platform for Action, no country has achieved equality for women and girls and significant levels of inequality between women and men exist

Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2015). Critical areas of insufficient progress include access to decent work and closing the gender pay gap; ending violence against women's sexual and reproductive health and rights; and participation in power and decision-making at all levels. Therefore, there is a new sense of real urgency, are the recognition that we are at a turning point for women's rights, a recognition that realizing gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls must be a pressing and central task which must be given new impetus at all levels (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2015).

In various parts of the world, organizations are still structured and function in ways that do not always support women's career patterns and their need to integrate work with family responsibilities (Frome, Alfeld, Eccles & Barber, 2006). Mostert (2009) also highlights the effects of work-family conflict as well as the demands of work and home on women's health, whilst Mathur-Helm (2006) cautions against the consequent family relationship problems. This means that in spite of the Beijing conference, empowering women have not been totally achieved, holding back the rationale for the conference. This indicates that males still dominate in all facets of life.

According to Robinson, Frost, Buccigrossi, and Pfeffer (2003), the major feature of the social status of men and women is the dominance of men in virtually every aspect of modern life. This culturally-installed male dominance can be explained in many ways and from a variety of perspectives. A strictly evolutionary approach might suggest that the gender roles have evolved over large expanses of time in a way that naturally selected men and women into the roles and social statuses they hold today. From a Judeo-Christian standpoint, one is led to believe that God created the world this way and everything is as it should be which may probably explain why men still try to dominate women even in marriage. A brief reflection on the last few hundred years again suggests that women have "come a long way" in establishing their basic worth and value in modern society (Robinson et al., 2003). According to the same report, there are other informed perspectives that suggest that the male dominance in modern society is a function of culturally-installed patriarchy that not only favour men but also oppresses women in our society. However, it gets explained, in the social order of things, men are the dominant group and women are the subordinated group in our society.

In Africa, the challenges women face in attempting to penetrate successfully and persevere in historically male-dominated work environments and other aspects of life emanate from traditional gender hierarchies and norms that prevail in the family and the society (Hartmann, 2010). Thus, in spite of gender equality and empowerment, the household unit has a traditional structure which makes males the dominant gender in all spheres of life. These traditional roles spill to organizational policies and practices to maintain women's marginalized work roles (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011) and become entrenched in a gender-bias organizational culture (Prescott & Bogg, 2011). These suggest the endemic nature of male dominance in society and the need for contemporary researches to be carried out on how women can be empowered for them to intensify and diversify their roles with given resources.

In Ghana, despite enough policies and programmes by various governments to empower women, male dominance is still prevalent and seen in different facets of life; political, social, and cultural among others. This has created unequal opportunities and conditions which do not allow females unlike their male counterparts to harness their potential to function. Interestingly, some people justify their discriminatory practices against women using culture and religion.

The problem has been this, in spite of several treaties and conventions signed and implemented by various governments of Ghana to empower women such as Convention on the Elimination

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of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) , Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) among others, it appears there is a spectre of male dominance in Mozano community based on the researchers' observation in the community. This seems to have caused married women in the community to be poor and under-represented in decision making at various levels of life. Interestingly, some community members use culture and religion to justify their actions and discriminatory practices against women. This research therefore sought to fill the gaps identified and was guided by this question - In what ways do married men dominate their wives in the Mozano community?

Literature Review on Conceptual Perspectives on Male Dominance

The review was done under the following themes: Theoretical framework of male dominance, conceptual framework, and areas by which men dominate women. Traditional theories fail to acknowledge the unique experiences that women face (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011). Feminist perspectives take that uniqueness into account and are in fact the most appropriate way to approach this research. Feminist theory looks intricately at what females experience in their lives and is helpful to explain why married women are dominated by their husbands in various spheres of their lives. In lieu of this, the Feminist theory will better explain male dominance over married women is the Marxist Feminist Theory.

Marxist feminist theory is a segment of feminist theory that concentrates on the idea that patriarchy is ever present in society. Patriarchy is a term that is used to describe the control that men have over women, especially within the household. Marxist feminists believe that many of the social problems involving women originate because of patriarchal controls. In the past, men have often been the breadwinners within the family, while the women have traditionally been the ones who raised the children and took care of the household duties. It therefore goes without saying that women typically have had to depend on their husbands for money and subsistence. Patriarchy and capitalism can be considered to be analytically distinct, with their own interests, laws of motion and patterns of contradiction and conflict resolution (Gouliman, 2007: 121-123).

Marxist feminist theories argue that male dominance is the centre of concern because it is a combination of the patriarchal that exists within the home and the means of production. Patriarchy is a predominate issue here. Within the context of married women, this would include preventing them to undertake certain economic activities, avoiding them when taking decision affecting their lives, preventing them from pursuing higher education, preventing them from taking religious positions among others. It is significant to stress that, women who experience an increased amount of oppression in their lives seem to be more vulnerable to poverty and are prone to discrimination and life dissatisfaction. This is represented by the conceptual framework in Figure 1.

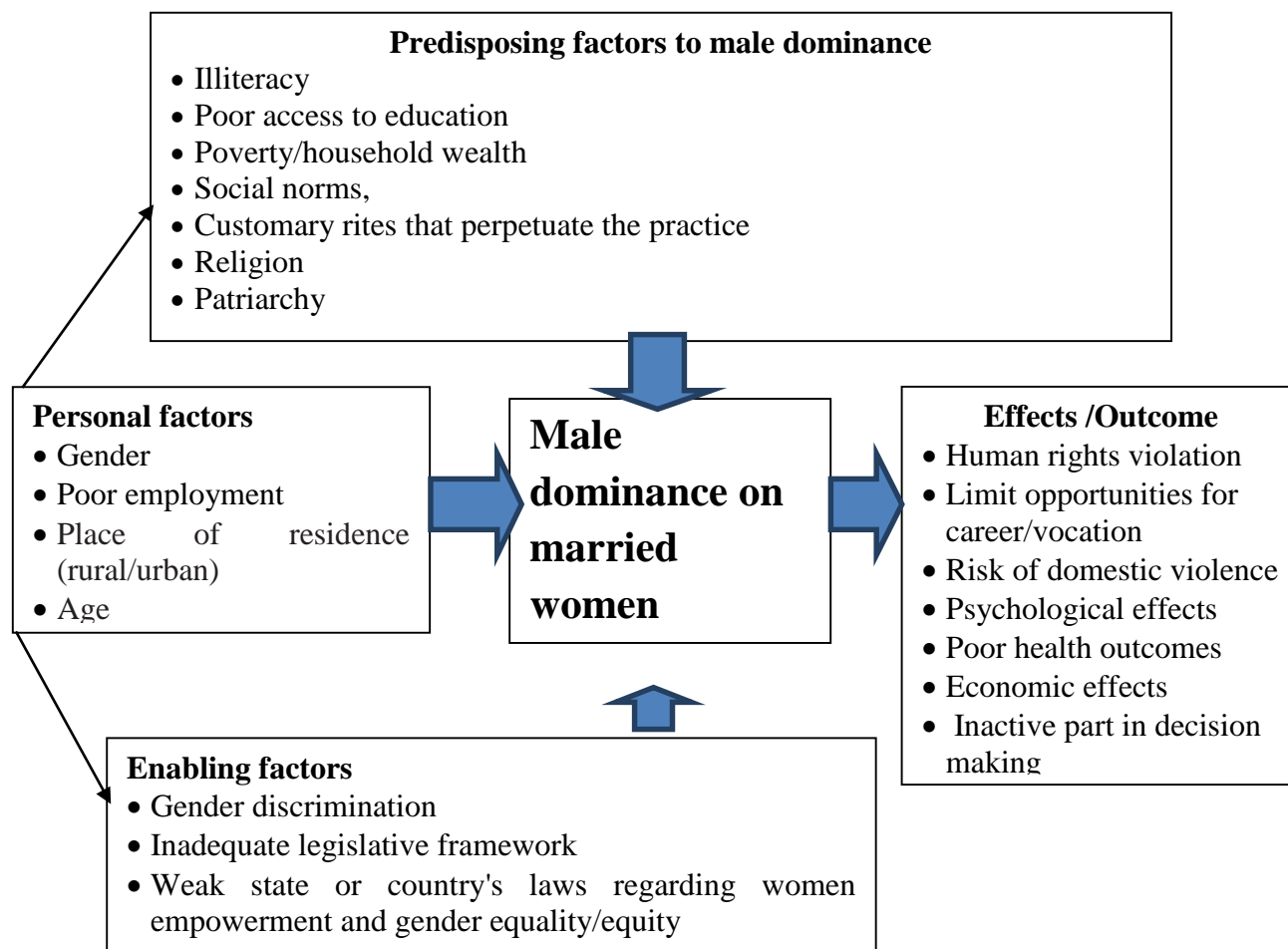


Figure 1: Framework for predisposing factors of male dominance

Figure 1 explains the various ways women have been dominated by their male counterparts and the active role patriarchy has played in making women more subservient to men. The variable shows the relationship between patriarchy and women subordination. The conceptual framework shows that male dominance is the centre of concern because male dominance exists within the home. This has led to an increased amount of inequality that exists between men and women thereby making women found to be more oppressed and susceptible to jobs and positions in society that are less than desirable.

Male dominance on married women is directly influenced by predisposing factors such as high illiteracy, poor or limited access to education, poverty/household wealth, certain social norms and customary or religious laws and or rites. The predisposing factors are further triggered by enabling factors which are also directly linked to male dominance over married women. The enabling factors include gender discrimination, gaps in national laws, inadequate legislative framework, weak state laws regarding women empowerment and gender equality. Male dominance has psychological, emotional, economic and health implications for married women. This is because the prevalence of male dominance leads to under-representation of women in decision affecting their personal lives such as preventing them to undertake certain

economic activities, avoiding them when taking decision affecting their lives, preventing them from pursuing higher education, preventing them from taking religious positions among others. All these have negative effects on women.

Patriarchy structure has been a major feature of the traditional society. It is a structure of a set of social relations with material base which enables men to dominate women (Aina 1998; Asiyanbola, 2005). It is a system of social stratification and differentiation on the basis of sex, which provides material advantages to males while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of females. There are clearly defined sex roles, while various taboos ensure conformity with specified gender roles (Aina, 1998). Traditionally men do not participate in domestic work including child rearing - such tasks are considered to be the exclusive domain of women. Males are classed as having the following qualities: strength, vigour, virile/powerful courage, self-confidence and the ability to meet the outside world, that is animal and human intruders head on and deal with it effectively. These qualities were reflected in the kinds of work that men engaged in. Men were responsible for much of what was thought of as "heavy" labour. Men in short provided for their families (Aweda, 1984; Silberschmidt, 1999; Asiyanbola, 2005). Women oversee the domestic chores. They kept houses, processed and cooked all foods. They also help in the planting and harvesting of food crops and cash crops. They were primarily responsible for the bearing and rearing of children from birth on; men were only called upon to assist when extraordinary discipline was considered necessary especially for the boys (Aweda, 1984:184).

Division of labour within the family is another area which is male dominated. The family is one of the pivotal sites where gender relations are produced and reproduced. It is a central place where children first learn about the roles connected to gender, and where power relations built around gender are located. "Patriarchy" as a historically central form of gender relations means literally "rule by the father" and was firmly based in male domination within families (Casper & Bianchi, 2002). Gender relations are not formed only within the intimate relations of the family; they are constructed within the public sphere as well (Arnesen, 2006). But a good case can be made that the family constitutes the most fundamental arena within which these relations are forged.

Men have also dominated the area of legal rights for many years. It is hard for most people today to really understand how it could be that before 1920 women did not have the right to vote. This was justified on many grounds: they were not as rational or intelligent as men; they were not really autonomous and would have their votes controlled by the men in their lives; like children, they were ruled by their emotions (Casper & Bianchi, 2002). The result is that women were not really full political citizens until the third decade of the 20th century. Aside from a few isolated contexts in which women are barred from certain activities - for example, direct combat roles in the military - women now do, effectively, have equal formal rights to men (Casper & Bianchi, 2002). However there are instances in Africa where women are still suffering from the hands of their male counterparts and become victims of rape, defilement, teenage pregnancy among others.

Gender inequality in the extent to which women occupy positions which confer significant power is more difficult to assess than inequality in pay or in occupational distributions. One indicator is presence of women on boards of directors and top managerial positions in large corporations (Arnesen, 2006). What is more difficult to ascertain is the extent to which the under-representation reflects systematic barriers and discrimination faced by women today (Arnesen, 2006). It is particularly difficult because, of course, the choices women make may themselves be conditioned by the experience of barriers: the barriers make managerial careers

for women more difficult, and by virtue of this they may decide it is not worth the fight and thus they “select themselves” out of the competition (Arnesen, 2006). The early argument is that women’s relation to production, low pay, part-time work and economic dependency is a cause of oppression but that this operates in tandem with biosocial considerations and more general ideas circulating in society concerning masculinity and femininity. This psychoanalytic analysis of patriarchy, which is the supposed transition from monocausal to polyvalent analyses, prefigures the move into postmodernism (Woods, 2001:71).

METHODOLOGY

Mozano is a religious town in the Gomoa West District in the Central Region of Ghana. The town was established as the headquarters of the Mozama Disco Christo Church (MDCC) by the founder of the church in 1922. It has about 4,000 inhabitants. The word Mozano is a heavenly name which means My Town or God’s Town (GSS, 2010). Qualitatively, phenomenological design was employed to undertake this study. Phenomenology is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual, ‘bracketing’ taken-for-granted assumptions and usual ways of perceiving (Plummer, 1983). The purpose of the approach is to illuminate the specific, and to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation. The research was aimed at studying human action from the insider’s perspective. The goal was not to predict, but rather to describe human behaviour. Emphasis is therefore placed on staying close to the subjects of study (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delpont, 2002) and it places value on the subject of study. The design is justified because the study seeks to explore and understand the experiences of married women in Mozano community with regard to male dominance. This involves trying to understand the world of the research participants and the meanings they ascribe to their world. Besides, the study does not seek to measure the association between any variables but to find out the experiences (feelings and assessments) of married women with regard to areas of male dominance in the community.

The population for the study was the married couple in Mozano community. Since Mozano attracts pilgrims and visitors on daily basis, only couples who attend MDCC and are permanent residents in Mozano were targeted for the study. Purposive sampling technique was employed in the selection of respondents. The researchers had specific predefined groups to collect the data from them. One of them was to verify that the participants do in fact meet the criteria for being in the sample (De Vos et. al., 2002). In terms of the study, the researchers ensured that the participants meet the following inclusion criteria: (1) Availability and willingness to participate in the study; (2) Couples who have married for five years and above; and (3) Permanent residents in Mozano who attend the MDCC. The study involved twenty participants, comprising fifteen married women and five married men who were heads of their households.

One on one interview and focused group discussion were the instruments employed in collecting the data. The interview guide had two sections. The first section covered the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the participants. The second section covered the themes developed to gather data on the experiences of the married women on male dominance. Focus group discussion was conducted to give participants the room to elaborate further on issues that came out during the interview.

De Vos et al. (2002) assert that data analysis involves identifying salient themes, recurring ideas and patterns of belief that link people and settings together. The transcribed data from the

focus group discussions and one-on-one interviews were analysed concurrently. Field notes were also scrutinised and incorporated into the transcribed data. The data collected were analysed by organising them into themes and patterns. Themes emerged from the research were therefore examined for similarities and differences. The themes were conceptualised to effectively describe the data provided by the participants. These were done to provide descriptive account of the respondents' narratives as clearly as possible.

Confidentiality of the participants' identity was guaranteed. Actual names of respondents were not used in the research report. Also, there is no description offered that might lead to easy identification of the participants by readers. Participants were informed of their rights to refuse to answer certain questions that they were not comfortable with. In addition, it was made clear that participation was voluntary and that participants were free to withdraw from the research should they feel the need to do so. No participant was persuaded in any way or forced to participate in the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings are presented in two sections. The first section was on socio demographic data of participants, while the second part dealt with the ways married men dominate their wives in the Mozano community. The socio-demographic data includes the age of participants, sex, educational background, occupation and marital status, whilst the areas of male dominance includes decision concerning what they cook, decisions affecting their reproductive rights and decisions affecting their children's career.

With the respondents' gender, out of the twenty sampled, 5 (25%) were males, while 15 (75%) were females. The researchers involved 15 female participants in the studies because females are always the victims of male dominance. The 5 males were also selected in order to help the researchers to understand the phenomenon of male dominance in Mozano from men perspectives. This helped provided an in depth information to the researchers in order to understand the phenomenon of male dominance as lived by the participants themselves and the also avoided researchers' bias. For the female participants, 9 (60%) representing a relatively high percentage were aged between 20 and 40 years. One participant (7%) was found within the least reported age cohort which is 60 years. Five participants (33%) were within the age bracket of 40-60 years. This indicates that most of the married women involved in this study were within the age bracket of 20 and 60. On the other hand, 3 (60%) of the male participants were aged between 40 and 60 years. Other age brackets of 20-40 and 60-80 years recorded 1(20%) each.

The female participants were also required to provide their educational background and the findings primarily shown that one respondent (7%) had tertiary education since she admitted that she has completed teacher training college, 2 (13%) had SHS education, whilst 14 (80%) had basic education. This shows that most of the female respondents had little education and they indicated that it affected their employment status and consequently their income levels. This confirms the various studies conducted by (GSS, 1999 & 2002) that formal education is a pre-requisite for greater social autonomy for women and for improving the socio-economic status of their families. The researchers were also interested in finding out the educational background of the male participants and the results show that 1(20%) had basic education, 1 (20%) had SHS education, whilst 3(60%) had tertiary education. This shows that most of the

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male respondents had higher education which influenced their employment status and consequently their income levels.

The employment status of the female participants shown that 14 (90%) engaged in informal sector, whilst only 1 (10%) participant engaged in the formal sector. This reveals how critical financial resources aids in the improvement of women's economic status. This data shows that most of the respondents are self-employed and receive meagre incomes since they do not engage in formal employment to enjoy monthly salary to enable them get collaterals to secure loans from banks to expand their businesses. This has influenced their employment status and their income levels and consequently their over dependence on their husbands. The researchers were also interested in the employment status of the male participants and the findings shown that 2 (40%) respondents engaged in informal sector, whilst 3 (60%) engaged in formal sector. This reveals that men had opportunity than the women. They are likely to have access to loans from banks since they enjoy monthly salary and collaterals to secure loans from banks to expand their businesses. This has influenced their income levels and consequently they are independent and makes their wives depended on them for survival. The evidence above also confirmed the studies conducted by Hartmann (1981) that wage labour is important site of women's exploitation by men. Thus, within the household women do more labour than men, even if they also have paid employment (Hartmann, 1981). This puts women in disadvantaged position in paid work which makes them vulnerable in their position in the family.

Ways married men dominate their wives in the Mozano community were of paramount importance. The researchers tried to find out from the participants how responsibilities are shared, whether the women take decisions themselves or their husbands decide for them, and whether their husbands involve them in decisions concerning issues at home. These include decisions concerning what they cook, decisions affecting their reproductive rights and decisions affecting their children's career. The themes that emerged are discussed below.

Firstly, on decision making concerning reproductive rights, majority of the participants revealed that one of the major areas men dominate their wives is in the area of reproductive rights. Twelve of the female participants indicated that their husbands decide on when and the number of times they will have sex, when to have a child and the number of children they will have. The women participants revealed that their husband have control over their bodies because they are the men. Some of the female participants were of the view that men take decision on reproductive rights even at the expense of their health. The participants 'expressed their experiences in the following ways:

Participant 1 is a 37 year old married woman. She observed that before she married, she and her husband decided to have four children with two years intervals. However, the situation changed after their marriage. Her husband did not follow the decision they made and as a result she has given birth to eight children with one and half interval. She further lamented that, her husband has sex with her anytime he wishes even when she is not prepared because her husband thinks she is his property. According to her the number of children she has makes her go through financial challenges. She stated that:

I and my husband planned before marriage and decided we will give birth to four with two years interval because our financial situation was not good but we now have eight children. Anytime my husband feel like having affair he does it because he said he is the man, and am his property so he can use me at any time. So we have not been able to fulfill what both of us agreed upon. We have

married for seventeen years. I even want to go to the hospital to remove my womb because I can't afford being pregnant again. Things are difficult for me.

Participant seven is a 30 year old married woman. She complained bitterly that her husband gives her no chance in decisions affecting her own reproductive rights. She complained that her husband does not show regards to women and treat her as one of his child. He complained that even when she is in her menstrual period, her husband force her to have affair with her and she has no right to resist him since any attempt on her part to resist her husband could lead to her being divorced. She lamented:

When we got married he said we will give birth to five and now we have two children, waiting for the other three. I have no say. Because he normally says that women, the head on our body is just there with no sense in it hence a man must direct a woman so I have no say about my reproductive rights. This is a secret I am telling you; even when I am in my menstrual period and in pains he sometimes sleeps with me, even though I don't like it. I can't complain since he is the head of the family and I am afraid to be divorced.

Other participants also expressed their experiences in the following ways:

With regard to reproductive rights, my husband takes decisions. At the moment we have two children. Anytime he feels like having sex with me he does it even when am tied, I cannot complain because he is the head of the family. Even when I feel like having sex I can't tell him until he feels like having sex because he is the man and he should demand for that. Any time I tried to initiate sex I become afraid in a sense that he will frown at it. To him, society frowns at women who do that even when they are in their hyper libido (Participant 3, a 32 year old woman).

We did not plan the number of children and the timing to give birth. So after giving birth to four I decided to end it there. I decided to do that because my husband was womanizing too much. Because of that I had to end it there and plan on how to take care of the children. I don't blame him; our culture allows men to marry more than one. The Mozano Church also allows men to marry more than one so he sometimes tell me if I am not happy with him I should go because he knows he can marry more than one. Of all these he will say that I can't leave because of the children (Participant 6, a 29 year old woman).

The experiences of the married women show that most of the women are aware of their reproductive rights but are being denied by their husbands. This shows that the married women are unable to take their own decision concerning the reproductive rights because of cultural beliefs and expectations. Some of the women were also afraid that their husbands will divorce them if they resist their sexual advances. It could be seen that their husbands have the traditional belief that they are initiators of sex and are using sexual conquest as justification of being men. These views expressed by the women confirm the view of Attom and Ngaaso (2011) that, many men believe that sexual conquest is one of the strongest proofs of masculinity and that men see themselves as the initiators of sex, whereas most women define themselves in terms of being objects of sexual advances. This shows that men within the Mozano community are socialized to see themselves as initiators of sex, when to have children and the number children to have

as a family. The males perceive these as appropriate behaviour and as the means to display their strength and to protect their reputation.

It was also revealed that few of the participants see reproductive rights to be natural and that human being cannot plan about that. For example, one participant said:

On issues of reproductive rights, we did not discuss it. We just give birth without planning for it. We did not discuss anything on that from the time of marriage till now. We will just give birth to what God gives us (participant 14, a 28 year old woman).

Secondly, outcome on decisions on family meals revealed that men also dominate their wives concerning the type of meals to be prepared in the home. These views were shared by majority of the male participants because to them they take greater responsibilities at home and instruct their wives as to what to do. The women commented that their husbands are in charge of paying bills, while they take care of the children, household chores and cooking for the family. The women confirmed that tradition and culture have specified the roles both wives and husbands are supposed to play which has given their husband the upper hand to dominate in all decisions including those on family meals. Thirteen of the women participants agreed that their husbands decide what to cook and what everyone should eat in the house. This is because the men provide the upkeep for the home. Eight out of the thirteen women participants confirmed that even though they support the family income they are compelled to cook the meals preferred by their husbands even if that food is not the preferred choice of the majority in that household. All the women confirmed that they only have the chance to cook the meals they want only in the absence of their husbands. Two of the women commented that their husband do not complain on the type of food they eat. This is because their husbands are getting older. The participants' expressed their experiences in the following ways:

Participant 3 is a 32 year old woman. She expressed that her husband decides on the kind of food they will eat every day. She commented that any attempt to cook any food without consulting her husband always leads to insults or even beatings. She observed that in order to prevent her husband to be angry the first thing she does in every morning is to find out from her husband the kind of food he wants the family to eat before he steps out. She expressed her sentiments that:

My husband decides on what we will eat every day. Sometimes when I make my own decisions on cooking without his knowledge he gets angry and says that when he gives instructions I don't obey. This leads to quarrel between us so in the morning I ask him what I should cook before I do so. He will insults me and sometimes beats me if I disobey. Nowadays it is all about what he desires to eat that is what I cook for the whole family.

Others also expressed that when they decide to cook any food without consulting their husbands they (men) rejects the food. This is because this makes the men angry and threatens them with divorce. Some expressed their experiences in the following ways:

In this community it is the man who tells you what you should cook every day. My husband like doing this if you disobey him and cook a different food, that food will be your cost and problem. Yes sir master is the order of the day. Obey and don't complain. Sometimes he will not give money for cooking but he insists

on what I should cook, it is very disheartening (Participant 9, a 27 year old woman).

My husband takes decisions with regard to daily activities like cooking. He decides what we eat on daily basis. He gives me money and instructs me what I should cook. If I do otherwise he becomes angry and rejects my food. He will tell me to eat the food myself. He says he is the head of the family according to tradition so if I disobey him he has to put me on the right path (Participant 10 a 24 year old woman).

These responses show that some men in the community direct their wives to perform what pleases them without taken into consideration the feelings of the women. This outcome shows the assertion that in life, active directs the passive and the independent person also subdues the dependent one.

Also, the outcome on men dominating in decisions affecting women and children career was discussed here. Responses from the participants revealed that men dominate their wives on decisions affecting their career and their children's career as well as how responsibilities are shared. It was revealed that men influence decisions affecting their wives career and responsibilities in the home. Eleven out of the fifteen women participants confirmed that their husbands share responsibilities. According to them this is so because culture and tradition have made it so. Eight women participants confirmed that their husband decided the type of job they were to do and those they were to sell. All the fifteen women agreed that their husband decide the career of their children because they pay their school fees and other bills in the house.

Participant 5 is a 28 year old woman. She revealed that her husband shares responsibilities in the house. She has been assigned to take care of the home, take care of the children and cook food as tradition demands. The husband also gives money for cooking, pay children's school fees, and pay light and water bills. She further indicated that her husband does not engage her when taken decision affecting their children and even decided on the kind of things she should sell. She stated:

My husband takes decisions concerning our children; he does not consider my view. For instance, he decides on the school that the children will attend and when I complain he says women have small brain according to our culture so decisions should be taken by a man (Participant 5, is a 28 year old woman).

In relation to how men have dominated the careers of their wives, the participants expressed their experiences:

When I married my husband, I told him I wanted to be a nurse but he said no, because as for a woman it is not that necessary to climb the academic ladder so high. So I forgot about the nursing and he agreed I should sell Mozano rings (used by members of MDCC). Even with this sometimes he does not show interest. You will not believe it, I use my own money in the ring business but when I sell them he collects the money I get. It is very worrying. He said as for a woman no matter how you struggle to get property it is a man who must control it according to our culture (Participant 9, a 27 year old woman).

I took my own decision to sell and I told my husband but he disagreed with me because he said when women work and get money they do not respect. I did not

mind him because I need to work and get money to support the home. I can't stay home without working (Participant 7, a 30 year old woman).

I decided on the career I love with no interference. When I married my husband, I was a certificate "A" teacher. Currently, am furthering my education. I have enrolled in distance education. My husband told me it was unnecessary, because as a woman no matter higher you climb the academic ladder is a man who will control you and if a woman grows beard, she will never be called a father. To him when women go to school they become disrespectful. So the money I wanted to use to purchase my diploma form, he took it and used it for another purpose but it did not stop me. I looked for money elsewhere and bought my forms. Because I did not listen to him and enrolled in diploma in education, he said I don't respect him as the head of the family and he has threatened to end the marriage because he thinks I have disobeyed him. This does not move me at all because he has gotten his degree and I think he is selfish and does not want my development but I will not give him the chance. To hell with that culture which gives men the chance to mistreat women (participant 11, a 29 year old female teacher).

The comments by these participants indicate that it has been entrenched in the minds of some men that their wives do not have the capabilities to take any meaningful decision affecting their personal development. This confirmed the notion that gender classifications seems to be rooted in human thought and emerges as framework that defines cultural values, norms, attitudes, relationships and forms of behaviour. This shows that men and women are categorized as separate groups with exclusive capabilities and functions.

In order to confirm the extent that men dominate their wives in decision making, the researchers interviewed and had focus group discussions of five men who were husbands to five of the women participants. From the responses, it was discovered that all the five men believed that they see no need to involve their wives in decision making because women on their own cannot take or contribute to any meaningful decision. They doubted that women can make any meaningful decisions without their husbands since men are full of wisdom as compared to women. They accepted that culture and tradition have given them authority to exercise control over their wives. They further revealed that they are being motivated to control their wives because history and tradition have proved it to be the best decision which needs to be continued. Three out of the five men also described men who involve their wives in decision making as "daft" who will be punished by their forefathers or gods. Some of the men commented that:

I do not listen to my wife's view concerning her work because it is the man who has to take decisions at home. In the olden days our forefathers took decisions for their wives and families which helped and we also have to continue. So what I say is final. Culture has given men the right to be head of the family and control all affairs so a woman must only obey instructions from a man but not to suggest or tell the man what to do. If our fathers did not do that I don't think we will do so. That is the reality and we have to accept it. We must go according to our culture (A forty year old man).

Only unwise men may allow their wives to take part in decisions affecting the family. This is because our culture has given men the sole right so if you are a man and you want to change the tradition; our fore fathers will punish you for

that. They will beat you with canes at your buttocks for doing the wrong thing when you passed on (a 56 year old man).

In summary, the data reveals that men dominate their women (wives) in various aspects of their lives. This is because men see themselves as heads of the family and therefore regard their wives as people who are unable to make any meaningful contribution during decisions in the home. This confirms the assertion of Casper and Bianchi, (2002) that patriarchy as a historically central form of gender relations means literally 'rule by the father' and was firmly based in male domination inside of families. This was also shared by Abeda (2010), that patriarchal ideology exaggerates biological differences between men and women, making certain that men always have the dominant, or masculine roles and women always have the subordinate or feminine ones. Abeda (2010:117) further commented that this ideology is so powerful that "men are usually able to secure the apparent consent of the very women they oppress." They do this "through institutions such as the academy, the church, and the family, each of which justifies and reinforces women's subordination to men" (Millett, 1977:35). This is indeed the case of women in the Mozano community of Ghana.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Married women in Mozano community are not allowed in decision making in their households and this affects them psychologically. Culture, religion and tradition have given men the authority over their wives especially in decision making. Religious factors and the doctrines of the MDCC have contributed to the male dominance on married women in the community. This makes men doubt the abilities of women to come out with good decisions.

Ignorance, low level of formal education, lack of descent, profitable and formal employment has made women in Mozano community vulnerable. This makes them susceptible to be dominated since they are over dependent on their husbands for survival. Men in the Mozano community dominate their wives in the area of reproduction. Men within the Mozano community are socialized to see themselves as initiators of sex, number of times to have sex, when to have children and the number children to have as a family without the consent of their wives. This is because men have control over the bodies of their wives even at the expense of their health. The males perceive these as appropriate behaviour and the means to display their strength and to protect their reputation.

Husbands decide on common household choices like what to cook and what everyone should eat in the house since they provide for the upkeep for the home. Most women have the chance to cook the meals they want only in the absence of their husbands. Most men in the Mozano community influence decisions affecting their wives and children career choices. To them most women do not respect their husbands when they attain higher education or get career opportunities. Men see their dominance in this area as something which needs to be perpetuated since their culture justifies such behaviours. Most men foresee that their dominance towards their wives will not change since society has been structured to enforce their actions.

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

Married women in the Mozano community should make a personal choice to develop their capabilities to the maximum degree without regard for culturally and religious obstacles. This can be done with the support of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection by providing various avenues for empowering women in the community. This will fully help them

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to contribute their quota to their family and community without regard for cultural and religious barriers.

There is the need for gender education by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The ministry should organise seminars and symposia for men and women in the Mozano community on the need to involve women in decision making at all levels. The need for gender education, enlightenment, awareness and consciousness rising among men in the Mozano community must target all age groups irrespective of social or economic class.

Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Gender and Social Protection and the Ghana Education Service should organize seminars, training and workshops to re-orient men irrespective of their socio-economic status and educational background. Re-orientation of men's mind set via gender education in the Mozano community could greatly enhanced women empowerment.

The MDCC in the Mozano community must adopt gender equality policies on women's representation in leadership. It should design actions aimed at tackling the gender gap in the leadership of the church. This will help empower women in the community and involve them in decision making at all levels.

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