

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**VISUAL PRESENTATION OF SELECTED GA MASHIE
PROVERBS: PRESERVATIVE VALUES OF THE ARTS**

SAMUEL ASIEDU BIMPONG



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**A Dissertation / Thesis in the Department of Music Education, School of
Creative Arts, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
in partial fulfilment**

**of the requirements for award of degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Arts and Culture)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

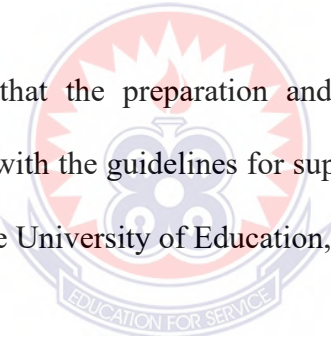
I, Samuel Asiedu Bimpong, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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Supervisors Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis / Dissertation / Project as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



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Signature:.....

Date:.....

Prof. Patrique deGraft-Yankson(Co-Supervisor)

Signature:.....

Date:.....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my wife Mrs Benedicta Bimpong and my daughters Nana Akosua Ansaah Bimpong and Akosua Asieduwaa Bimpong.



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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the design and production of selected Ga Mashie Proverbs on a canvas. This is to revive, conserve and develop intangible art forms via proverbs. Not much visual documentation has been done in terms of artistically documenting oral art for both cultural and educational purpose with reference to the people of Ga Mashie. The people of Ga Mashie have culturally and socially lived in accordance with symbol systems especially in the practice of their arts. The quest for cultural knowledge has fuelled the sense for a cultural revival and identity among the people of Ga Mashie as resulted in the need for research to document some aspects of the Ga Mashie culture and tradition as a reference material to augment the oral tradition which is inadequate and fast waning. This study showcases thirty visual symbols, created from the selected proverbs by the researcher with the aim of making them promote visual and cultural literacy. In highlighting the significance of these selected proverbs, the study employed art-based technique of a qualitative research approach to represent them artistically. In doing this, qualitative research instrument such as structured and unstructured interviews and observation methods were used in data collection. However, the thematic analysis was used for the analysis of data obtained from the interviews. The study gives credence to the Nelson's semantic theory, which says that pictures are perceptually more distinct from one another than word, thus ensuring their chances of retrieval. What was significantly evident was that some of the respondents especially the youthful population were not in sync with the direct role proverbs play on their economic lives but were equally quick to point to how proverbs have served as a guide to good behaviour. The assertion is further strengthened by some inherent values others claim they learnt from proverbs such as punctuality, chastity, hardworking, patience, selflessness etc. Traditional authorities pointed to persistence chieftaincy disputes within Ga Mashie has contributed a lot to the inability of the traditional authorities and the people to maintain their rich cultural practices and values one of which is the oral tradition where proverbs are the main elements for transmission. Several years of conflicts within the 'We' leading to divisions and cracks making it difficult for one to believe which of the practices and customs to follow. The results of the study therefore provide readers and viewers of the artworks, the possibility of recall of the painted proverbs. Based upon the findings of the socio-cultural values embedded in these proverbs, this paper recommends that more symbols should be created using the numerous proverbs and wise sayings that are in existence in our local languages to salvage the declining image of those proverbs as an important component of African art for communication.

In order to preserve these traditions in our contemporary era, there is the need to frequently create and introduce new and innovative symbols from proverbs, otherwise sayings and the life stories of our people into the system to augment the existing ones as well as to educate and to tell their story to the outside world. The study further recommends a continuous investigation into other means of preserving culture besides oral tradition and written text.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In Ghana, the Ga Mashie people of Accra are gerontocratic in nature. Elders are revered for their knowledge and deep connection with the ancestral world. They are esteemed and respected as carriers of valuable cultural wisdom. Elders are responsible for teaching the younger generation's vital cultural, moral and linguistic knowledge. This knowledge are shared informally through a variety of oral literatures such as stories, legends, tales, myths, and proverbs. The Ga Mashie people considers proverbs as the palm oil with which words are eaten.

Proverbs, as traditional wisdom are never absent from daily speeches of the Ga Mashie people. They are prevalent in daily conversation at home, school, ceremonies and in all other social events. Proverbs, as spoken expression in daily speeches of the Ga Mashie people are integral part of their culture, which reflects many aspects of their lives. People epitomizes their way of thinking, their feeling and their ideas through proverbs. They use it to solve their daily conflicts and defend their actions. Infact, it is very rare to hear a discussion among the Ga Mashie people without a proverb being used, even in their traditional courts. Proverbs have been used to relieve the tension in conflict situations, to influence behaviour, to justify behaviour, to lend support to arguments and reflects the values and philosophy of those who use them.

Most of Ga Mashie proverbs are derived from common experiences. It is not claimed that they invariably convey truth and wisdom and it is because the experiences from which they are derived may differ and somewhat contradict each other. This notwithstanding, proverbs are an important vehicle for the transmission of beliefs, culture and values which reflect much of people's varied attitudes towards their surroundings.

Furthermore, proverbs play a critical role in the educational process. However, the introduction of foreign cultures and symbols into the Ghanaian tradition and in particular among Ga Mashie people is gradually replacing and collapsing the conventional symbols that are much cherished by the Ga Mashie. Visual literacy of Ga Mashie people has the propensity to decode, interpret, create, challenge and evaluate actions. To communicate with visual images in a creative and appropriate way is to express meaningful messages (Yankah, 2012). Visual literacy for communication such as tribal marks, emblems of clans and the Adinkra symbols in Akan culture also transmit special messages (Kquofi et al 2013).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The relevance of proverbs to most indigenous Ghanaian ethnic groups is largely seen in the semantic use of it as a means of communication and the Ga Mashie people of Accra, are no exception. It is quite obvious that the cultural, educative and informative aspects of proverbs are gradually being lost while the cosmopolitan status that Ga Mashie community is fast gaining ground (GAMADA, 2008). This situation therefore creates a fertile ground for the study of the Ga proverbs and the need to develop icons to represent these proverbs for easy visual recollection.

Although there is documentation of proverbs in general in Ghana, little or no documentation has been made to project Ga Mashie proverbs as a powerful tool of communication among the indigenes. Studies shows people exhibit increased story recall when they are allowed for visual literacy (Bustle, 2004).

Ga proverbs are rich and weighty with wisdom which anybody may quote in a similar situation so much so that some become popular expression in the language of the people. They are embedded with symbolic, socio-cultural and moral significance which are employed in the social ethics of the people. The Ga Mashie people have a rich cultural heritage amongst which is the art of proverbs. Also, because a few that was documented in books for the purpose of teaching is even out of print, this art is being lost among the contemporary generation. The researcher thus hopes to renew interest in these rich indigenous traditional values for contemporary usage, making it easier for people to remember them. The researcher has made a collection of some these proverbs and developed images to represent these proverbs for easy visual recollection and enhancement of their educational value. The researcher has used these proverbial images in painting to popularise their conceptual and aesthetic values in today's contemporary Ga Mashie community.

Ga Mashie proverbs and symbols that exist have not been fully adopted in visual forms especially for educative purposes. In order to sustain the existence of this important aspect of the Ga tradition, it has become necessary to explore the possibility of preserving and popularizing them through visual registration for the people of Ga Mashie. Ga Mashie proverbs are fascinating and reflect the imaginations, knowledge, wisdom, ethics and morals of the people yet its symbolic representations tend to receive less attention. The researcher hopes that this modest

contribution to his people and society as a whole will go a long way to add up to the advancement of the poetic essence of the Ga language within Ga Mashie which seem to be dying off, represent them in a visual language and give their symbols a socio-cultural interpretation for visual literacy to use for both formal and informal education systems.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The project is directed towards documenting Ga Mashie proverbs in visual forms. Central to the project is using traditional picture making processes for producing artworks and preservation of oral art. The reason for the project stems from the fact that Ga Mashie proverbs is mostly documented in text. The painted proverbs will add to the reservoir of Ga Mashie cultural knowledge, helping to interpret cultural behaviours, practices and lived experiences. This is the goal of the research .

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

1. trace the history of proverbs and their relevance to the morality of Ga Mashie people of Ghana from pre-independence to date
2. develop thirty symbolic images to represent selected Ga Mashie proverbs for easy visual recollection
3. produce demonstrative images on canvas with twenty of the symbolic images for painting
4. evaluate the usefulness of the symbolic images of Ga Mashie proverbs rendered through painting.

1.5 Research questions

1. What is the history of Ga Mashie proverbs from pre-history independence to date and their relevance to the moral development of the people?
2. How will thirty symbolic images that represent selected Ga Mashie proverbs be developed represented for easy recollection?
3. In what ways can twenty selected Ga Mashie proverbs be produced through painting on canvas.
4. How will the symbolic images of the selected Mashie proverbs be evaluated?

1.6 Delimitation

The project was limited to establishing fascinating Ga Mashie proverbs and reflect the imagination, knowledge, wisdom, ethics, and morals with visual representation of the proverbs through painting on canvas. The research was carried out among Ga people of Accra specifically, Ga Mashie which comprises of Asere, Sempe, Abola, Gbese, Akumadzei, Otublohum and Ngleshie Alata (James Town).

1.7 Significance of the study

The study is significant in the sense that it will help people to know the historical background, philosophies, wisdom and the context within which Ga Mashie proverbs emanate. It would also support visual literacy among the Ga people of Ga Mashie since visual imagery promotes story recall when people are allowed to construct relevant pictures such as proverbial images. In order to sustain the existence of Ga visual culture and tradition, it is necessary to explore the possibility of preserving Ga proverbs. This would add to existing literature on Ga proverbs and serve as the basis for conducting further studies. People will have better knowledge about historical facts about the Ga people in Ga mashie of Accra over the centuries. It will also

inform the public on the rich oral traditions of the people of Ga Mashie and their relevance to moral development of the people. The project would be beneficial to those who are conscious about the sustenance of Ga cultural values, ethics and beliefs through appropriate moral behaviour among the people thereby preserving and promoting the dying rich oral traditions (proverbs). It would enrich the knowledge of students and teachers of African art and culture and paremiologist. The outcome will serve as a guideline for the preservation of oral tradition (more specifically proverbs) of other ethnic groups and indigenous other societies.

1.8 Definition of terms

Ga: It is a Kwa language of Ghana, spoken in Accra and vicinity.

Ga Mashie: It refers to the home of the original Ga settlers and the original name of Accra and comprises seven clans, Asere, Sempe, Akangmaje, Gbese, Ngleshi Alata & Otublohum.

GAMADA: Ga Mashie Development Authority

Nai : this is the principal clan deity of Ga-Mashie

Jemawɔ̃ji : The deities that the Ga people came to Meet when they migrated to the coast.

Iconic representation: The creation or generation of an icon or image from the stated proverb as a result of pictures created in the mind's eyes.

Icons: These are images, symbols, pictures, or other representations usually as an object of religious devotion.

Proverbs: It is a short, well-known pithy saying, stating a general truth or piece of advice.

Paremiologist: One who studies proverbs.

Symbols: It refers to something visible that can be in a form of two- or three-dimensional objects that represents something else that is invisible

Visual literacy: It refers to the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image

1.9 Abbreviation

A.I.C :American Institute for Conservation

U.E.W: University of Education, Winneba

1.9 Organisation of the Rest of the Text

Chapter One covers the introduction containing background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, delimitations, importance of the study, theoretical frame work and organization of text. Chapter Two covers the literature review which deals with theories of various authors in connection with how they view proverbs and symbols. Areas discussed under this section are; the anthropology background of the people of Ga Mashie, the culture of the Ga language, definition of Ga, economic activities of the people of Ga Mashie, topography of Ga Mashie, meaning of proverbs, classification of proverbs, features of Ga proverbs, Icons, what is pictorial presentation, visual aesthetics of proverbs, preservation of arts, Pictorial presentation of proverbs. Chapter Three deals with the research methodology and it's relation to the study. It includes the research design, population of study, sample and sampling technique, data collecting instruments as well as methodologies employed in obtaining relevant data for the research. In Chapter Four, the data have been assembled, discussed and analysed. Chapter Five deals with the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

Review of related literature will be centred on data from books, articles, journals, archival documents, internet sources and other research material that are related to the phenomenon being researched. Data will be broken down into sub-headings and reviewed with reference to existing literature. The review of some related literature in this study is as follows.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework informing this study is the concept of visual imagery of proverb as acquired knowledge people use to interpret lived experiences (Kaplan, 2002). This framework also views proverbial symbols as a system of meanings a people attribute to phenomena. Bantinaki (2004) said that pictorial art can have cognitive value, that it can enhance our understanding of the world and of our own selves, has had many advocates in art theory and philosophical aesthetics alike. This perspective is in consonance with the goals and objectives of this research project, the essential concern of which is the visual presentation of proverbs as means to preserving oral art as within an indigenous Ghanaian culture.

The premise here is that since artists often give form to their thoughts and lived experiences through their artistic activities, products of art and artistic acts are in a sense, lived experiences transformed into images. The researcher using qualitative paradigm situated the research in the theoretical thoughts of Nelson's sensory semantic theory. It opines that pictures hold two encoding advantages over words. Pictures are perceptually more distinct from one another than are words, thus

increasing their chance for retrieval. Snodgrass and McCullough (1987) say that when very similar pictures are used, no picture superiority effect is present. Pictures are also believed to assess meaning more directly than words.

The Nelson's sensory theory is closely related and justified by Allan Paivio's dual-coding theory (1971) and picture superiority effect. Paivio claims that pictures have advantages over words with regards to coding and retrieval of stored memory because pictures are coded more easily and can be retrieved from symbolic mode, while the dual coding process using words is more difficult for both coding and retrieval. Another explanation of the higher recall in picture superiority is due to the higher familiarity or frequency of pictured objects (Asch & Ebenholtz, 1962).

This theory and its related theories can be applied in the teaching-learning environment. Learners can structure a mental model when processing a picture initially so that no further model construction may be required for subsequent processing of a text. Presenting picture before text is beneficial to students with low prior knowledge (Eitel & Scheiter, 2015).

2.3 Anthropological background of the Ga Mashie people

The origin of the Ga-speaking ethnic groups from the early Sixteenth Century in the then Gold Coast has been a subject of controversy, since various scholars have given different versions of their migration stories. Most of these narrations are based on oral traditions, myths, legends, folklores, music, religious songs and many other sources; including archaeological findings. Reindorf (1895) in tracing the origin of the Ga indicates that F. Romer, a Dutch resident of the Christianborg in about the middle of the Eighteenth Century states, "that the Gold Coast was once part of the western division of the territory of the Emperor of Benin."(p.18) To buttress this point, Romer

further argues that, “the insignia of the kings of the *Akras* were like those used in Benin, and most of their religious ceremonies, e.g. killing the sacrificial animals with sharp stones instead of knives, in order not to avoid defiling them, were also used in *Akra*.”(Reindorf,p.18)

Corroborating Romer’s assertion, Henderson-Quartey (2001), citing from the work of Bruce-Myers (1927, pp.70-72) quoted him as saying, “the Gas came all the way from the central part of the Continent...and they are kinsmen to the Benins, who by their own choice, kept back in the course of the migration.” This gives credence to the assumption that the Ga ethnic groups were once part of the people of Benin from the mid-western part of Nigeria. Existing traditional accounts of the origin of the Ga according to Reindorf, indicates that the ancestors of the tribes of *Akras*, *Late*, *Obutu* and *Mowure* are said to have emigrated from the sea, arriving at the coast tribe after tribe.” These tribes he believe arrived together with the Adangbes either from *Tetetutu* or from *Samè*, located beyond the Volta in the east, and situated between two rivers.

Field (1937) associating with Reindorf noted that the Ga speaking emigrants began to arrive and settle among the lagoon-worshipping *Kpéshi* aborigines probably at the end of the sixteenth century. She argued that these were emigrant refugee families of the *Ga Boni*, *Ga Wo*, *Ga Mashie* and the *Obutu* fleeing in separate parties from *Tetetutu* and other Benin parts, probably travelling along the beach, and eventually settled along the coastlines of the Gulf of Guinea, in the Greater Accra region. Henderson-Quartey on his part noted that the *Ga Mashie*, *Ga Wo*, and the *Ga Boni* in association with some Guan groups having formed part of the emigrants that re-grouped at *Tetetutu*, crossed over from the east of the Volta into the Accra Plains.

On the contrary, Amartey (1991) narrating from oral traditions or folkloric sources gave a different version of the migration story of the Ga in *Gamei Ashikwéi* (Origin of the Ga). According to Amartey, historically, the Ga of Ghana were believed to have once lived along the eastern part of the banks of the River Nile during the reign of Thothmes II, the then Pharaoh of Egypt, circa 1700 –1250 BCE. This was at the time when the Israelites had settled on the land of Goshen, from the eastern part of the River Nile to its estuary. He postulates that the Ga were part of the Nubians that left Egypt after being freed from slavery by the then Pharaoh Amenhotep II.

Unlike other scholars and historians, Amartey tracing the itinerary of the Nubians indicted that this group separated into the Ethiopian and Ga ethnic groups after they had left Egypt, with each group following different direction. The Ga-speaking ethnic groups which consists of the *Wo Kpele*, *Wo Krowor*, *Wo Doku* and *Wo Sagba* were supposed to have travelled the south-western route by following the *Ghazal* and *Jebe* creeks, and the River *Ubangi* which eventually led them to *Boma*; a town in Congo (presently D. R. Congo). There they sojourn for some time, before moving on to the *Boni* Island in the Niger Delta Basin. He further posits that while in Nigeria, these groups once again separated, with one part moving west to the land of the ancient Benins, while the rest moved north-west to Ife in the Yoruba land. He then traced their movements from Nigeria through Dahomey (now Republic of Benin) and to Togo where they settled at *Aneho*, before eventually moving on to their present locations in the then Gold Coast. (Amartey, 1991)

Reindorf, (1889) however posited that even though these narratives of the origin of the Ga-speaking people depended mainly on the generics of oral traditions,

legends, etc: it is obvious that names of certain places such as *Tetetutu*, *Benin*, *Boni*, *Boma*, *Samè* or *Seme*, *Aneho* and others have featured prominently in the migration stories of most scholars of Ga history. These assertions have been corroborated by people of other ethnic groups such as the *Adangbe*, *Ada*, *Krobo* and *Ewe* speakers who were fellow emigrants of the Ga groups in their journeys from Benin in Nigeria through *Aneho* in Togo, and finally to their present locations in modern Ghana. Commenting on the above assertions, Field (1937) intimates that, when the Ga-speaking emigrants arrived in the Gold Coast, neither they nor the aborigines had any military organization and since they were all farmers, the newcomers settled peaceably among them wherever there was a vacant territory. However, because much of the land was of thick bush inhabited by wild and dangerous animals, hunters who opened up tracts of these forests were recognized as owners of such places.

Consequently, these extended family groups comprising of both emigrants and aborigines either through intermarriages or through assimilation, formed settlements that lived by farming and to some extent hunting. In order to protect themselves from slave raiding that has become rife, these settlements which were threatened with extinction, had to combine forces to establish towns for mutual protection; and the setting up of military organizations to fight off these invaders.

Stride and Ifeka (1971) while corroborating these assertions of Field(1937), further noted that it was at the end of the Fifteenth Century that the social organizations of the Ga towns began to change. This in their view began with the establishment of a more centralized administration system, and military companies (*Asafoi*) under captains (*Asafoiatsemèi*) that played prominent and important roles in the maintenance of law and order, as well as governance of these towns.

2.4 The culture of the Ga language

Ga language according to Henderson-Quartey (2001) conveys oral traditions through which the history of its speakers is revealed, and the means by which the members of the society share their collective experience and knowledge through common bond. He postulates that since there was no existing written record of the Ga language prior to the Eighteenth Century, it would be difficult to know the difference between the forms of the language spoken now and say 2000 years ago. He, however, argued that from the archaeological point of view of the stages of human development, it is reasonable to assume that some form of evolution has taken place in the Ga language; either through migrations, conquest, trade, cultural assimilation or contact with speakers of different dialects has caused considerable modification of the Ga language. This in his opinion is the case of “the coastal town of Kpone, once Adangme, is now Ga speaking.”

The Ga language as compared with other spoken words in etymology according to Greenberg (UNESCO, 2022), is classified among the Kwa group of languages found on the African Continent. These classifications consists of the Kru languages, Western Kwa, made up of Ewe-Fon, Akan-Guan sometimes called Volta-Camoe, Ga-Adangme, Yoruba-Igala, Nupe, Edo, Idoma, Ibio, and Ijo groups. Commenting further on the evolution of the Ga language, Henderson-Quartey postulates that though it is closest to the Adangme and share a great deal of similarities not only in root-words but also in language structure; it has under gone some form of changes by borrowing words from the Yoruba, Guans, Akans, Portuguese, and English languages to enhance the Ga vocabulary. For example, words such as Okyeame (linguist), Asafo (company or troop), Akwashon (corrupted form of *eku eson* – council of seven), *bitim*, *odono*, *atumpam* (types of drums), *pleko* (iron

nail), *nklakla* (light soup), *ampeshi* (boiled plantain), etc. Besides, in Ga religious expressions, *mpai* (libation), *otutu* (a mound of shrine) etc, are also of Akan origin.

While *asapatre* (Shoe), *goa* (Guava), *dashi* (Bribe), *gudiimin* (Good Evening), *moonimooni* (Good Morning), *feesi* (First) are corrupted forms of Portuguese and English words respectively. Of course, the Guans also on the other hand, had contributed extensively to the lexicological development of the modern Ga language through the formal principles of inflexion of Ga words; and grammatical features such as the usage of verb forms for the present progressive and the future tenses, which are not found in the Adangme verb forms.

2.5 Definition of Ga

Ga is the derivation of Gaga (soldier ants) which according to Reindorf (1895) is the names of the big black ants which bites severely and are dangerous to the white ants. However, he noted that the natives called themselves *Loeiabii* (children of *Loei*). Of course, *Loei* is a Ga name for another species of dark brown ants, which meanders about in great swarms; invading houses, killing and devouring everything in their way. These marauding ants known to the Akans as *nkrang*, and whose aggressive nature were attributed to the powerful wandering Ga emigrant tribes; easily subdued other tribes as well as the Guans who were the aborigines of the land. This was the name ascribed to the Ga-speaking tribes due to their prowess and bravery in warfare, and the Portuguese due to their difficulty in pronunciation later on corrupted it to Akra.

2.6 Economic Activities of the Ga Mashie people

Historically, before the coming of the Europeans, majority of the residents in Ga Mashie were fishermen, fish mongers, farmers and traders. The farmers mostly cultivated vegetables and fruits for both household consumptions and for sale at the

market centres. During the colonial era, the people of Ga Mashie learnt skills such as masonry, carpentry and other skills, with assistance from the Basel Mission Society (Agyei-Mensah & Wrigley-Asante, 2013). Currently, the main occupations of the residents are food production, informal trading, informal services provision and informal manufacturing. This is because there are no arable lands for farming due to high demand for land for residential purposes (Campion, 2011). Some of the men are into fishing, informal manufacturing, services and petty trading. (Mahama et al,2011) observed that, there are barbers, tailors, corn mill grinding operators and bakers in the community. The study area is experiencing rapid population growth due to the natural increase and migration from the rural areas. These factors have caused the area to record a high per cent of unemployment due to the limited job opportunities in the community. This has also resulted in most people coming out with different kinds of home-based enterprises (Mahama et al, 2011). Those who mostly engage in home-based enterprises according to Campion (2011) periodically, visit the Agbogbloshie and Makola Markets to buy foodstuff, clothes and other items and retail them in the community.

2.7 Topography of Ga Mashie

Ga Mashie, a neighbourhood in the original settled part of the city, sits only one kilometre from the city's significant urban districts, including Accra's financial centre, national law courts, cultural institutions and civic places on the Gulf of Guinea coastline. In addition to its placement on some of the most economically and socially valuable land, Ga Mashie is the ancestral homeland for the Ga tribe, whose population is one of the largest in Accra. (Quarcoopome, 1993)

In spite of Ga Mashie's cultural and geographic signification, the area has become a dense urban slum over the past several decades. Though the population

density of Ga Mashie has grown to 25 times that of Accra's average, new development in Ga Mashie is almost non-existent. One contributing factor is the complicated system of land ownership. In Ga Mashie, much of the land is owned by the Ga Paramount Chief (tribal leader), who operates a legal, but parallel, system to the democratic government of Accra. Few families have legal title to the land on which they live, and little ability to change the properties they currently rent or inhabit. While local organizations are assisting families in gaining titles to the land they occupy, this process is slow and land ownership tenure unclear. (Quartey-Papafio, 2006)

Quartey-Papafio further asserts that another factor exacerbating the difficulties, is the unplanned nature of the district. While Ga Mashie was once carefully laid out, today the vestiges of that plan are hard to discern. Very high levels of population growth led to uncontrolled infill development (within the larger block), which is irregular in position and size. There are a number of pedestrian paths that penetrate the block interior, but most are narrow and hard to navigate, confusing the distinction between private and public, street and courtyards, and generating more disorder amidst the deteriorating, poorly constructed housing stock.

Most of the time, especially on Sundays, families stay outdoors, where there's more elbow room. At night, the streets of Ga Mashie are sardined with slumbering bodies

2.8 Meaning of Proverbs

Proverbs have been, are and will always be timeless. Proverbs according to Akporobaro (2008) is a short popular saying usually in the form of a moral advice or truth expressed in a concise form. He goes further to describe it as a means by which ideas could be vividly expressed and illustrated. The history of proverbs dates back to

the 16th century when in 1515 Erasmus of Rotterdam published his first collection of proverbs and proverbial sayings. Since then, proverbs have become stimulating & researchable. This characterises proverbs as an acceptable form of communication in and out of cultural contexts.

The variety and number of proverbs and proverbial phrases is boundless. No matter how old people are, what country they come from, proverbs are part of their heritage. To the way of thinking of all proverb users, they comprise a good portion of common sense, experience, wisdom and above all truth. Proverbs, from a linguistic perspective, is a source of figurative language and metaphor. It has also been described as the “core of verbal interaction in Africa” (Oduaran & Oduaran, 2006) and “the palm oil with which words are eaten” (Yankah, 1989). Used daily, proverbs continue to be a chief mode of communication in African communities.

Yisa (1998) opines that proverb is a short repeated witty statement of experience which is used to further a social end. Yisa, (2004) citing Grigas, Kirkman, Louis, Mieder, and Seitel (1965) is of the opinion that short, cleverly constructed belief statements which are used to perform different functions in society. One of such functions is to help users to say unpleasant things in an ameliorated way. They are able to do this because proverbs are often associated with common or traditional (i.e. longstanding) wisdom or attitude.

One can infer from the definitions of proverbs cited above that, they are kernel which contains wisdom of the traditional people and they are also philosophical. They are moral expositions shrunk to a few words because it is didactic. Proverbs are also used to suit every situation and occasion. This is because every significant affirmation traditional value or belief can be strengthened and supported with the use of appropriate proverbs. Social problems and personal

difficulties can also be settled by an appeal to the sanctioning proverbs. Ghana's rich cultural diversity and commonality is also seen in ethnography description of proverbs (Dzobo, 1974). The Akan, for example, call them "mme" or "mbe" or "mmebusem/mbebusem," the Ewe "lododo," the Ga "abe," the Sisala "namaka," and the Dagbani, "naha.". When a speaker uses proverbs well, we say he really knows the language. Instead of a long speech, a good speaker sometimes uses proverbs or wise sayings to express the same ideas. Proverbs are the gems of wisdom, a mixture of wisdom & philosophy. It does not argue over a point or explain anything; it just tells us a great truth in the most significant way. Yankah, drawing from the above assertions posited that proverbs are also used to sum up life experiences and let the listener draw conclusions by himself and apply them to his behaviour in the future. Thus, because the proverb holds deep metaphorical meaning and is integrated into the daily activities and challenges of African peoples.

Finnegan (1970) argues that proverbs are highly culture and context dependent and thus cannot be understood outside the cultural context in which they are spoken. If removed from the cultural context she argues that they may have an entirely different meaning. The use of the proverb relies on cultural allusions, thus when the cultural element is not understood, the essential meaning of the proverb may be missed or lost. She argues that this can be even further complicated by the fact that the same proverb can be used for multiple purposes. Yet, at the same time Asimeng-Boahene (2006) and Yankah (1989) speak to African proverbs as universalized truths speaking to the human condition. Thus, because the proverb is fluid and flexible it can also be used outside direct cultural context. They are coined in order to impart practical knowledge to mankind. It is great truth with profound thinking and tons of experience. Most proverbs are anonymous. They are true in different contexts. There

are some proverbs which cannot be challenged such as ‘Honesty is the best policy’ ‘Cleanliness is next to godliness’. These are universal proverbs. Proverbs can be known as a common man’s friends, a philosopher and a guide. They influence us in many ways. Elders sometimes use proverbs to explain phenomena and thus it has a great impact on our minds.

2.8 Classification of proverbs

Among the Ga-speaking people of Accra the use of proverbs is very common in everyday speech. The Ga proverbs are funny and sometimes play on words. No wonder proverbs creep in everything they say and do. Proverbs express the time-tried wisdom of the elders and contain the traditions of the elders. The words may change, but the main truths remain in, and are transmitted from generation to generation through, our Oral Traditions. (Accam, 1972).

Proverbs play a very important role in the everyday language of the Ga people. Their languages have beautiful proverbs which cover all aspects of their life. They are drawn from careful observations of social events, the lives of people and animals. Some are also drawn from experiences in occupations such as farming, fishing, hunting, and weaving. Like other ethnic groups, Ga proverbs talks about family and human relations, good and evil, poverty and riches, joy and sorrow etc.

According to Kudadjie (1999) a careful study of the use of proverbs among the Ga people suggest the following classifications.

- (a) Proverbs that mention God, the gods, mother Earth, rivers, and other spirits of the universe.
- (b) Proverbs about animals and men.
- (c) Proverbs that deal with historical explanations or stories.
- (d) Proverbs in which parts of the body such as ears, hands, eyes, and brain are mentioned.

- (e) Proverbs which deal with objects of nature and art, e.g., domestic or wild animals, plants and minerals.
- (f) Proverbs which refer to the general state of man, his fate, and his destiny.
- (g) Proverbs that deal with the domestic, social, and political life of the people.
- (h) Proverbs which refer to the intellectual conditions of man, e.g., wisdom, foolishness, rudeness, etc.
- (i) Proverbs that refer to moral values, e.g., patriotism, love, unity, hard work, patience, justice, truthfulness, loyalty.

Proverb can be used for multiple purposes. Some of the functions of proverbs are the following:

- (a) they adorn the speech and make it rich and beautiful,
- (b) they bring out the main point of the matter for clear understanding,
- (c) they make an otherwise long statement short,
- (d) they make listeners pay attention to what is being discussed,
- (e) they educate and teach morals.

There are different proverbs for different situations. Important matters or occasions call for their own proverbs. For instance, a proverb that will be used when a lazy child is being advised, will be different from when a hardworking child is being praised. Sometimes two or more proverbs may convey almost the same meaning. Although there are different proverbs for different situations, sometimes one proverb may be used for different situations.

Ga Proverbs will remain timeless and will keep on shedding light to warn against pitfalls & will show the correct way.

2.10 Features of Ga Proverbs

Ga and Dangme proverbs, like those of other African traditional societies are attributed to the ancestors. In many African societies, when a proverb is cited, it is preceded with a statement like, "So said the elders...." This may be a way of according proverbs authority. It is also a way of saying that all the people own the proverbs; also, that they contain experience, wisdom, and valid counsel which are to be acknowledged by all. Thus, the collective thought, beliefs, and values of an African people can be discerned from their proverbs (Kudadjie, 1999).

Accam (1972) stated that a close look at Ga and Dangme, as at other African traditional proverbial sayings, shows clearly that the main concerns expressed in the proverbs relate to every aspect of human life. The ultimate purpose of the proverbs is to teach wisdom and moral lessons.

The proverbs contain observations and good counsel against undesirable vices like anger, backbiting, greed, ingratitude, laziness, lying, pride, procrastination, selfishness, stealing and so forth. Many other proverbs also praise and advise people to cultivate virtues that promote progress and ensure wellbeing; as for instance, circumspection, co-operation, gratitude, humility, patience, perseverance, prudence, respect and unity.

Supporting the statements made above, Dundes inferred that proverbs reflect everyday occurrences and that they usually have two meanings: the literal or primary meaning, and the deeper or real meaning. The real meaning of African proverbs is not always apparent. This is precisely why they are called proverbs. For instance, the Akan, Dangme and Ga expressions for "to cite a proverb," *bu abë*, means "to bend," "curve," or "twist words," to make them complicated. Take, for example,

the Ga proverb *Kë onyië shwuö sëë lë owuu bö*. (If you follow in the trail of an elephant, you do not get smeared with the dew.) The statement is literally true. The elephant is a very big animal, and as it goes through the forest stepping on the grass and destroying the shrubs, it gets smeared with the dew. Therefore, if you follow in its trail, you stand less risk of getting smeared with the dew, since the elephant has already cleared it off the grass and shrubs (Dundes, 1994).

Ga and Dangme proverbs share many other common features with those of other African societies. They can be used for several purposes, for instance, the linguistic analysis of a particular language or dialect. Historical information as well as the thought, customs, beliefs and values of a society can also be obtained through their proverbs. Besides, the proverbs are a literary device used to embellish speech. This is because many of their idioms are embedded in the proverbs. As it were, the proverbs are used as sweeteners to communicate effectively. As one Ga writer put it, speaking without citing proverbs is like eating soup without salt (Djagbletey, 1972).

2.11 Visualization

Visualisation has been used for decades as a strategy to help readers construct meaning from reading passages. Visualisation can be done internally (by creating mental imagery) and externally (by drawing visual representation). Reading process is identical to obtaining meaning from a text (Palincsar, 2003). Visualisation is one of metacognitive strategies that can help students in reading (Israel, Bauserman, & Block, 2005). Current scholars have also introduced visualisation to promote reading comprehension. Visualisation is divided into two types: internal and external (Cohen & Hegarty, 2007; Gilbert, Nakhleh & Reiner, 2008). The internal visualisation is famously known as mental imagery that readers create in their mind as a part of meaning construction process (Trafton, Trickett, & Mintz, 2005).

To make the internal visualisation visible, readers can draw a visual representation to represent their mental imagery as well as representing the meaning of a text. This is what is referred to as external visualisation (Cohen & Hegarty, 2007). Joyce and Gaudin (2007) suggest that there are two kinds of visual representations: narrative and non-narrative. Narrative images commonly include a story that illustrates a causal process in a mentioned time. The participants in the narrative images can be people, animals or objects that are doing something (actors), or they may have something done to them (goals).

It is fair to conclude that within a narrative design, a visual representation can be drawn as problematic event sequence which is presenting some images that show the problematic sequential events involving the orientation, complication and resolution parts of a story as mentioned in a text. This can be used to represent a narrative text. Successful visualisation is related to successful comprehension. This successful comprehension is presented through productive characteristics being included in students' visual representation.

2.12 What is Pictorial Representation?

Bantinaki (2004) opines that pictorial art can have cognitive value, that it can enhance our understanding of the world and of our own selves, has had many advocates in art theory and philosophical aesthetics alike. It has also been argued, however, that the power of pictorial representation to convey or enhance knowledge, in particular knowledge with moral content. Pictorial representation can be seen to exploit knowledge of the world and of the system of representation itself, shared within the generating culture.

Given that it is generally not possible for an artist to depict all that there is to depict about her chosen subject, artists commonly rely on audiences to draw on their knowledge and experience and, thereby, fill-in those aspects of pictorial content that are not being given explicitly. Thus, to be rightly appreciated, pictures often have to be seen under the light of information that the artist had reasons to regard as shared knowledge among the anticipated audience. These can be seen clearly in the Adinkra symbols of the Asantes (Rattray, 1988). Arthur however agreed that all of these symbols originated from proverbs such as *'akokɔ nan tia ban a enkum ba'* translated in English as the hen steps on the chicks but does not kill it, *'sɛ wo werɛfi na wosan kɔfa a yennkyi'* also in English it is not a taboo to return to take back what you forgot, these are illustrated into pictures and it made it easy for identification and remembrance. In the case of non-narrative pictures, as I shall illustrate, this interpretive strategy allows pictorial content and created forms of interpretation to sayings of a traditional system to expand beyond appearances, thus enabling moral function. (Arthur, 2001).

2.13 Symbols and their uses

In our communication, we often forget that there is more to it than words. There is a body language that says more than the words say. There are numerous types of symbols that surround people, powerfully moving them into involuntary behaviours. Symbols are communications that have specific meaning. Usually visual, symbols act as communication short-cuts that convey one or more messages that have been previously learned by both the sender and the recipient. Symbols have been used since time immemorial to communicate ideas and convey deeper meanings. Symbols may be universally recognized (by a group of people) or personally significant (to an individual) (Knauff, M., et al 2002).

Symbols have the ability to be used for practical purposes or by abstract means. One can use the following as symbols to represent something else; sign, sound, emblem, objects, picture, image etc. Symbols may be used as an identifier, a language of concepts, an iconic representation, express intangible truths, carry particular meanings, express something unknown, simply to represent something else, pass on stories from generation to generation, convey a deeper meaning than the words themselves and as a source of connection between members in a group (Lipinski, 2001).

A symbol serve as a powerful instrument of thought and abstract idea that vehicle for the conception of an object, enabling us to conceive or form a view of an object. Symbols help in giving clear information about the environment and about intentions and feelings of people, and bring out the appropriate reactions as well as hide and protect some important secrets as well. In the same way as they give information, when they are not properly used, they may turn to misinform the individual and can lead one to a serious danger (Farrell-Kirk, 2001).

There are two types of symbols, the natural and artificial or man-made symbols that can be seen around the environment. Some examples of the natural symbols are names of animal plants human beings, fire etc.

2.14 Visual aesthetics of proverbs

Across the world, proverbs are symbolic expressions of people. Proverbs are influenced, to a large extent, by the linguistic and socio-geographical experiences and orientations of the diverse peoples that make up the country. The imagery in proverbs, their form and context of use as well as aesthetics, reflect the peculiar natural environment of the users. They describe plant and animal life and all activities of man in the world; they point humanity on the way forward or the acceptable way of living.

Jegede (2008) identifies “proverbs as a dynamic mode of discourse with unique identity”(p.182). He further posits that proverbs form a pool of linguistic and thematic resources from which speakers and writers in rhetoric, politics, economics, jurisprudence, philosophy, history, religion, technology, etc.

This presupposes that the functions of proverbs as a means of embellishing speech and performance, projecting business sense of people, portraying the image of a community and preserving the history and culture of a people can be aesthetically underscored among speakers and listeners. In fact, Manikas-Forester and Syswerd (1990) assert that “...these wise sayings (proverbs) describe patterns that operate in everyday life, offering us advice on how to conduct ourselves in various situations.”(p.661). Aesthetically speaking, a proverb may be used to show joy, to mourn, to praise, to indicate failure or to warn. So, apart from the literal and linguistic contexts, the social context of any proverb determines its suitability of use in a particular situation (Bashir et al 2012).

The meaning of a proverb, to a great extent, depends on the circumstance of use, the dexterity of the speaker (user), the iconic cultural and interpretative skills of the listener (audience), among other linguistic tropes which embody its aesthetics. Suru (2010) affirms that aesthetics deals with those responses to natural objects (including proverbs) and the judgement of them whether they should be regarded as beautiful or ugly. Omoera (2012), though in a slightly different context, argues that what we see, say, or hear has ‘colour’ or ‘art’ attached to it and equally constitutes an aesthetic essence, which is a ‘moment’ of beauty in both tangible and intangible terms.

2.15 Preservation

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works defines preservation as follows: The protection of cultural property through activities that minimize chemical and physical deterioration and damage and that prevent loss of informational content. The primary goal of preservation is to prolong the existence of cultural property. (AIC, 2008)

In the widest sense, preservation encompasses

- Activities that prevent damage to paper-based and media collections, such as proper housing, environmental control, and disaster planning; and
- Activities such as treatment, replacement, or reformatting that address existing damage.

Preservation involves keeping a balance between collection-level activities such as environmental control, which can be difficult and/or costly to manage but provide the greatest long-term benefit for the most materials, and item-level activities such as conservation treatment, which are often more easily understood and managed but can have limited effect, especially if the items are returned to a damaging environment.

Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc, are considered by many to be two of the first conservation/preservation theorists. Ruskin, a poet, writer and art critic, believed nothing from the present should disturb the remnants of the past and that a building is born, lives and then, dies (Ruskin, 1849). In the same vein, festivals are born with a society and hence the frantic effort of unearthing the aesthetic values and preservative qualities of Ohum festival for the arts thereby promoting and preserving it on all platforms.

Preservation with regards to culture heritage involves activities associated with maintaining library, archival, or museum materials for use, either in their original physical form or in some other format. It is the protection of cultural property through activities that minimize chemical and physical deterioration and damage and that prevent loss of informational content. The primary goal of preservation is to prolong the existence of cultural property (Harris,1982).

Linsay(1990) espouses cultural heritage as comprises legendary artifacts, history, cultural relics and monuments of our forefathers that are being preserved for generations yet unborn to learn from the past-be it good or bad. The importance cannot be overemphasized: Cultural heritage affirms our identity as a people because it creates a comprehensive framework for the preservation of cultural heritage including cultural sites, old buildings, monuments, shrines, and landmarks that have cultural significance and historical value. As human we can ensure effective coordination among concerned agencies in order to avert the diminution, depletion and destruction of the country's cultural heritage.

Lindsay (1990), further reiterates that tradition implies continuity through time, but not in a static or immovable aspect, given that every tradition must be situated within a continuous process of change and metamorphosis. They are undoubtedly important for the individual and for groups or social collectives as well.

Preservation by itself is instinctive in human beings. Since the beginning, humans were protecting, repairing and cleaning their own shelter, whether it was a cave or an independent standing structure, although at that time there were no philosophies, theories, rules, regulations or standards (Miri, 2012). The protection, promotion, maintenance and presentation of our culture in its diversity are an essential

requirement for sustainable development for the wellbeing of present and generations yet unborn. Although culture is dynamic, history, cultural values and institutions give us our identity as Ghanaians and hence the need to respect, preserve harness and use our cultural heritage and resources to develop a unified, vibrant and prosperous national community with distinctive African identity and personality and a collective confidence and pride of place among the country nations.

The general concept of preservation relates to the safeguarding of cultural resources. The degree of the significance of the resource relates to its value or values. These values include social, economical, political, scientific, aesthetic, philosophical, spiritual, architectural, archeological, sentimental, age considerations and so on. Some of these resources may have a limited value in the present but which can increase exponentially in the future. (Unesco, 1997).

The perpetuation of society as we are accustomed to conceive or idealize it is dependent to a very large extent on the preservation en masse of our accumulated group memories and consciousness stored in the form of written, printed, and otherwise recorded word or symbol (Petherbridge, 1987).

The extreme importance of preservation activity is clear: to provide present and future generations with tangible evidence of lives of important people of the past who have been linked with the particular area, and to serve as an inspiration and benefit for the people of the area both culturally and economically, eventually creating a significant and positive social impact on the daily lives of people and communities where such preservation measures are taken. In this regard, festivals which are important tools for preservation of the arts should be harnessed for its continuity.

Historic preservation is a means of retaining the order and stability of the past by controlling the unknown consequences of the new. History is a continuous and irreversible process in which events are dependent upon one another. The past creates the present which, in turn, shapes the future.

2.16 Preservation of art

Bame (1991) discusses the artistic values of festivals concurrently with development. He is of the view that traditional festivals provide opportunities for the collective renewal of the arts as a form of community experience or as expressing group consciousness, as well as for developing artistic repertoires of the performing groups. He remarks that, although singing, drumming and dancing assume varying degrees of extensiveness in the programmes of different festivals, they are never completely absent in any traditional festival. To that extent, all traditional festivals more or less facilitate the development of the arts.

Agbodo (2001) reveals that, festivals are days set aside for communal merry-making and that the day is marked with artifacts, chieftaincy regalia, cultural displays and other tourist attractions. According to him, chiefs and other traditional leaders attached significance to their art forms and amongst the Akan for example, leadership regalia and prestige items for royals and others of high status represent an important area of artistic activity. He stresses that festivals in Ghana are characterized by intensive use of art forms.

A detailed account of the attire used during the celebration of the Kundum festival of the Nzema in Ghana is given by Ansah (1999). He describes two spectacular dresses that are used: the *atwenkwasi* and the special traditional dress of the women and the *Asorlor* for the male dancer.

The women of Kundum according to Ansah (1999) do not have any distinctive attire like the men's kilt but they put on their clothes for daily work

The usefulness of festivals in preserving and promoting art has been outlined by Asihene (1980). The chief's regalia including the stools, drums, emblems as well as the flamboyant umbrellas that enhance the pomp and pageantry at this festival are the handiworks of the indigenous artists of Takyiman in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. The people of Takyiman are indeed artistically inclined. Because, activities like the durbar, town-parade and libation are all organized in an orderly manner although they appear to be hectic (Asihene, 1980).

Festivals are occasions that expose to the outside world or to different groups the rich cultural heritage of a society. Gadzekpo (1978) explains that, traditional rulers dress in their rich kente and gold ornaments during festivals. Stools, palanquins and other handicrafts of the natives showing their level of civilization are exhibited to the admiration of all. He further explains that ordinary citizens dress in their best to add colour to the historical tradition of their people.

Bolin and Dunstan (1985) indicate in their presentation that in non-western societies, art is not a separate, specialized activity; it is a phenomenon firmly meshed with other cultural sub-fields. This principle is well illustrated in Bali's Eka Desa Rudra festival, an astonishingly colourful spectacle held once every one hundred years in Nigeria. Although its significance is primarily religious, this elaborate celebration is also a highly organized artistic occasion. It covers many days, involves most members of the community, and combines colour, poetry, dance, song, music parades, mime, intricate flower and food offerings, and shadow puppet performances. It is the joint duty by all to preserve the country's cultural heritage that has been

passed down by our ancestors, and must be passed on to our descendants. Festivals are an environment for people to go back to their roots, to learn about their origins through word of mouth, performance, art works and their own experiences in the festival. It is a way to learn about history, from firsthand experience. Festivals are living and breathing culture museums that ensure the continuity of our culture and traditions and environments to nurture traditional culture. While the older generations complain that the younger generations are not involving enough the younger generations do not understand why they have to take part, hence creating a gap. It's crucial to provide people with a proper understanding and respect for traditional values, religion and beliefs presented through the festival. As they understand, they would change their behaviour (World Heritage, 2002).

According to Hodgson and Beavers (2011), cultures need preserving before they die out. Challenges and threats linger on, but not all change is bad. Culture is dynamic and helps people adapt to the world around them. The world has always been changing, cultures have always been adapting, how best to blend the two helps in preserving our culture. They go on to say that one sign of a healthy community is its simultaneous ability to preserve and invent its culture that is, to conserve its history and heritage while developing new expressions for current times. Often, the concept of preservation is interpreted as meaning stagnation when, in fact, heritage and history can be the basis for innovation and advancement. Moreover, heritage and history are frequently essential sources of meaning that give a place character and resonance.

People settle and move away, each leaving some remnant of whom they were and why they had come to that particular place. All of these people present and departed rich and poor have stories to tell, stories that can be collected, conserved, and celebrated. The articulation of those stories can significantly contribute to

preserving, celebrating, challenging, and inventing community identity. According to Jackson & Herranz (2002), preserving spaces and objects could be done by documenting stories from elders, and recording as well as facilitating a community's contemporary cultural practices.

Another way to preserve our arts is by sharing to the outside world and with young people in our culture, who may not know the riches of their cultural background. Art forms could be done publicly and also put on social media as a means of preserving. Education is another key factor to preservation of our arts through festivals. Learning about them from experts and the older generation helps us to understand them better thereby inculcating a habit of preserving them. Herbert as cited in Kemevor (2004) and cited by Thompson (2009) maintained that: Education is the means by which men acquire the civilization of the past and are enabled both to take part in the civilisation of the present and explained that civilization means the totality of transmitting, preserving, developing and achieving the culture.

2.17 Summary

The review of the related literature has led to the fact that globally proverbs are symbolic expression of people largely influenced by linguistic and socio-geographical experience and orientation. The obvious familiar words in most of the proverbs mean much more than they seem on the surface. These deeper underlying level of meaning of such rich oral tradition is filled with imaginary symbols that are aesthetically illuminating with the potential to enrich knowledge base of the people. However, its important culture especially proverbs of the people of Ga Mashie is properly documented and preserved using appropriate artistic methods and processes so it could be handed to the next generation. Previous methods of documenting oral

cultures of the people of Ga Mashie such as audio recordings and written text had proven inadequate for the current cosmopolitan nature of Ga Mashie. In order to sustain the existence of this important aspect of the Ga Mashie tradition, it has become necessary to explore the possibility of visual registration of Ga Mashie proverbs to enhance visual literacy of this rich oral tradition for both formal and informal education.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the research design, population of study with reference to sampling, data collecting instruments as well as data collecting procedures and data analysis Plan used in the study.

3.1 Research Approach

The researcher employed qualitative research methodology as the main method of gathering data. Qualitative research is the study of symbolic discourse that consists of the study of texts and conversations. Qualitative research can also be referred to as the study of the interpretive principles that people use to make sense in their symbolic activities. Qualitative research is said to a systematic and subjective approach to highlight and explain daily life experiences, and to further give them proper meaning. (Burns & Grove, 2011). Qualitative research methods were developed to help uncover trends in thoughts and opinions, and dive deeper into the problem.

Qualitative research seeks the ‘why’ of its topic through the analysis of unstructured information – things such as interview transcripts, field notes, feedback forms, photos and videos. It does not just rely on statistics or numbers, which are the preoccupation of quantitative researchers. Qualitative research is an umbrella term use to refer to the theoretical perspectives designs as (Creswell, 2009; Hancock et al 2009) narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, action research, case study, ethnography, historical research and content analysis.

Qualitative research approach emphasises the importance of getting close to the researched. This is because one of the purposes of qualitative approaches is to try

to depict the participant's view of social reality. Thus, techniques such as participant observation and unstructured or informal interview observations, and examination of records, reports, photographs, and documents are commonly used. Because of the time and costs involved in such work, qualitative designs do not generally draw samples from large-scale data sets.

3.2 Advantages of Qualitative Research to the researcher

The researcher used qualitative research method in order to gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles as attached to proverbs and symbols and how these values really contribute to the livelihood of the Ga people and at the same way to curb any bias and personal emotions. By the help of the qualitative method, every information gathered was treated independently and reconsidered for fairness. Art-based and ethnography method of qualitative method were selected to provide a systematic approach in generating symbols on proverbs for Ga people of Ga Mashie of Accra. Qualitative research does not include statistical or empirical calculations (Brink, 2009).

The researcher used diverse methods for collecting empirical materials, ranging from the interview to direct observation, to the analysis of artefacts, documents, and cultural records, to the use of visual materials or personal experience. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) .

The goal of qualitative research is to advance a novel perspective of a social phenomenon from the views of the actors involved rather than explaining it from outside. Qualitative research was employed to find answers to questions of what, how, why and when i.e why are the people of Ga Mashie not conversant with proverbs, how can the various clan houses adopt and use the new designs in the day to day cultural activities.

3.3 Research Design

3.3.1 Art based Research

Art-Based Research included all practices that use artistic processes as a way of investigation and knowing (McNiff, 2011). Greenwood (2012) argued that practices based on the Art Based Research approach respond to the need to both bring out and share understandings and phenomena that are difficult to read properly through traditional approaches.

The researcher used the art-based research to achieve the second and third objectives of the research which are to develop thirty symbolic images to represent selected proverbs and produce demonstrative images on canvas with twenty of the symbolic images for painting.

Art based method was adopted by the researcher to develop the visual images from proverbs by making use of the elements of design to recast the content of his experiences into visual forms. Art based method allowed the researcher to deploy visual materials, tools, procedure and techniques as part of the process of generating evidence.

Visual materials can 'reveal what is hidden in the inner mechanisms of the ordinary and the taken for granted' (Knowles & Sweetman, 2004). Thus interviews with participant-generated visual materials are particularly helpful in exploring the taken-for-granted things in their research participants' lives.

The method allowed for the systematic use of the artistic process by the researcher and the making of artistic expression in all of the different forms. This research method is particularly noteworthy in that it ensures that both the modes of inquiry and the forms of dissemination include an action-oriented interactive approach.

3.4 Ethnography

Ethnography according to Brewer (2000) is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or fields by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner but without meaning being imposed on them externally.

Baral et al (2005) further asserts that ethnography is the systematic study of people and cultures. They added that it is designed to explore cultural phenomena where the researcher observes society from the point of view of the subject of the study. Ethnography is a qualitative research method where researchers observe and/or interact with a study's participants in their real-life environment. Ethnographic research takes a cultural lens to the study of people's lives within their communities (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Fetterman, 2010).

The roots of ethnography lie in anthropological studies that focused on studying social and cultural aspects of small communities. The methods used must therefore permit access to people's social meanings and activities and involve close association and familiarity with the social setting. This does not necessarily mean actual participation in the setting, so ethnography's repertoire of techniques includes in-depth interviews, discourse analysis, personal documents and alongside participant observation (Barter and Renold, 1999).

The researcher used ethnography research design to achieve objective one and four which to trace the history of proverbs and their relevance to the morality of Ga Mashie people and evaluate the usefulness of the symbolic images of Ga Mashie proverbs rendered through painting.

3.5 Population for the study

The researcher adopted the scientific method of population identification for this thesis and the population is homogenous. This is that all the resource persons belongs to same ethnic group and had ample knowledge in proverbs and Ga mashie traditional and cultural practices.

3.6 Target Population

In this study the researcher observed and listened to the use of proverbs from within the Ga Mashie community which is made up of Asere, Sempe, Abola, Gbese, Akumadzei, Otublohum and Ngleshie Alata (James Town).

3.7 Accessible population

The accessible population is the quantity or size of an entire aggregation of items which are capable of being reach for the purpose. The Ga mashie community was selected base on the fact that it has a large sub sets of clan houses that shares similar if not common traditional, cultural beliefs, practices and customs. The researcher interviewed total of 20 respondents who were placed in five sets of categories.

The category A is made up of traditional authorities, category B is made up of teachers, category C is made of Paremiologist, Category D is made of curators and category E is made up of youth between the ages of fifteen to twenty-five years.

Table 1. Categorization of Population

CATEGORY	STATUS	NUMBER OF SAMPLE
A	Traditional Authorities	10
B	Teachers	2
C	Paremiologist	3
D	Curator	3
E	Youth	2

The table above shows the number of population the researcher interviewed.

3.8 Sampling Technique

A sample is the section of the population chosen for the study (Greener, 2008). To attain the sample, a variety of sampling techniques were employed to reduce the size of the population to a workable one. Gay (2009) describes Sampling as “a process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected”. Data for this study was collected using purposive sampling technique. Purposive technique helped to select persons who are knowledgeable in traditional Ga Mashie proverbs.

The researcher after series of interviews had numerous proverbs from the Ga dialect but due to time and facility thirty proverbs were selected and used to accomplish the thesis. The proverbs were grouped under nine categories as identified in the literature review.

3.9 Data Collection Instruments

The researcher collected data for the work through observation of existing work of art such as photographs, drawing, sculptures and illustrations of existing and non-existing anecdotal records. Interview and observation were used in collecting data at the Twin festival in some clan houses within Ga Mashie, during the Homowo festival, Outdooring ceremonies, funeral rites, *Kpaashimo*, libation at various traditional ceremonies, *Tsalewote* Street Art Festival, *Wɔmanne* Street Art Festival, *Portomanto* Street Art Festival, Curators at Centre for National Culture and Osekan Beach Resort all in Accra, and other resourced persons.

3.9.1 Observation

Observation is a systematic data collection approach in which the researcher uses all the senses to examine phenomenon under study in their natural situations. It involves prolong engagement in a setting, social or cultural situation. It is classified as a

participatory study because the researcher has to immerse herself in the setting where the respondents are while taking notes or recording.

Observation as a data collection method can be structured or unstructured. In a structured or systematic observation, data collection is conducted using specific variables and according to a pre-defined schedule while unstructured observation on the other hand is conducted in an open and free manner without specific objectives. Observation methods offers the researcher direct access to the research phenomena, high levels of flexibility in terms of application and helps generate significant record of phenomena to be referred to later in the study. The researcher was equally mindful of some iota of influence observation could have on the sample and biases from the observer.

The researcher observed and studied the philosophy behind the creation and use of *proverbs* during rituals at Palaces of *Gbese Manste, Sempe Mantse, Akumadzei Mantse, Sempe Mantse, and Ngleshi Alata Mantse*. Proverbs and icons on canoes of fisherfolks within the Ga *Nshoonaa* were also studied. The researcher observed the use of proverbs during the *Homowo* festivals at Gbese Mantse Palace, Asere Mantse Palace, Sempe Mantse Palace, Atublohum Mantse Palace and other clan houses. The researcher was allowed to observe rear occasions where visual interpretation of proverbs was undertaken by specific personalities because it was strictly a secret ritual within a clan house at *Abola Piam*.

The researcher observed the use of proverbs and symbols of different kinds at other occasions. The researcher attended the St. Mary's Anglican Church to witness the use of proverbs in sermon delivered in local Ga language and also visited customary marriage ceremonies, naming ceremonies, funeral rites, the twin festival preceding the Homowo festival and witnessed the *Kpaashimo* competition among the

fisherfolks of the Ga Mashie in order to learn more of the tradition and the appropriate use of proverbs in such situations. This helped the researcher to acquire ample knowledge about proverbs, their interpretations and uses in their daily activities.

3.9.2 *Anecdotal records*

The researcher also observed and listened to a Ga discussion programs on Obonu Fm and television where interpretation and the appropriate use proverbs was the dominant feature by the host Nii Adjei Klu and his panelist. A number of these proverbs were recorded, analysed and used.

3.9.3 *The Interview*

Interview is defined as a verbal conversation between two people with objective of collecting relevant information for the purpose of research. Interviews are particularly useul for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. (McNamara 1999). To this end the researcher interviewed the Nai Wulomo of Nai We, Nuumo Akwaa Mensah, the Korle Wulomo, Asafoatse Tetteh Tsuru of Atuopai, Asofoanye Naa Adaku Mansah I of Atuopai, Prince Ayibonte of Gbese mantse Palace, Three teachers of the Ga language namely Mina Oye Reimmer and Naa Lamiokor Lawson of Holy Trinity Cathderal Senior High School and Dorinda Naa Dedei Quaye of St. Andrews Anglican Basic School were interviewed. An art education Tutor was also interviewed.

Two of the youth selected from *Gbese* and *Sempe* were interviewed. A Priest Assistant from Holy Trinity Cathedral Church was consulted on the use of proverbs in sermons. Two Paremiologists were interviewed.

In carrying out the interview, an interview guide was prepared. The purpose of the guide was to direct the researcher to get access to the needed information for the

study. The researcher made use of the two main types of interview structures. They were the structured (closed interview style) or unstructured (open-ended interview style). Open-ended or unstructured interviews are defined by Morse and Corbin, 2003 as an informal interview, not structured by a standard list of questions.

The researcher employed the structured and unstructured interviews in order not to stray from the relevant information and at the same time allowed for respondents to express themselves without any inhibition. By this, other information was elicited unaware. In the unstructured interviews, the researcher had normal conversation with respondents and jotted down summarized information deduced off the scene of conversation. Because it was not made formal, the respondents talked freely and contributed with ease. This method was used when talking to people with little or no education background. With the structured interviews, the researcher prepared interview guide plan for specific information from respondents. In all the interviews and observations made, the researcher had a recorder for audio only, digital camera for still pictures as well made some videos. These tools served as a backup of information for the research. Interviews were conducted in Ga and English and later the Ga into English for Analysis.

3.9.4 *Advantages of the Interview*

Interviews are key qualitative data collection method. It is achieved in the form of questioning of a person or a conversation in which information is elicited. Interviews helps to build the receptiveness of the respondents by making them feel that their opinions are very useful to the study and is going to a pleasure rather than an ordeal. The interview also helped the researcher to unpack what either to could have been complex topics and giving the respondent the room to express him or herself

relevantly and freely. The interview allowed questioning to be guided as the researcher wanted it and opportunities for probing further to get the underlying factors. The researcher was able to pick up nonverbal clues from the respondent. Interviews becomes a viable option where there are limited respondents and also where respondents are not fluent in a native of a country or where they have difficulties with written language. (Gray, 2004)

3.9.5 Validation of Interview Guide

To ensure that the prepared interview questions were free from errors the researcher consulted other researchers to vet the questions, before finally submitting it to his supervisor for vetting and corrections.

The interview guide served as a pattern of questions set by the researcher to achieve expected results from conducting an interview. In conducting the interview, the researcher drafted interview questions to serve as an interview guide during the interview period. Interview guides were prepared by considering the underlisted issues:

1. Are questions easy to be understood?
2. Are the questions skewed?
3. Will respondents be willing to provide the information needed?
4. Do the questions have some relationship with the objectives?
5. Do the questions afford interviewees the space to expand on the answers?
6. Will the questions aid easy analysis

3.10 Administration of Instruments

The researcher adopted two main instruments for collecting data. The bulk of data for the research was obtained through direct interviews. However, the research was

supported with an observation check list. The selection of these instruments was to ensure that each instrument will complement the other on what was not obtained by the other. The interview guide was directed to all the resource persons namely the traditional authorities, Paremiologist, Art Educationist, Ga Teachers, Youths and Art Curators. The interview guide was made up of twelve questions. The researcher had twelve observational checklists for observation of several cultural and traditional activities within Ga Mashie.

3.11 Data Collection Procedures

Prior to the interviews, the researcher gave notices to the selected interviewees to ensure that date and time scheduled for interviews was convenient for both the researcher and the respondent. The mode for conducting interviews of traditional authorities differed from that of the educationist and Paremiologist. The researcher adopted the face-to-face structured and unstructured interview to collect data.

Interviews with educationist and the Paremiologist were formal and very brief and were done with the structured method where the interviewees responded to questions guided by the interview guide.

These questions were open ended and interviewees were given time to respond without interruptions from the researcher, however, the researcher sought for clarifications of points which were not well understood as well as explanation of technical terms which were used in the cause of the response to the question. Interviews the traditional authorities, writers of Ga books and Teachers of Ga language was conducted mainly in Ga since most of the people are used to proverbs in Ga and they express themselves well in it. Interviews done with traditional authorities however, were also open ended and relied on both the structured and

unstructured methods. The interviews were done in an informal atmosphere. The interviewees occasionally strayed into other subjects but were brought back to the main subject with a question from the interview guide. Questions were sometimes repeated in instances where data provided were not clear to enable the researcher get vital information needed for the research. Some of the interviewees demonstrated, and told stories how drawings of proverbs could enhance the understanding of the subject under discussion. All the interviews were done with the face-to-face approach. The audio recorder was used to collect the data however, with respect to the proverbs; the researcher wrote them on the spot to get the exact spellings from the pronunciations.

3.12 Data Analysis Plan

The data was analysed using the thematic analysis based on recurring themes from the responses to the research questions.

The analysis of data from the various interviews were transcribed manually under some headings. After getting the needed proverbs, the researcher assembled these proverbs under the developed headings and then analysed them individually, bringing out possible ideas from each statement and then interpreted them in the form of drawings. The interviews conducted with the traditional authorities, Ga language teachers, youth, Paremiologist was conducted in the local Ga language; therefore, they were translated and transcribed with the help of a Ga language tutor and translator.

The proverbs that were shared in Ga were also translated by the same Ga transcriber during the transcription process. To ensure that all proverbs that were spoken were equally available in both the Indigenous and English language, those that were shared in English by some art education practitioners also translated by the researcher. The researcher drew conclusions and recommendations on the entire data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

This Chapter discusses and analyses data gathered during interviews and observation of individuals, cultural and traditional practices while seeking views on the relevance of proverbs in visual form and to inform the public on the rich oral traditions of the people of Ga mashie and their relevance to moral development of the people.

The study sought to find answers to the following research objectives:

1. trace the history of proverbs and their relevance to the morality of Ga Mashie people of Ghana from pre-independence to date
2. develop thirty symbolic images to represent selected Ga Mashie proverbs for easy visual recollection
3. produce demonstrative images on canvas with twenty of the symbolic images for painting
4. evaluate the usefulness of the symbolic images of Ga Mashie proverbs rendered through painting.

Out of the twenty-five (25) prospective interviewees set to respond to the interviews, only twenty (20) interviewees were interviewed giving a total of 20 respondent representing a total response rate of 80 %. Therefore, the analysis will be done based on 20 respondents. The first part of analysis focus on the bio-data of the respondents whiles the general issues relevant to the research have been discussed in the second part.

4.1 Section A: Bio-Data of Respondents

General information on the background of the respondents were discussed. Information such as age, educational level and gender were discussed.

Table 2: Age range of respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
15-29	2	0.1
30-44	3	0.15
45-59	5	0.25
60 and above	10	0.5
Total	20	100

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2019

Table 1 shows that two respondents representing 0.1% were within the age bracket of 15-25, three respondents representing 0.15 % were within the ages of 30-40, five representing 0.25% were within the ages of 45-59 and ten representing 0.5% was 60 and above. This implies majority of the respondents were experienced in traditional and cultural issues. However, the younger generation were not left out because they were fairly represented by respondents representing 0.5%.

Table 3: Educational Level of Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Middle/basic	9	0.45
Secondary/S.S.S.C.E./W.A.S.S.C.E.	5	0.25
Tertiary	5	0.25
None	1	0.05
Total	20	100

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2019

Table 2 shows that out of the twenty respondents, nine respondents representing 0.45% have had middle or basic education, five respondents representing 0.25% have had second cycle education five respondents representing 0.25% have received tertiary education and one respondent representing 0.05% have had no formal education. This is indicative that majority of the respondents one-hundred and nine respondents representing 99% have had access to some level of formal education.

Table 4: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	12	0.60
Female	8	0.40
Total	20	100

Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2019

Table 3 above clearly shows that out of twenty respondents, twelve respondents representing 60 % were males and eight respondents representing 40% percent were females. Indicating that, there were more male respondents than female respondents in the study.

Section B: Analysis of Data Relating to Research Questions

4.2 Research Question 1: What is the history of Ga proverbs from pre-history independence to date and their relevance to the people.

4.2.1 Proverbs and their Relevance to People of Ga Mashie

The respondents were unanimous in their understanding of proverbs known in Ga as 'abe' meaning to squeeze. They assert that it is a long statement that has been shortened to avoid the use of long winding phrase or sentence or irrelevant comments. Most proverbs attributed to the people of Ga Mashie since their migration to their present home remain the same way they were handed down to them by their ancestors.

However, other respondents were of the opinion that the current generation of indigenes mostly youth have distorted some of the proverbs to suit their understanding. They explained that the spirit of those proverbs may not have been affected by the letter had suffered some distortion. A respondent cited for example a proverb '*aleemo leebi ni asu kane ke kwe ehie gbeké*' when it should read '*aleemo leebi ni asu la ke kwe ehie gbeké*' as one of the distortion some proverbs have suffered.

Respondents again agreed that the iconic representation of proverbs may be silent but talks and will speaks to the hearts and minds of the youth to eschew themselves from morally corrupt lifestyles. They added that the current moral degeneration among the youth could be curbed and replaced with proper moral values and virtues such as loyalty, chastity, respect for elders and members of the society, patience, hardwork, truthfulness, kindness, tolerance, cleanliness, humility, avoidance of greed, obedience and selflessness, punctuality and honesty. A cross section of respondents within this category opined that their traditional leaders before and even after independence are seen as citadel of oral tradition most of which are channelled through storytelling, appellation, symbols, dirges, drumming and proverbs.

They are therefore expected to speak and admonish their subjects using wise words in the form of proverbs in their interaction with the subjects. The level of fluency and maturity in the traditional practices and the native Ga language is measured in the way and manner in which these traditional leaders lace their speeches with proverbs (*abei*) with such dexterity. It was obvious proverbs played a major role in the moral and cultural development of the youth in the past and present.

More than half of the interviewees indicated that proverbs had experiences and aspirations of the society. They mentioned some of the experiences in occupations such as farming, fishing, hunting, and weaving. Some the respondents say are drawn from careful observations of social events, the lives of people and animals.

Reason they have proverbs that talk about family and human relations, good and evil, poverty and riches, joy and sorrow etc. All the respondents admitted proverbs had some amount of influence on their moral upbringing.

4.2.2 The Use of Proverbs in Contemporary Ga Mashie Community

Respondents posited that the use of proverbs especially among the people within Ga Mashie is very rare. *Asafoanye* of *Atuopai* attributed this to a declaration made by their traditional fore fathers and mothers during several struggles and war encounters they had with their foes at that time. The declaration quoted in Ga as '*ablekuma abakuma wo*' was meant to open the gates of Ga Mashie to settlers or strangers who were to boost their numbers and make them formidable economically and militarily to face any potential enemy during their war encounters as well for trade and occupational purposes.

The *Asofoanye* and other traditional elders believed that is what has continued to today leading to the influx of settlers from different ethnic groups into Ga Mashie thus adulterating the culture and traditions of Ga Mashie. *Nae Wulɔmɔ* believes this lack of traditional foundation was because of foreign cultures brought by these settlers and that most parents rarely use proverbs in their admonition of their children when they go wrong. The lack of it always leaves the children in a state of obvious confusion when they hear proverbs been use at traditional functions.

4.2.3 Ways to Encourage the use of Proverbs Among the people of Ga Mashie.

Host of James Town *Ngleshie Noyaa Kpee* and other respondents strongly advocated for the conscious effort to arrest the current decline by using the current technological tools to encourage the youth to embrace the use of proverbs both through formal and informal education. They asserts that parents, home and society takes the lead by speaking the *Ga kron* with their children. They maintained that society should help bring back the story telling, tales, and other traditional children's play like *tuumatu*, *atee*, *ampe*, *alokoto* most of which are laced with subtle proverbial instructions. Others were of the opinion that including proverbial symbols in Ga books for formal education especially at the basic level could help the younger ones appreciate the moral and cultural essence of proverbs and the lasting impact it could have on the total development of the children within the Ga Mashie community.

4.2.4 Use of proverbs to Maintain Good Morals Among the People

More than half of the respondents were of the view that the family or families which was the basic unit of society provided strong social network worked efficiently in the past to ensure that youth conform to good moral values. They gather that in the past youth were tutored in good moral values through cultural practices and oral tradition and so they were aware of how society expected them to behave. Apart from the firm believe by society that children belonged not only to his or her family but to society as well and so was disciplined and reprimanded by persons in the society hence every adult had the right to discipline a child and this made every child conduct themselves appropriately. Adults on the other hand are seen as role models and so are mandated to behave responsibly. They asserted that youth were made to participate in cultural and traditional activities. Other respondents stressed that the society was able to keep a good moral environment because children were made aware of the good moral

values and the consequence of good and bad behaviour on themselves and their family, hence they behaved well.

4.2.5 Ways in Which the Society can Encourage the use of Proverbs Among the people

All the respondents believe traditional education, formal education can encourage the use of proverbs. Almost half of the respondents are of the opinion that the society must fall back to the use of the Ga language as a means of communication at home. Other respondents were of the view that parents should make a conscious efforts to expose their children to their indigenous root for them to experience the proper Ga mashie way of living, They mentioned the *nkpaiyeli*, *tsotsoobi*, *kpashimɔ*, *yala,ŋamɔi*, *Ga lalai srɔtoi* as some of the Ga Mashie customs and practices Ga indigenes especially the young ones must be exposed to. Some posited that the youth must be told folktales as well as bring back the now contemporary Ga music groups like Wulomei, Abladei, Bukom Dance Ensemble among others and encourage them to include proverbs in lyrics of their songs. Less than half of the respondents also believed the inclusion of proverb in formal education as well as encouraging programmes that will promote its use in schools. A few of the respondents suggested that the Ga Mashie community should take advantage of the technological tools available as well as the new media space to propagate the teaching of proverbs.

4.3. How will thirty symbolic images that represent selected Ga Mashie proverbs be developed for easy visual recollection

4.3.1 Helping for easy collection of proverbs through the use of symbolic images

Two teachers of the Ga language in a trip down memory lane recalled how the Ga Adangme and in specific Ga Mashie had borrowed from sections of Akan ethnic group the idea of symbols to represent their clans, chiefs, titles etc. They intimated

that this project will be part of a broader framework for Ga Mashie to reignite a major aspect of their lost cultural literacy. They viewed this cultural literacy as an act or process of understanding symbolic meanings and the ability to verbalize the assumptions and values that constitute one's cultural heritage and especially the use of traditional art technology i.e painting will provide the avenue of translating proverbs into unique visual symbols and will augment their abilities to communicate and create new opportunities in art and culture. All students of Ga language interviewed were of the opinion that the use of proverbial symbols will aid artistic expressions of other art forms which were very likely meaningful to persons educated in Ga culture as well, as the artistry of their craftsmen. They, in their opinion artistic symbols will accelerate the formation of new socially acceptable symbolism among the people of Ga Mashie.

4.3.2 Types of proverbs that can be symbolically represented

A Paremiologists at Obonu fm and two teachers of the Ga language opined that any project to represent Ga Mashie proverbs must be done within the context that seeks to explain the proverbs in both literal and symbolic angles and cultural significance. They argued that proverbs themselves are symbols of communication condense into short sentences or even anecdotes and stories, which are sometimes carved on wood, stone or other material, or even sung or danced or acted and so any attempt to symbolically represent them must still seek to provoke thought. This assertion was strongly supported by the *Nae Wulomɔ* and *Korle Wulomɔ*. (*Wulomo* is the Ga name for a priest). *Nae Wulomɔ* posited with an analogy that a typical Ga Mashie home must have *sɛtsu kɛ asa* (Chamber and Hall) , the *sɛtsu* (Chamber) is a private closet and not accessible to anybody accept the owner of the room. He likened it to Ga Mashie proverbs which in spite of the project which seeks to add knowledge to a cultural heritage must still bear the myth and sacred image that is characteristic of

proverbs. The *Wulɔmɔi* added proverbs are use based on the situation at hand and that not all proverbs will lend itself for symbolic representation because of the very complex and witty nature of some proverbs. However the literal, symbolic and cultural significance must be clear and not too difficult to understand.

4.3.3 Features of proverbial symbols rendered in painting

Another experienced paremiologist and Ga Mashie fetish traditional explains that most of these wise sayings usually employ symbols like animals, trees, the human body and objects present in the human environment and they are used as metaphors (*agweseaŋ wiemo*) to communicate an intention, opinion etc. He further affirmed that proverbial symbols that represents proverbs in any of the aforementioned must not necessarily take their forms but be able to provide understanding in the simplest structure to even the unlettered.

A radio host in the Ga language on Obonu Fm and a former teacher of the Ga language observed that the visual elements such as shapes colours etc used must portray the collective wisdom of the ancestors, the wise men and women of old and the images must speak against undesirable vices proverbs speaks against. He summed it up with an opinion that a common feature of African art was that it was created to animate and give life to the daily beliefs, cultural values and daily practices and so the themes around which each proverbial symbol is painted must give meaning to the feature.

4.5 Studio Work Process and Presentation of Art Works

To be able to execute the art works, a design process was followed. This is because the artworks were intended to adequately communicate to the population of the research, the intention of the artist. Below is the design process for making the artworks.

4.5.1 Definition of the Problem

Among the people of Ga-Mashie the use of proverbs is very common in every traditional and cultural practices. The Ga Mashie proverbs are time tested and sometimes are a play on words. Proverbs express the time-tried wisdom of the elders and contain the traditions of the elders. The people of Ga Mashie are big on traditions.

The words in proverbs may change, but the main truths remain in, and are transmitted from generation to generation through, our oral traditions. When approaching oral cultures, proverbs can be regarded as these sturdy, time-tested stepping stones placed by the elders to move people from the river bank of unbelief to the kernel of knowledge. Instead of regarding proverbs as simply a tool to be used, they should be regarded as a deep symbol within culture that reveals the worldview of the people.

The rich Ga Mashie oral tradition and culture are gradually been lost to urbanisation that promotes alien culture. The Ga Mashie people have a rich cultural heritage amongst which is the art of proverbs. It has become imperative to assemble a collection of some proverbs and developed images to represent these proverbs for easy visual recollection and enhancement of their educational value.

4.5.2 Collection of Information

The researcher commenced the actual work by gathering data with the objective to gain inspiration by studying historic and contemporary examples and experimenting with materials and visual ideas.

4.5.3 Brainstorm and Analyse Ideas

The researcher made a number of preliminary sketches on each of the proverbs identified, made and studied so the researcher could understand how all the data and information collected could impact the execution of the final works. Some of these ideas and sketches were based on respondent's ideas and observation of how similar one were created and used. This stage of the project lead to the researcher to arrive at questions and answers to the following questions:

- i. Which tools, materials and artistic processes are relevant in executing the painting?
- ii. How does each work portray the themes or subjects being painted?
- iii. Which artistic ideas are appropriate for the executing the works?

These created symbols, emulating the Ga Mashie symbol cultural heritage, are presented in shade and tints of browns. The researcher adopted this format to conform to the philosophy of age old African oral traditional art of proverbs.

4.5.4 Tool, materials and techniques

The following picture making techniques and tools and materials use for creating the proverbial icons.

4.5.5 Painting

Painting is the practice of applying paint, pigment, color or other medium to a solid surface support. For the purpose of this study painting will be an expression of cultural ideas and emotions, with the creation of certain aesthetic qualities in a two-dimensional visual language. The elements of this language will be the shapes, lines, colours, tones, and textures were used in various ways to produce sensations of

volume, space, movement, and light on a flat surface. Painting was the main picture making technique use create to the proverbial icons for the thirty selected proverbs.

4.5.6 Application tools

The essential tools used for applying paint to paper and canvas surface were the brushes, palette knives and broom sticks. A painting brush is an implement consisting of bristles, hair, or the like and a handle, used for painting, cleaning, etc whiles a palette knife a round-ended spatula with a thin flexible blade used by artists for mixing, applying, and scraping off paint.



Figure 1: Bristle brushes
Source: Photograph by Researcher



Figure 2: Palette knives
Source: Photograph by Researcher



Figure 3 : Palette
Source: Photograph by Researcher



Figure 4 : Broom
Source: Photograph by Researcher

4.5.7 Pencils and papers

A pencil an instrument for writing or drawing, consisting of a thin stick of graphite or a similar substance enclosed in a long thin piece of wood or fixed in a cylindrical case. Pens and papers were used as drawing tools for planning and sketching ideas.



Figure 5: Pencils
Source: Photograph by Researcher

4.5.8 Acrylic Paint

Acrylic paint is a fast-drying medium made of pigment suspended in acrylic polymer emulsion and plasticizers, silicon oils, defoamers and stabilizers. Acrylic paints are water-based, but become water-resistant when dry. Acrylics was the main medium used to create shapes, lines, colours, tones, and textures of the selected proverbs.



Figure 6: Acrylic Paints

Source: Photograph by Researcher

4.6 Executing the Painting works of proverbs

4.6.1 Selection of proverbs and making sketches

The proverbs were selected by considering their suitability and that they lend themselves for artistic presentation. With pencils and papers, the researcher made a number of sketches for each intended proverbs. The researcher selected from the preliminary sketches, drawings that best explains the proverb for which the drawing was made.

4.6.2 Developing sketches

The selected sketches of proverbs went through another stage of development to fine tune the drawing and make it ready for painting.

4.6.3 Colour scheme

In Ghana, and for that matter Ga Mashie, colours inherently have a symbolic nature in a variety of areas. Colours can represent a variety of emotion, tradition etc. The combination of colours commonly used have their own symbolic, cultural and aesthetics meaning. However, the choice of colour for the painted proverbs is based on the symbolic relation between the proverbs and colours. The researcher selected one proverb ‘*Kwemɔ oha mi ni maye nii ewɔŋ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyie*’ and rendered it in three different colour schemes in order to enable him draw conclusions on the appropriate colours schemes for the themes or subjects being painted.

4.6.4 Green scheme

Green is natural colour that demonstrate growth. It can be related to the spiritual growth and development of an individual as well as the growth that takes place in nature such as the agricultural rebirth of the land as the new season. It may give refreshing nature to proverbs but maintain a natural ability to heal rot in individual as well as a community (Mikellides, 2012).



Figure 7: Green colour scheme

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.6.5 Red/Maroon scheme

Red or Maroon symbolises a sacrificial rites, bloodshed and death but also spiritual and political moods for its strong presence and visibility. It is representing a serious cultural events and issues such as funerals, festival, durbars etc (Ayiku 1998).

4.6.6 Blue colour scheme

Blue is a colour of harmony and love symbolising the importance of peace and togetherness. Its often used in combination with other colours to create a rich tapestry of energy that has deep symbolism behind it. (Mikellides, 2012).



Figure 8: *Blue colours scheme* **Source: Researcher's Construct**

4.6.7 Choice of Brown gold/yellow ochre scheme by Researcher

The shades of this colours were among the oldest pigment found in earliest stage of art development. Shades of yellow ochre and umber is associated with richness and this richness is equally seen of proverbs as a cultural heritage. Dingy shade of colours Represents the old art relic of great value both in the past and present. (Mike, 2012)



Figure 9: *Brown /yellow ochre scheme* Source: Researcher's Construct

4.6.8 Painting the proverbs

Painting was done on paper using brushes, palette knives and broom sticks. The researcher wanting to create an historical statement made by one of respondents that they need proverbs in the form the research sought to create. According to him 'proverbs reflect who they are. The proverbs were rendered in tints and shades of dingy gold, shades of grey and brown. The researcher introduced shades of brown to complete the antique colour scheme. The researcher believes to infuse deeper meaning into an oral tradition, requires the use of colours to create something more memorable for readers by attaching an emotional state or event or even character to a colour. The shades of grey and brown is associated with decay and things of old and proverbs which are witty words of old or ancestors will help to highlight the aged

wisdom. The proverbs were painted in realistic and silhouette style with occasional introduction of impasto technique for emphasis.

4.7 Presentation and analysis of artworks

After sketching and painting the selected Ga Mashie proverbs, the following are the resultant works and their analysis. At least one out of the nine categories of proverb listed was painted. Each of the painted proverbs presented is accompanied by of the sketches made by the researcher during the study.

4.7.1 (Preliminary Sketch) *Kwemɔ oha mi ni maye nii ewɔ́h̄ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyiɛ* (Its is for security and safety that the Deer always walk in two)



Figure 10: Sketch of proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

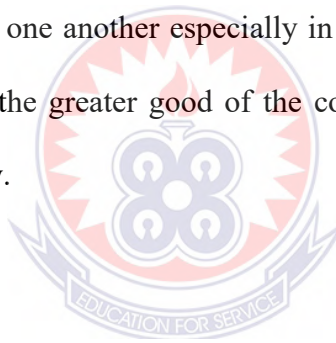
4.7.2 (Painting) *Kwemɔ oha mi ni maye nii ewɔh̄ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyie*



Figure 11: Kwemɔ oha mi ni maye nii ewɔh̄ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyie (Its is for security and safety that the Deer always walk in two)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The proverb is painted in impasto and titled *Kwemɔ oha mi ni maye nii ewɔŋ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyie*. The proverb means that its important to have a friend who can look out for you when the need arises. The work is painted in scheme of browns. The composition is made up of two deers, one busily feeding on grass while the other keep watch to avoid been pounced on by an enemy. The visible strong brush strokes registered was meant to emphasize the strength the animals exhibits when they have to escape from other wild animals that prey on them. Friendship among the people of Ga Mashie is a much cherish commodity so much that members in community will always rise to defend the ‘weak’ members from abuse by another member especially from outside the community. The Ga Mashie is noted to unite against a common enemy even if they have internal squabbles. According to oral tradition, (N.D) the proverb teaches the need to be an eye for one another especially in a community, for it is that which could foster security for the greater good of the community. It teaches the value of public and personal safety.



4.7.3 (Preliminary Sketch) *Ake shuo yee naamɔ feo`* (One doesn't engage the high and mighty in a fight).



Figure 12: Sketch of a Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.4 (Painting) *Akɛ shuɔ yee naamɔ fɛo*
(One doesn't engage the high and mighty in a fight)



Figure 13: Painting of ‘Akɛ shuɔ yee naamɔ fɛo’ (One doesn’t engage the high and mighty in a fight)

Source: Researcher’s Construct

The proverb is painted in impasto painting technique. It shows the image of a young man reeling in pain after he was trampled on by the elephant. The work is rendered on a plain background. The painting literally means one doesn't engage the high and mighty in a fight. The Ga Mashie community places a lot of premium or respect for members of the community who have the economic power and influence to support community development. They believe all the fingers are not equal and that God in his finite wisdom distributed wealth, knowledge etc according to the one's ability.

Therefore, it is natural those blessed with economic power would always respond to some basic needs of the community from which they are born or live. The community in reciprocating the gesture is obliged to appreciate and extol the good deeds of their benefactors with blesses than to fight or curse them. The painting depicted a man lying right under the heavy toe of an elephant. The man symbolizes the community and society that seem not grateful to the good works of the benefactor (the elephant) but rather chooses to engage in a fight with it. It seeks to caution members of the community against ungratefulness usually exhibited by beneficiaries of kind gestures.

4.7.5 (Preliminary Sketch) *Agbee mɔ kane koni bo onɔ atso* (You don't have to dim someone else's light for yours to shine.)



Figure 14: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.6 (Painting) *Agbee mɔ kane koni bo onɔ atso*



Figure 15: *Agbee mɔ kane koni bo okane atso* (You don't have to dim someone else's light for yours to shine.)

Source: Researcher's Construct

This image shows an impasto painting of a woman in a lowering posture holding behind her an illuminating lamp with one hand while at the same time blowing to put out another lamp on a desk. The entire painting is rendered in tints and shades of brown and greys respectively. The title of the work is *Agbee mɔ kane koni bo onɔ atso*, meaning You don't have to dim someone else's light for yours to shine. The painting portrays the negative vice some members overtly or covertly exhibit towards other members of the community or household. This 'pull him down' attitude is largely frowned upon by the people of Ga Mashie. Ga Mashie is noted for her proverbial hospitality to visitors or strangers and this is reflected in how welcoming Ga Mashie has been to indigenes from other towns who have even integrated well with their host

and have been permitted and supported to own and run several business interest within the Ga Mashie community. Light symbolically is seen as an element that brings hope, joy, success etc to everyone . The absence of it is seen as inimical to the growth and development of the community and the country at large. The community believes its ability to support anyone within the community is the *light* that illuminate the Ga Mashie path to growth. The painting seeks to advice people with the tendency to dim(discouraged) people light(potentials) to shun the negative attitude has that could cause retrogression in Ga Mashie. The painting advices members of the community to support each for the growth of it.



4.7.7 (Preliminary Sketch) *Kɛ oye lɛlɛɛ mli lɛ oloɔ emli nu* (You join to scoop water out from a flooded canoe)



Figure 16: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.8 (Painting) *Ƙε ογε λελεε mli λε ολοο emli nu*



Figure 17: *Ƙε ογε λελεε mli λε ολοο emli nu* (You join to scoop water out from a flooded canoe)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of the painting is *Ƙε ογε λελεε mli λε ολοο emli nu*. It is painted in impasto and it means once you join the group you take part in every progressive activity within the group. The painting is composed of a man scooping water from a canoe at sea. The impasto technique shows dominant tints and shades of browns and greys. The use of a canoe portrays fishing as the main occupation of the people of Ga Mashie since their migration to their present settlement. There are different forms of canoeing or fishing expeditions and amongst them is the individualized fishing expedition. However, the dominant type of fishing is the group fishing expedition for which everybody is expected to contribute his 'strength' before, during and after the expedition when the

canoed has docked at sea. It is this communal spirit that ensures the success of every expedition. The people of Ga Mashie historically believes that their migration from their first place of origin and the several challenges they encountered along the way and the successes they chalked in several war situations was as result of the communal spirit A value they so cherish till date. The work and the proverb seek to tell the value of supports from each member in a group which goes a long way to ensure the success of the group. Failure to scoop water from the canoe flooded with water could result in catastrophe and everyone will die. Lending support could avert such disasters. The proverb teaches the importance of communal spirit.

4.7.9 (Preliminary Sketch) *Kɛ wu ma wuɔ gbee shee gbeyei* (The dog is not the least disturbed when the cock is in possession of a bone)



Figure 18: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.10 (painting) *Kɛ wu ma wuɔ gbee shee gbeyei*



Figure 19: *Kɛ wu ma wuɔ naa gbee shee gbeyei* (The dog is not the least disturbed when the cock is in possession of a bone)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The painting is titled *Kɛ wu ma wuɔ naa gbee shee gbeyei*. It is a Ga Mashie proverb and it means that the dog is not the least disturbed when the cock is in possession of a bone. It is a painting of a cock in possession of a bone while a dog lies down looking on. It is an impasto painting technique which has been rendered in tints and shades of brown on a white background. Since the cock does not chew bone, and will definitely not possess the bone for long will eventually drop the bone for the dog. The people of Ga Mashie believe in the virtue of patience in their day to day interaction. The adage and the work means what has been destined to be yours will always come to you at the right time. It means with patience nothing is impossible. It is a symbol of love.

4.7.11 (Preliminary Sketch) *Adamɔ ɛmɛ mli afamɔ ɛmɛ*
(The best place to pick thorns is not within thorns)



Figure 20: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.12 (Painting) *Adamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ mli afamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ*



Figure 21: Painting of *Adamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ mli afamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ* (The best place to pick thorns is not within thorns)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The painting above is titled “*Adamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ mli afamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ*” It means in the heat of crisis, confusion, misunderstanding, one need not apportion blame. It’s a painting of a man standing under a palm tree who attempted to pick thorns while standing within it and was pricked by the same thorns with blood oozing under his feet. It is rendered in dominant shades and tints of brown. The proverb and painting mean that when crisis or misunderstanding ensued between two or several parties, it’s important for the arbitrators to allow for time or space among the feuding parties and not to in the heat of the crisis attempt to arbitrate as that could escalate an already tense situation and make matters worse. If the man chooses a different space outside the thorns riddled area he would avoid being pricked by the thorn. The elders also believe that there is

always a natural space that helps to calm tension with time any time dispute arises and any attempt to resolve the issues will yield positive results. This has been part of the traditional mode of adjudicating over disputes in the past even before introduction of modern legal system of adjudicating over cases in court.

4.7.13 (Preliminary Sketch) *Kotoku flo damɔɔ shi* (An empty sack cannot stand)



Figure 22: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.14 (Painting) *Kotoku flo damɔɔ shi*



Figure 23: Painting of *Kotoku flo damɔɔ shi* (An empty sack cannot stand)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The painting is titled, “*Kotoku flo damɔɔ shi*”. It means an empty sack cannot stand. The composition is made up of a sack known in Ga language as *kotoku*. The sack is stuffed with items that makes it firm so could stand upright. The work is painted in shades and tints of brown. Women from Ga Mashie who trade in the sale of maize with *banku* and *kɔmi* sellers in the community has over the years used the jute sack to bag maize for sale. It is no surprise that almost every household within Ga Mashie have a maize sack (*abele kotoku*) in their house. The sack when not stuffed with maize or some other item is folded or rapped in bails and this is because the sack could stand upright only when its filled with maize. The adage and work teaches that for effective and efficient output from somebody or to survive, one needs to have eaten to so he could stand on his to enable him or her carry on with rigorous task.

4.7.15 (Preliminary Sketch) *Adamɔ ekome na kekɔ enya* (To progress in life is step by step)

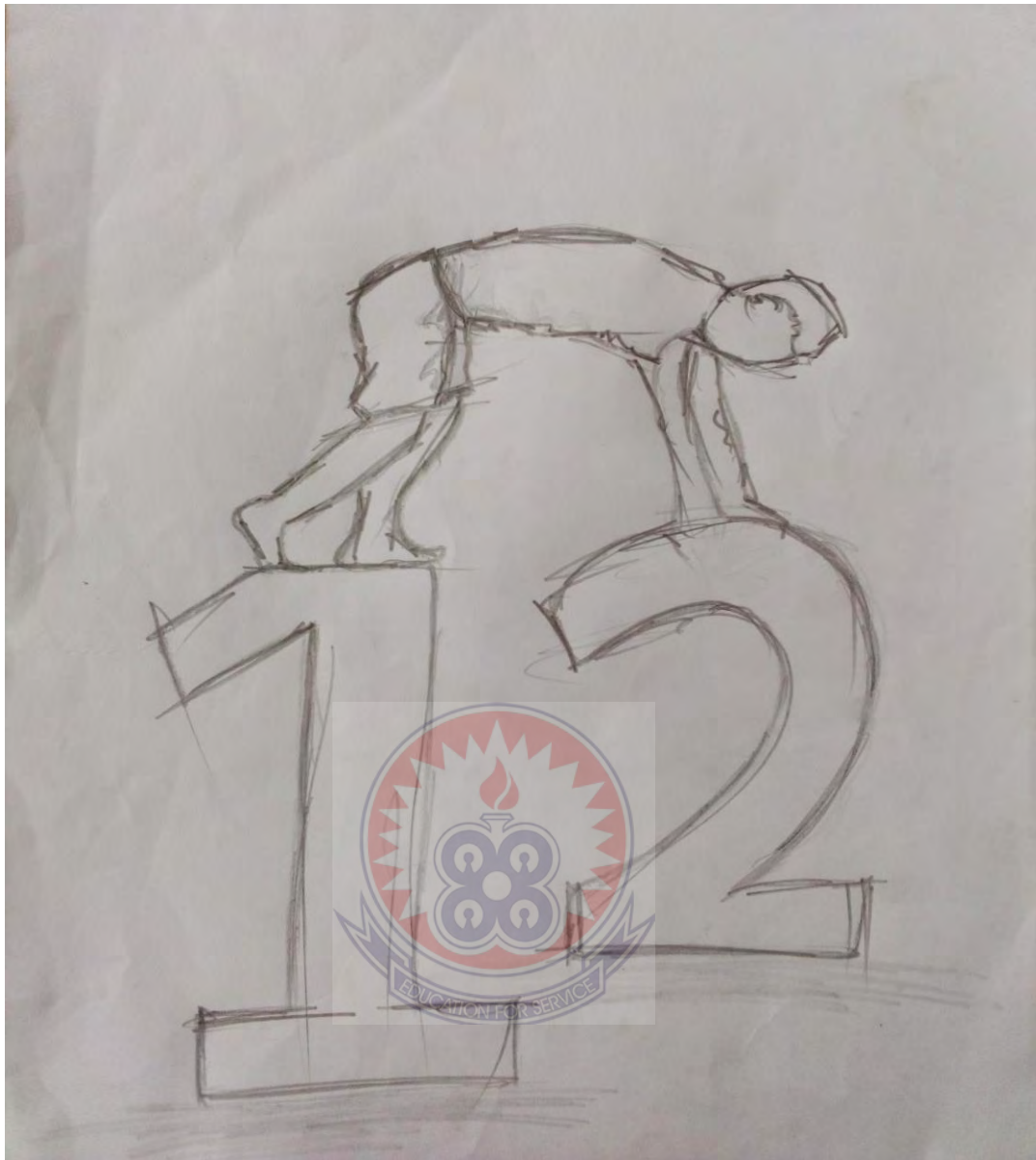


Figure 24: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.16 (Painting) *Adamwɔ ekome na kekwa enya*



Figure 25: Painting of *Adamwɔ ekome na kekwa enya* (To progress in life is step by step)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The impasto painting is titled, “*Adamwɔ ekome na kekwa enya*” It means to progress in life is step by step. The painting is rendered in shades of brown depicting things of old which is true characteristic of proverb. The composition is made up a man standing on the figure one and had stretched to. The composition is painted brown and ochre harmoniously. The figure one the man is standing on represents the humble and the little beginnings while the figure two symbolizes the bigger and better things ahead of the road to success. The adage tells of how better it is to take small steps in the

right direction than to make a leap forward only to stumble backwards since success is the sum of small efforts repeated daily. This tells of the importance of getting started by breaking complex into small manageable task and then starting on the first one.

4.7.16 (Preliminary Sketch) *Mɔkome fɔɔ shi jee mɔkome kwɛɔ* (A child is born to family but it takes society to bring him/her up)



Figure 26: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.18 (Painting) *Mɔkome fɔɔ shi jee mɔkome kwɛɔ*



Figure 27: Painting of *Mɔkome fɔɔ shi jee mɔkome kwɛɔ* (A child is born to family but it takes society to bring him/her up)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of the painting is “*mɔkome fɔɔ shi jee mɔkome kwɛɔ*”. The proverb means that a child is born to a family but it takes society to bring him/her up. The composition executed in impasto is rendered in shades of brown. The work is composed of a child whose feet rest in the palms of a several adults symbolising the space offered by society or the community to find comfort. The two hands of the child are held up firmly by another adult member of society representing the direction in terms of values society is ready to offer to every growing child so he or she could realize his full potential. The last set of hands holding the child at the waist level is

explained as the support society gives to every child, i.e moral, social, psychological support. This proverb is used to explain the role society or community plays in the life of every child by way of providing for and interaction positively so those children could experience and grow in a safe and healthy environment.

4.7.19 (Preliminary Sketch) *Kɛ obeɲkɛ kaa dani obaanu akɛ ewɔlɔɔ* (One will only get to experience the cough of a crab only when one gets closer to it)



Figure 28: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.20 (Painting) *Kɛ obeŋkɛ kaa dani obaanu akɛ ewɔlɔ*



Figure 29: Painting of *Kɛ obeŋkɛ kaa dani obaanu akɛ ewɔlɔ* (One will only get to experience the cough of a crab only when one gets closer to it)

Source: Researcher’s Construct

“*Kɛ obeŋkɛ kaa dani obaanu akɛ ewɔlɔ*” is a painting of a Ga Mashie proverb and it means that one will only get to experience the cough of a crab only when one gets closer to it. The proverb is painted showing a crab coughing. The coughing signs are depicted using line in a dispersion. The work is rendered in shades of brown and grey. Crabs unlike many other animals are not known to make audibly loud sounds, however crab experts Jennifer Taylor asserts that crabs make a rasping sound when

their claws rubs against each other. This rasping sound which is only heard when one closer what the elders likened to the hidden real character, attitude or behaviour of a person. It is believe that the real character of a person is manifested when one gets closer to the person. It is therefore not appropriate for one to pass a verdict on somebody he barely knows and not closer to. It is often the case that issue about people comes up, members of society are quick to condemn the person without getting closer to know their side of the issue. The moral of the story is for society to hasten slowly in that condemnation and rather get closer to know the person character before passing verdict.

4.7.21 (Preliminary Sketch) *Ake iñmei enyɔ kwɛɛ tɔmli* (You do not look inside a bottle with both eyes)



Figure 30: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.22 (Painting) *Ake ih̄m̄ei enyɔ kwɛɛ tɔmli*



Figure 31: Painting of *Ake ih̄m̄ei enyɔ kwɛɛ tɔmli* (You do not look inside a bottle with both eyes)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The painting is titled, "*Ake ih̄m̄ei enyɔ kwɛɛ tɔmli*" and it means "You do not look inside a bottle with both eyes". This means one must direct his or her strength at his passion one at a time. The proverb is use to advice people against directing their strength at the impossible. The composition is made of a figure holding up a bottle to one of the eyes and peeping into it to see what it contains. The painting was rendered in tints and shades of browns, grey and black. Sometimes we all try to do the impossible thus kill two birds with one stone. It is true that some people can perform multi tasks but while each of those tasks is performed, one is put on hold. If you try to

do more than one thing at the same time, the probability that you would fail is very high. The Ga Mashie proverb that “It is impossible to look into a bottle with two eyes at the same time” is very true as well. It is better to concentrate your resources and strength on one thing than to do two. If you are someone who intends to use one opportunity to achieve two objectives, then listen to this and learn from it. I am sure you would be happy to succeed at one thing than to end up with two half-baked loaves of bread in your hand.

4.7.23 (Preliminary Sketch) *Mɔko eɣmɛ tsohe ni ayaye kɔyɔɔ abo* (No one let go of a tree during a storm and rather embraces the storm)



Figure 32: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.24 (Painting) *Moko eɛmɛ tso he ni ayaye kɔyɔɔ abo*



Figure 33: Painting of *Moko eɛmɛ tso he ni ayaye kɔyɔɔ abo* (No one let go of a tree during a storm and rather embraces the storm)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of the painting is, “*Moko eɛmɛ tso he ni ayaye kɔyɔɔ abo*” and it means that no one let go of a tree during a storm, and rather embraces the storm. It is usual for one to be caught up in any of the natural disasters i.e rain, sun, storm, coldness etc and regrettable results of these natural disasters especially a storm on the humans and the community are there for everyone to see, however, one can wade through stormy conditions and stay safe if could get hold of something like a branch or the trunk of a tree. The painting depicts a figure in a firm embrace of a tree during a storm rendered in shades of browns. The proverbs explain how people fail to see opportunities

staring them in the face and rather chooses directions bereft with failures and avoidable challenges. The painting seeks to directly translate the proverb in visual form.

4.7.25 (Preliminary Sketch) *Moko enyieε tso ni gbee akɔ' lε*
(No one allows to be bitten by a dog while holding a piece of wood)



Figure 34: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.26 (Preliminary Sketch) *Mɔ ko enyiɛ tso ni gbee akɔ' lɛ*



Figure 35: Painting of *Mɔ ko enyiɛ tso ni gbee akɔ' lɛ* (No one allows to be bitten by a dog while holding a piece of wood)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of the painting is “*mɔ ko enyiɛ tso ni gbee akɔ' lɛ*”. It means no one allows to be bitten by a dog while holding a piece of wood. Connotatively, it means no one sits and looks on for a misfortune to befall him or her when there are steps that could be taken to prevent it. It is used to advise community members to be resolute in the face of possible calamity by deploying all the preventive measures to avoid the consequences. In the painting is a man warding off a dog attempting to bite with a piece of wood. The painting is rendered on a light background and rendered in shades of dominant browns and a shade of blue. Dogs, though was domesticated several

years ago when the prehistoric men begin to settle in communities still had the tendency to display cannibalism but are tamed and brought under control when a piece of wood is brandish at them.

4.7.27 (Preliminary Sketch) *Kε onyie shuo sεε lε owuuu bɔ* (He who walks behind the elephant is not be beaten by dew)

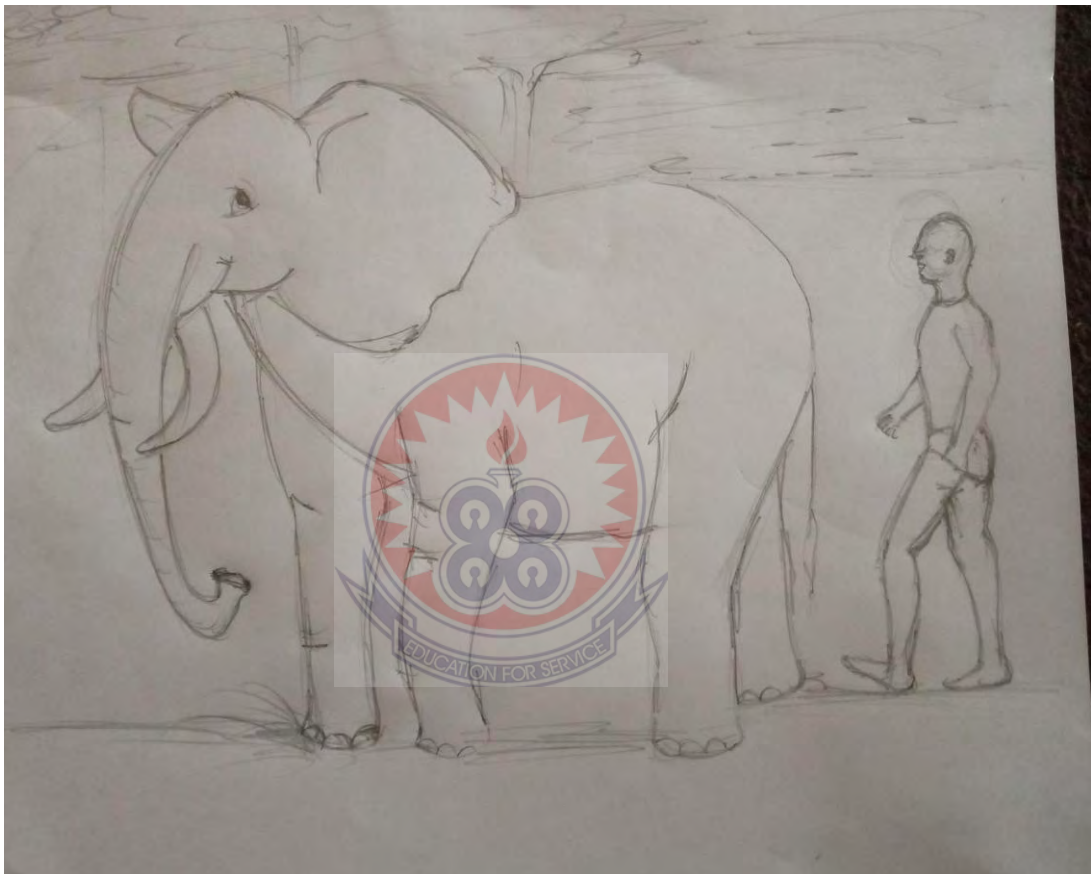


Figure 36: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.28 (Painting) *Kɛ onyie shuo sɛɛ lɛ owuuu bɔ*



Figure 37: Painting of *Kɛ onyie shuo sɛɛ lɛ owuuu bɔ* (He who walks with the elephant is not beaten by dew)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The digital painting is titled, “*Kɛ onyie shuo sɛɛ lɛ owuuu bɔ*”. It means that He who walks behind the elephant is not beaten by dew . The work is a painting of an elephant in its huge usual self, rendered in dark, middle and light tones of dominant browns on a light background. The elephant is bracing through the forest under a heavy dew fall. Behind the elephant walks a man who is protected by the huge imposing elephant from being a possible heavy drench from the dew as the elephant wades through the forest. The sage believes that when the elephant wades through the forest, it clears everything on her way including dew, therefore one walks in that same path unhindered. Elephants are the world’s largest animals and are considered a symbol of protection and so can push through obstacles and particularly potent totems for those

seeking strength among other things. The adage tells of why ‘strength’ is important in other for one to survive in very challenging moments. The painting and adage mean that to survive or succeed in life requires people with the influence and clouts to help you navigate the tortuous waters of life.

4.7.29 (Preliminary Sketch) *Mɔ kome nɔ̄ ji wuɔ, shi eboɔ ke shɛɔ mā fɛɛ*
(One person owns a cockerel but it crows to wake up a whole community)



Figure 38: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.30 (Painting) *Mɔ kome nɔ́ ji wuɔ, shi eboɔ ke shɛɔ má fɛɛ*



Figure 39: Painting of *Mɔ kome nɔ́ ji wuɔ, shi eboɔ ke shɛɔ má fɛɛ* (One person owns a cockerel but it crows to wake up a whole community)

Source: Researcher’s Construct

“*Mɔ kome nɔ́ ji wuɔ, shi eboɔ ke shɛɔ má fɛɛ*” is a painting of a Ga Mashie proverb and it means that the one person owns a cockerel but it crows to wake up a whole community. This is use to remind families of their social responsibilities to trained up a child for the benefit of an entire community. The painting portrays an imposing cockerel standing and overlooking a number mud houses. The cockerel and the mud houses are all registered in shades of brown on light background. The crowing sound of the cockerel is also registered with musical notes. Cockerels are dominants livestock animals found in Ga Mashie, Infact they have for decades serve has ‘alarm

clocks' to especially the fisher folks within Ga Mashie who had to embark on dawn or early morning fishing expeditions and also women who had to catch early morning businesses. The proverb is used to advice community members especially families to train their children so they can become responsible adults and contribute to the development of not only their family but the community as a whole. Families pride themselves with raising children who benefits transcends their respective families and that is what the painting seeks to portray.

4.7.31 (Preliminary Sketch) *Mɔni kɔkɔ tso kpakpaa le eyisei atsiɔ*
(He who climb a good tree deserves further push)

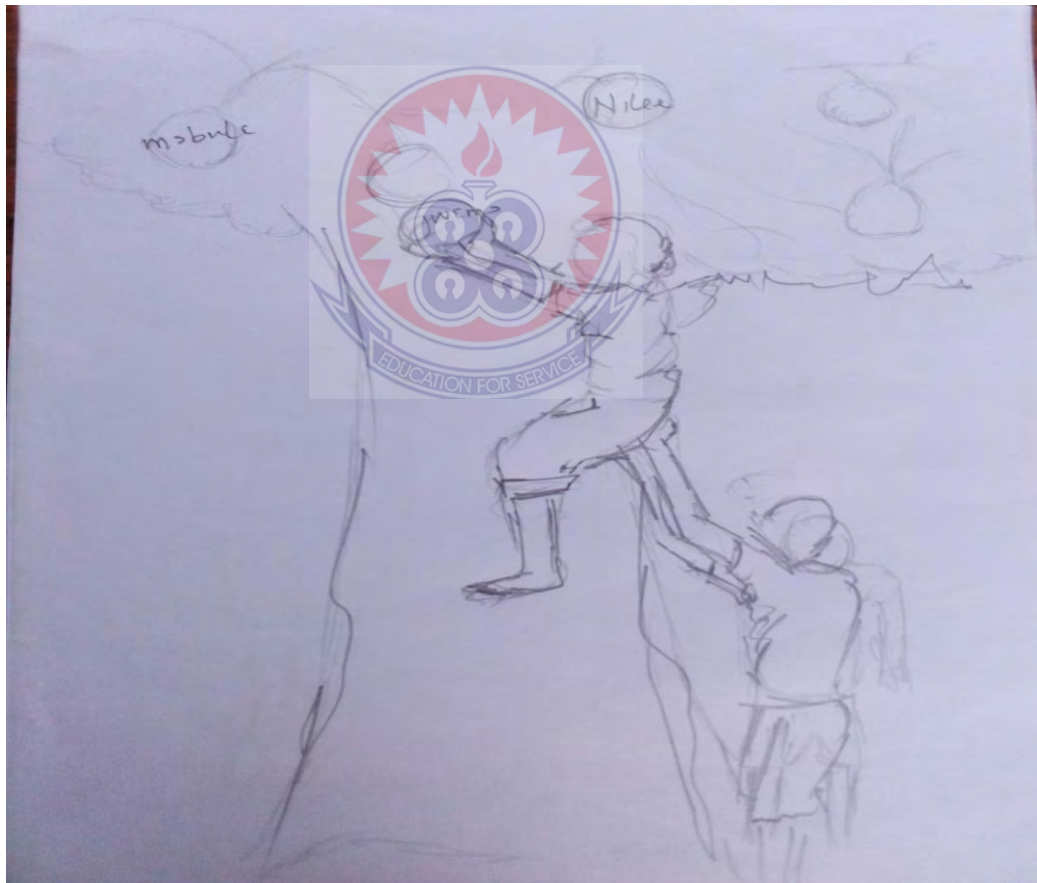


Figure 40: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.32 (Painting) *Mɔni kɔkɔ tso kpakpaa le eyisei atsiɔ*



Figure 41: Painting of *Mɔni kɔkɔ tso kpakpaa le,le eyisei atsiɔ*(He who climb a good tree deserves further push)

Source: Researcher’s Construct

The painting is titled, “*Mɔni kɔkɔ tso kpakpaa le eyisei atsiɔ*” and it means “He who climb a good tree deserves further push”. The English equivalence of this proverb is good reward comes with hard work. This means society will commend those who do good. It also means that for society to recognise or commend a successful person, he or she must work hard because those society would push to achieve are the ones who are seen as determine and so are rightfully rewarded. The proverb is used to advise people and the community of the reward that awaits individuals who strife to make a difference in societies and the unique support the society will give to such individuals. The composition is set on a light background. It shows a man being push to climb a

tree. The tree symbolizes success journey beckoning him while the man doing stands for the society, community and individual who could come out of his way to lend support to a good course. The painting is registered in a dominant colour of browns, dingy gold to project the ancestral origin of proverbs.

4.7.33 (Preliminary Sketch) *Tso kome ekpee kɔɔyɔɔ*
(one tree cannot resist a wind)



Figure 42: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.34 (Painting) *Tso kome ekpee kɔɔɔɔ*



Figure 43: Painting of *Tso kome ekpee kɔɔɔɔ*(one tree cannot resist a wind)

Source: Researcher's Construct

This painting is titled, “*Tso kome ekpee kɔɔɔɔ*” which means, “one tree cannot resist a wind” The proverb is firmly rooted in the Ga Mashie proverbial of communal spirit and oneness. The proverbs were represented with the painting of a single tree succumbing to the force of a strong wind while an orchard of trees stands firmly in the same raging storm. The painting is in shades of brown, whites and yellows colours which represents things of old and rooted in Ga Mashie tradition. The people of Ga Mashie believe the successes chalked from their original place of migration, in wars, trade and economics, chieftaincy etc was as a result of spirit of unity amongst them which the orchard of trees represents. The proverbs is use to advice and remind members of the community of the need to stay united all the time especially in times

of conflicts (storm). One virtue or value that causes the defeat and failures of individuals and communities is a broken front. The vice versa is what the people of Ga Mashie pride themselves in as the wand that makes them stands tall when conflicts arise and that is togetherness as captured in the proverb.

4.7.35 (Preliminary Sketch) *Gbee etuuu ake eyaamɔ looflɔ ni miifliki kenye ɛwei ɛwei*
(Its unwise for a dog chase after a bird in flight)



Figure 44: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.36 (Painting) *Gbee etuuu akɛ eyaamɔ looflɔ ni miifliki kenye ɣwei*



Figure 45: Painting of *Gbee etuuu akɛ eyaamɔ looflɔ ni miifliki kenye ɣwei* (Its unwise for a dog chase after a bird in flight)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The theme of the painting is “*Gbee etuuu akɛ eyaamɔ looflɔ ni miifliki kenye ɣwei*”
The proverb means that “Its unwise for a dog chase after a bird in flight”. The work is painted in a scheme of browns on light background. The composition is made up of a dog sited and watching a bird flying. The posture of the figure suggest how it careless about the presence of a potential prey and it is because there is no guarantee that a jump or a dive in an attempt will yield positive results of a meal. The ancestors of the people of Ga mashie derives a good virtue from this encounter and explains that even though it is sometimes good to challenge oneself into a venture or an activity or

business, it is equally wise that one assesses success rate of the venture before throwing the effort which could be tangible or intangible. The assets that it would be unwise to go into a bout with an opponent in an unfamiliar terrain as that will definitely cause one a shameful defeat. According to *Nae Wulomɔ*, the proverbs caution members of the community against unnecessary show of strength and might especially when one is not at ‘par’ with the supposed opponent and rather conserve that energy for another day when it will be easy to triumph over a business deal, a venture etc. This proverb teaches people to tread cautiously in everything they do. It teaches the value of self-evaluation.

4.7.37 (Preliminary Sketch) *Nine ni woɔ ona'a le agbaaa le m̄a*
(You do not smack the hands that feeds you)



Figure 46: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.38 (Painting) *Nine ni woɔ ona'a le agbaa le mâ*



Figure 47: Painting of *Nine ni woɔ ona'a le agbaa le mâ* (You do not smack the hands that feeds you)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of this work is, “*Nine ni woɔ ona'a le agbaa le mâ*” and it means “You do not smack the hands that feeds you”. It is a painted composition of a head with the mouth open ready to receive food from the palm of another person. The researcher worked with black and shades of browns on a light background and it to portray the age old existence of this virtue of gratitude. The work employs the people of Ga Mashie to eschew ungratefulness and hypocrisy on the part of beneficiaries of kind gestures from individuals. Helping one another as been part of the people of Ga Mashie since they migrated to their present place of settlement. The helping and

supporting each other spirit cut across the entire social spectrum of Ga Mashie. It is seen when a new baby is born, during festivals, in local trading activities, support to the vulnerable etc. The proverb teaches the value of gratitude and how it could open further opportunities for someone. The palm holding the food symbolizes the kind gesture from individuals, community or groups. The people believe that it is only the hand that could feed the mouth. In this painting, it means people who benefits from the benevolence of others must speak ill of the same people who supports them.

4.7.39 (Preliminary Sketch) *Ahaaa alokoto sei ake eta no*
(You don't make mockery of another person's deformity)



Figure 48: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.40 (Painting) *Ahaaa alokoto sei ake eta no*



Figure 49: Painting of *Ahaaa alokoto sei ake eta no* (You don't make mockery of another person's deformity)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of the painting is "*Ahaaa alokoto sei ake eta no*" which means "You don't make mockery of another person's deformity". It is a painting depicting a Ga Mashie proverb that forbids people from mocking a deformed person going. The composition consists of a traditional kitchen stool and an '*alokoto*' swirling and not able to remain stable on the stool. The '*alokoto*' is not able to 'sit' on the stool because of its pointed end. The people of Ga Mashie believes that everybody was created by God and that irrespective of how each individual is created everybody deserves to be treated with respect. They even believe that those who make mockery of other's deformities will themselves be rewarded with deformity in one form or another.

The proverbs therefore speaks against mocking God's creation weird as it may look and rather encourages the community and individuals to accommodate every living person.

4.7.41 (Preliminary Sketch) *Tso nikεε elejoo le ahuu tseɔ le joo*
(If a tree does know how to dance, the wind will teach it)



Figure 50: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.42 (Painting) *Tso nikkɛ elejoo ɛ ahuu tɛɔ ɛ joo*



**Figure 51: Painting of *Tso nikkɛ elejoo ɛ ahuu tɛɔ ɛ joo*
(If a tree does know how to dance, the wind will teach it)**

Source: Researcher’s Construct

“*Tso nikkɛ elejoo ɛ ahuu tɛɔ ɛ joo*” is an impasto painting. It is a Ga Mashie proverb that means that if the tree does not know how to dance, the wind will teach it. The proverb teaches how each individual is blessed with a hidden talent and potentials and that it takes an opportune time to rise to stardom. Every member of the community as a wind that is yet to come. An inventory of the painting reveals a tree being thrown into a frenzy and ‘dancing’ mood by strong wind. The painting is registered in tints and

shades of browns giving meaning to proverbs as saying of old. The brown symbolizes decay because of longer period of time. They believe there is wisdom in old age. The aged who are most revered and are considered as towers of wisdom, the source of proverbs. The proverb also teaches members not to give up easily when difficult moments arises. It encourages members to bid for their time and catch each passing moment with some level of determination because that moment (wind) might be one's spring board to a better life.

4.7.43 *(Preliminary Sketch)Faa tsio faa yise*
(River flows when a body of water pushes the other)



Figure 52: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.44 (Painting) *Faa tsio faa yise*



Figure 53: Painting *Faa tsio faa yise* (River flows when a body of water pushes the other)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The impasto painting is titled, "*Faa tsio faa yise*". It means that it takes the flow of a river to cause the flow of another river. The composition shows a river flowing through hills meandering its way down through the forest to other tributaries. The hills and some parts of the plains are draped in shades of browns and vegetation greens was introduced to show a semblance of realism of the natural vegetation. . The adage tells of how important it is to have the support of reliable family, community or individuals from the community because just like the rivers flowing as a result of a push from the body of river. The people of Ga Mashie in firm reference to this adage believe that the growth and development of the Ga Mashie is largely dependent on supports and efforts by well-meaning members of the community to develop skills and talents of others to realize their God-given potentials. The painting tells of the importance of reliance.

4.7.44 (Painting) *Tsene ni ká faa he haa kuma aye gbɔ gbɔ*
(A stranger will not thirst of water when a gourd is lying by a river)



Figure 54: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.45 (Painting) *Tsene ni ká faa he haa kuma aye gbɔ*



Figure 55: Painting of *Tsene ni ká faa he haa kuma aye gbɔ* (A stranger will not thirst of water when a gourd is lying by a river)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The painting shows an old vegetation with a river running through the midsection of a forest. The title of the work is, “*Tsene ni ká faa he haa kuma aye gbɔ*” and it literally mean a stranger will not thirst of water when a gourd is lying by a river. The foreground and back ground are old foliage and plank of trees and are portrayed in shades of browns. The flowing river is registered in shades of brown whiles the gourd partly lying in bank of the river is represented in its natural colour of brown. The proverb speaks to how people must seek to take advantage of life opportunities around them. It will be seen as absurd should someone be found around a stream,

river or water body good for human consumption and still complains of thirst. The gourd is one the most natural ancient storage containers and till date could be found in most homes, at market centres and at cultural and traditional occasions within Ga Mashie. Its use from ancient days has not change even among current generations. The proverb advises members of the community to spot and access opportunities because that is what will lead to accomplishment.

4.7.46 (Preliminary Sketch) *Fiofio adɔɔŋ fee ekye gbee toi* (Its takes extreme patience to address complex issues

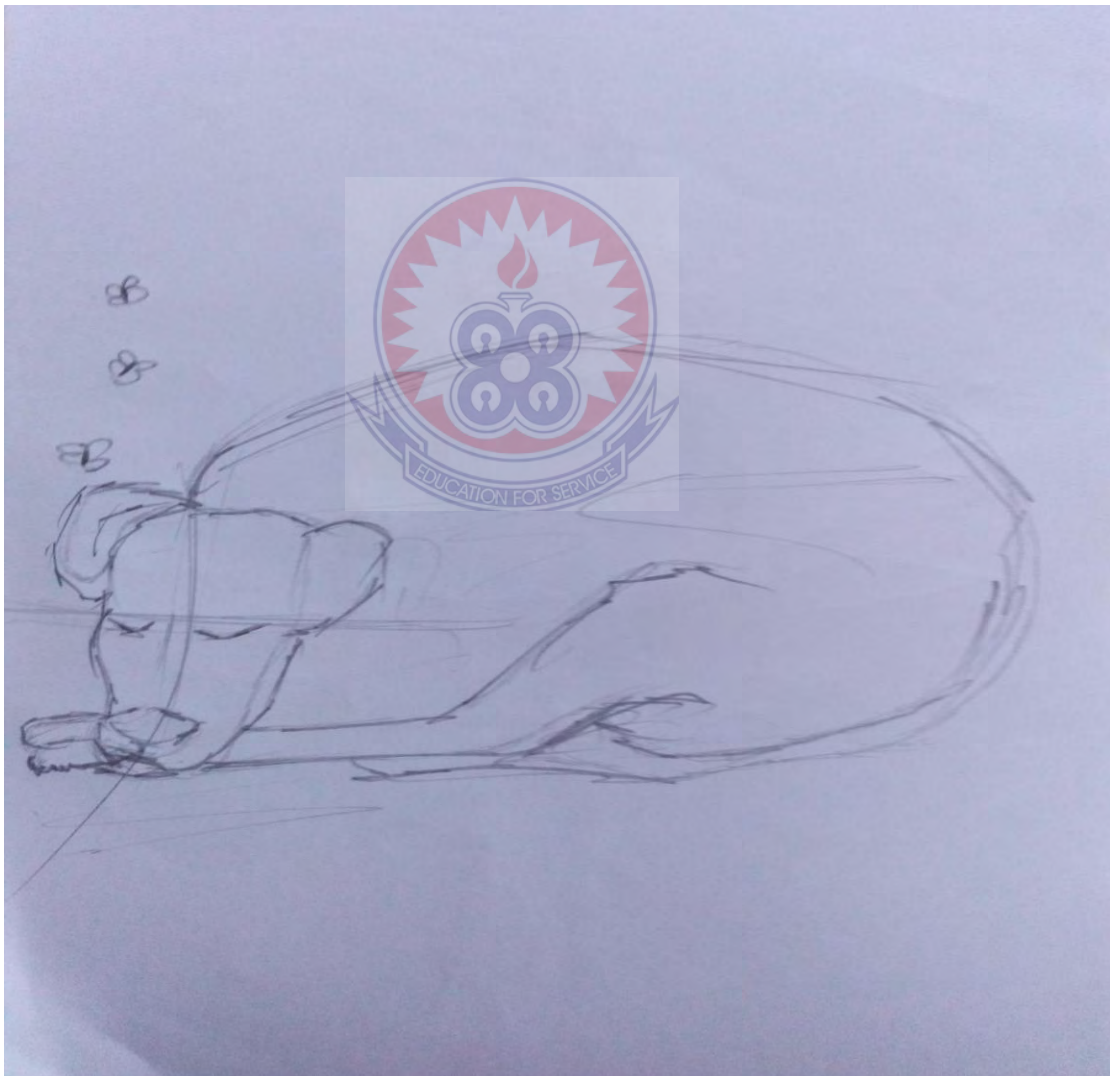


Figure 56: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.47 (Painting) *Fiofio adɔɔɔ́ fɛ ɛkɛyɛ gbɛɛ tɔi*



Figure 57: Painting of *Fiofio adɔɔɔ́ fɛ ɛkɛyɛ gbɛɛ tɔi* (Its takes extreme patience to address complex issues)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The digital painting is titled, "*Fiofio adɔɔɔ́ fɛ ɛkɛyɛ gbɛɛ tɔi*". It means that it takes extreme patience to address complex issues. The painting has a white background which identifies the origin of the adage painted. The composition is made up of a dog lying down but with a housefly feasting on the sore ridden ear. The composition is painted in shades of black, brown and ochre harmoniously. The dog intermittently shakes the housefly from the sore ear but the housefly keeps coming back to nibble away the sore ear. The intransigent nature of the housefly represents an adage that tells of one of the virtues and values among the people of Ga Mashie community. Patience both a great virtue and a great weapon that moves mountain. The painting

explains the ability of individuals to endure waiting or delay in order to achieve something that is incredibly difficult. The work and adage mean that it is easy to train people to have good moral values while they are still young. This tells of the importance of patience with hardwork.

4.7.48 (Preliminary Sketch) *Atawoɔ too din be mli ni hunu ntso jee be mli mi dun ewo*
(Its easier to search for a black goat during the day than at night)



Figure 58: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.49 (Painting) *Atawoo too din be mli ni hunu ntso jee be mli mi dun ewo*



Figure 59: Painting of *Atawoo too din be mli ni hunu ntso jee be mli mi dun ewo* (Its easier to search for a black goat during the day than at night)

Source: Researcher's Construct

“*Atawoo too din be mli ni hunu ntso jee be mli mi dun ewo*”. It is a painting of a Ga Mashie proverb and it means that Its easier to search for a black goat during the day than at night. The painting is made up of black goat with the sun registered in corn yellow. The entire work is mounted on a plain background. This is often used to explain how convenient it is to look for the most precious thing during the day than at night because chances of seeing it at night is very slim. Black signifies doom, so proverb in other respect is also use to caution members of the community against looking for the dark character of a person which is mostly strip bare when the ‘light’ is shines on them. People who are backed by stronger forces like people in authority, God, god’s or oracles. The Ga Mashie community just like most communities in

Ghana may have ‘mensa’. The use of ‘mensa’ is to explain how every family may have persons or person with shady character. The proverb is use to educate members on why they must stay above reproach.

4.7.50 (Preliminary Sketch) *Keji tso shishi fai le ye hewale le, eshee ahuu ko kwraa gbeyei* (A tree with deep roots fears not the heaviest storm)



Figure 60: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.51 (Painting) *Kɛji tso shishi fai lɛ yɛ hewalɛ lɛ, eshee ahuu ko kwraa gbeyei*



Figure 61: Painting of *Kɛji tso shishi fai lɛ yɛ hewalɛ lɛ, eshee ahuu ko kwraa gbeyei* (A tree with deep roots fears not the heaviest storm)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The digital painting is titled, “*Kɛji tso shishi fai lɛ yɛ hewalɛ lɛ, eshee ahuu ko kwraa gbeyei*”. It is a Ga Mashie proverb and it means that a tree with strong roots fears not the heaviest storm. It is a painting of a tree firmly rooted in the ground resisting the efforts of the strong wind to uproot it. The tree and its roots are painted in shades of green with the soil taking its natural brown shade. The proverb is likened to strong family connections and tides that provides warmth and care for members of the families. The people of Ga Mashie believes that a strong family structure provides supports in areas of education, health, wellness and emotional supports to every member of the family. A strong family supports each other through good and bad

times. The roots represents the family support while the branches symbolizes the forms of supports a strong family offers to a member in need. The adage and the work mean that when people know how strong their family is position, they are never afraid of who what awaits them especially if its negative.

4.7.52 (Preliminary Sketch) *Añmɔɔ afutɛ akajee*
(We don't make mockery of someone with a disability)

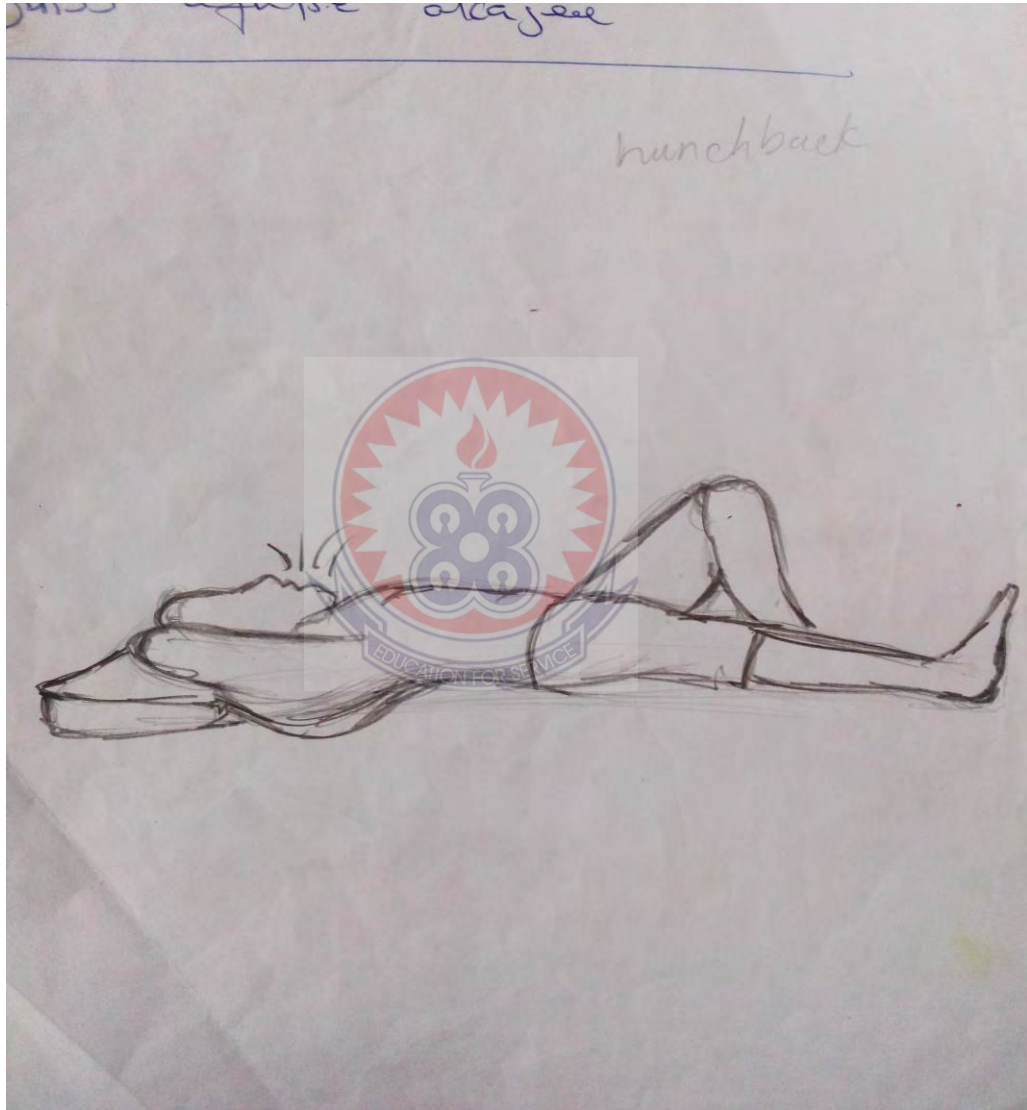


Figure 62: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.53 (Painting) *Αήμω afutse akajee*



Figure 63: Painting of *Αήμω afutse akajee* (We don't make mockery of someone with a disability)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of this Ga Mashie proverb painting is, “*Αήμω afutse akajee*”. The proverb means that we don't make mockery of someone with a disability. It is a painting of a figure with hunch back lying in a supine position. It is portrayed to be screaming because the position is very discomforting to him. The painting is rendered in shades of brown on white background. The elders of the Ga Mashie community forbids members of the community from mocking such persons. They believe that those who make mockery of persons with disability gives birth to persons with disability or one from the family will. They explained that God created every human being in his image and that even those born with deformities and other minor body damages

deserve respect, so make fun of such persons translates into making fun of God. The proverb means that people should desist from making persons with disability a laughing stock.

4.7.54 (Preliminary Sketch) *Waa ɲoɲo flo enyiεεε*
(no one undertakes a task without what can push him/her)



Figure 64: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.55 (Painting) *Waa ńońo flo enyiεεε*



Figure 65: Painting of *Waa ńońo flo enyiεεε* (no one undertakes a task without what can push him/her)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The Ga Mashie proverb painting above is titled, “*Waa ńońo flo enyiεεε*”. It means no one undertakes a task without what can push him/her. It is a painting of a snail in motion. The motion is depicted in band of shades of browns. The snail is registered in shades of brown as well all on a light background. The proverbs are tied to how the indigenous Ga Mashie community can progress. The proverbs explain how important it is for the community to channel their concerted energies and other resources towards the development of the Ga Mashie. The empty snail shell cannot move except when there is a live snail to carry it from one place to another. So is development and progress. The people of Ga Mashie believe there can be meaningful progress when there is the requisite resources. The proverb and the painting mean that when people

are tasked to undertake a project, they should equally be equipped with needed tools so they can move.

4.7.56 (Preliminary Sketch) *Abɔtri tɛ nɔ shamɔɔ*
(the fighting arena can be slippery)



Figure 66: Sketch of Proverb

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.57 (Painting) *Abɔtri tɛ nɔ shamɔɔ*



Figure 67: Painting of *Abɔtri tɛ nɔ shamɔɔ* (the fighting arena can be slippery)

Source: Researcher's Construct

The title of the painting is *Abɔtri tɛ nɔ shamɔɔ*. Proverbially, it means that the fighting arena can be slippery. It's a painting of a figure who is the verge of being floored by a blow that hit him at the foot. The blow symbolizes the slippery fighting arena. The composition is rendered in shades of yellow, grey and browns on a light background. This proverb is used to refer to situations where people or someone throws caution to the wind and overly boast of his or her superior strengths way ahead of a contest or an event. The likelihood of them failing or losing the contest is seen ahead of time. The people of Ga Mashie are noted for their extra strength in physical combat especially in boxing and so are aware that a good fighter do not boast

but shows that prowess to his opponents. Every good fighter is cautious of every move by his opponent during the fight, takes advantage of it and prevents being embarrassingly beaten.

4.7.58 (Preliminary Sketch) *Ake kpoŋ flo shaa loo*
(A hook without a bait (fish) do not catch fish)



Figure 68: Sketch

Source: Researcher's Construct

4.7.59 (Painting) *Ake kpoŋ flo shaa loo*



Figure 69: Painting of *Ake kpoŋ flo shaa loo* (A hook without a bait(fish) do not catch fish)

Source: Researcher's Construct

“*Ake kpoŋ flo shaa loo*” is a polychromatic painting. It is a Ga Mashie proverb that means a hook without a bait do not catch fish. The composition is made up of a fisherman pulling out an empty hook from a pond. The painting is rendered in natural tones and shades of polychrome. The use of a fisherman is to give credence the proverb and highlights the main occupation of the Ga Mashie people, which is fishing. Ordinarily, every fishing expedition especially the lone expedition has a notable rule that until you bait the potential catch with a fish do not expect to make a catch. The proverb teaches that to attain or achieve a certain feat in life one must be willing to give out by way of talent, skills and even knowledge in other to acquire more of those same of skills or more. The proverb is used to provoke man's instincts to offer the needed help to those in need and the he or she will be surely rewarded in several other ways.

4.8 In what ways can the selected Ga Mashie proverbs be produced through painting on a canvas?

The researcher decided to produce twenty demonstrative images of the thirty selected proverbs on a canvas size of 183x133cm.

Below are the proverbs presented on the canvas



Figure 70: 20 selected proverbs on canvas . 183x133cm.

Source: Researcher's Construct

Painted Proverbs and their meaning

Proverb: 1. Mɔkome fɔɔ shi jee mɔkome kweɔ

Proverb: 2. Gbee etuuu akɛ eyaamɔ looflɔ ni miifliki kɛnyie ɛwei ɛwei

Proverb: 3. Kɛ oyɛ lɛlɛɛ mli lɛ oloɔ emli nu

Proverb: 4 Adamɔɔ ekome nɔ kekɔɔ enyɔ

Proverb: 5 Kotoku flo damɔɔ shi

Proverb: 6 Kɛ onyie shuɔ sɛɛ lɛ owuuu bɔ

Proverb: 7. Akɛ shuɔ yeeɛ naamɔ fɛɔ `

Proverb: 8 Adamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ mli afamɔɔ ɛmɛɛ

Proverb: 9. Kɛ wu ma wuɔ gbee sheeɛ gbeyei

Proverbs: 10. Tso nɛkɛɛ elejoo lɛ ahuu tɛɔ lɛ joo

Proverb: 11 Atawɔɔ too din be mli ni hunu ntso jee be mli mi dun ewo

Proverb: 12. Agbee mɔ kane koni bo onɔ atso

Proverb: 13. Akɛ ɛmɛɛ enyɔ kwɛɛ tɔmli

Proverb: 14. Kwɛmɔ oha mi ni maye nii ewɔɔ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyie

Proverb: 15. Mɔni kɔɔɔ tso kpakpa lɛ eyisei atsiɔ

Proverb: 16. Mɔko enyieɛ tso ni gbee akɔ' lɛ

Proverb: 17. Mɔ kome nɔɔ ji wuɔ, shi eboɔ kɛ shɛɔ maɛ fɛɛ

Proverbs: 18. Ahaaa alokoto sei akɛ eta nɔ

Proverb: 19. Abɔtri tɛ nɔ shamɔɔ

Proverb: 20 . Waa ɛnɔɔ flo enyieɛɛ

Figure. 70 is a canvas painting of twenty of the proverbs labelled from 1 to 20. The labelling is to help for easy identification of the painted proverbs. As part of process to revive and conserve oral art such as proverbs, a research project was undertaken, part of which was to produce demonstrative images on a canvas with twenty of the proverbs. The canvas painting was used by the researcher for evaluation by the respondents. The copy of the canvas was printed and presented to the traditional authorities of Ga Mashie to be kept in a museum as educational resource material.

4.9 How will the symbolic images of the selected Ga Mashie proverbs be evaluated?

4.9.1 Evaluation of Artworks of Selected Proverbs

After completion of the paintings on the research, the paintings were presented to the sample of the study. Respondents either came and evaluated the works or were given printed versions of the paintings and were tasked to identify the proverbs the paintings were intended to portray.

Table four below indicates each painting title and the number of people who could identify particular proverbs by perceiving their resultant paintings. The table also captures the number of people who could not identify each proverb by perceiving their resultant paintings.



4.9.2 Results of the Evaluation

Table 5. Identification of proverbs by participants

TITLE OF WORKS	NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO COULD IDENTIFY PROVERBS	NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT IDENTIFY PROVERBS
<i>Mokome fɔɔ shi jee mɔkome kwɛɔ</i>	16	0
<i>Gbee etuuu akɛ eyaamɔ looflɔ ni miifliki kenye ɛwei</i>	12	2
<i>Ke oye leleɛ mli le oloɔ emli nu</i>	14	0
<i>Adamɔɔ ekome nɔ kekɔɔ enyɔ</i>	10	0
<i>Kotoku flo damɔɔ shi</i>	11	3
<i>Ke onye shuɔ sɛɛ le owuuu bɔ</i>	11	4
<i>Akɛ shuɔ yeee naamɔ fɛo</i>	14	0
<i>Adamɔɔ ɛmee mli afamɔɔ ɛmee</i>	18	1
<i>Ke wu ma wuɔ gbee shee gbeyei</i>	19	0
<i>Abɔtri tɛ nɔ shamɔɔ</i>	11	6
<i>Atawoɔ too din be mli ni hunu ntso jee be mli mi dun ewo</i>	16	0
<i>Agbee mɔ kane koni bo ono atso</i>	18	1
<i>Kwemɔ oha mi ni maye ni ewɔɛ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyie</i>	16	2
<i>Mɔni kɔɔɔ tso kpakpaa le eyisei atsiɔ</i>	16	3
<i>Mɔko enye tso ni gbee ako' le</i>	17	1
<i>Tsene ni ká faa he haa kuma aye gbɔ</i>	11	3
<i>Waa ɛɔɔ flo enyieɛɛ</i>	10	4
<i>Mɔ kome nɔɛ ji wuɔ, shi ebo ke sheɔ maɛ fɛɛ</i>	12	4
<i>Ke obeɛke kaa dani obaanu akɛ ewɔɔɔ</i>	14	3
<i>Keji tso shishi fai le ye hewale le, eshee ahuu ko kwraa gbeyei</i>	15	4

(Source: Field Data, 2020)

Indentification of proverbs by participants

The Table 4 is made of twenty proverbs listed in a column. The number of people who could recognize the proverbs and paintings by perceiving the painting representations and the number of people who could not are represented in first and second columns respectively.

From the data in Table 4, out of the twenty painted proverbs, majority of the proverbs were identified by the respondents used from the study. More than half of the respondents on each of the proverbs could recognize the proverbs by perceiving the painting. In all, thirteen out of the seventeen proverbs were identified by more than half of the eight. Four of the paintings had more than half of the respondents unable to tell which proverbs were represented in the paintings. It is therefore important to say that art hold possibility of being used to document proverbs. Findings represented in the Table indicate increased chances for retrieval of the proverb represented in pictorial forms and hence proving that prioritizing and putting in practice Nelson's Semantic Theory of pictures perceptually more distinct than words be used in recording and preserving oral culture, could potentially increase remembrance by people who perceive artworks with cultural content. It could be therefore concluded that the illustrated symbols will go a long way to help the people of Ga Mashie and by extension the general public understand these proverbs better by the use of the symbols and a reliable source of pictorial documentation of proverbs and other oral cultures.

4.9.3 Results of the Evaluation

Table. 6 Explanation of proverbs on canvas by participants

TITLE OF WORKS	NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO COULD EXPLAIN PROVERBS	NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT EXPLAIN PROVERBS
<i>Mokome fɔɔ shi jee mɔkome kwɛɔ</i>	6	10
<i>Gbee etuuu akɛ eyaamɔ looflɔ ni miifliki kenye ɛwei</i>	6	8
<i>Ke oye leleɛ mli le oloɔ emli nu</i>	8	6
<i>Adamɔɔ ekome nɔ kekɔɔ enyɔ</i>	6	4
<i>Kotoku flo damɔɔ shi</i>	3	11
<i>Ke onye shuɔ sɛɛ le owuuu bɔ</i>	5	10
<i>Akɛ shuɔ yeee naamɔ fɛo</i>	1	13
<i>Adamɔɔ ɛmee mli afamɔɔ ɛmee</i>	4	15
<i>Ke wu ma wuɔ gbee shee gbeyei</i>	3	16
<i>Abɔtri tɛ nɔ shamɔɔ</i>	1	16
<i>Atawoɔ too din be mli ni hunu ntso jee be mli mi dun ewo</i>	1	15
<i>Agbee mɔ kane koni bo ono atso</i>	8	11
<i>Kwemɔ oha mi ni maye ni ewɔɛ ni Yɔɔ enyɔ nyie</i>	3	15
<i>Mɔni kɔɔɔ tso kpakpaa le eyisei atsiɔ</i>	12	7
<i>Mɔko enye tso ni gbee akɔ' le</i>	10	8
<i>Tsene ni ká faa he haa kuma aye gbɔ</i>	2	12
<i>Waa ɛɔɛ flo enyieɛɛ</i>	3	11
<i>Mɔ kome nɔɛ ji wuɔ, shi ebo ke sheɔ maɛ fɛɛ</i>	6	10
<i>Ke obeɛke kaa dani obaanu akɛ ewɔɔɔ</i>	2	15
<i>Keji tso shishi fai le ye hewale le, eshee ahuu ko kwraa gbeyei</i>	2	17

(Source: Field Data, 2020)

Explanation of proverbs on canvas by participants

The table 5 is made of twenty proverbs listed in a column. The number of people who could explain the proverbs and paintings by perceiving the painting representations and the number of people who could not explain the proverbs are represented in first and second columns respectively. From the data above, out of the twenty painted proverbs, majority of the respondent were not able to explained the proverbs used from the study. More than half of the respondents could not vividly explain the proverbs rendered on the canvas. It is therefore important to say that art hold possibility of being used to document proverbs.

4.10 Discussion of General Findings

1. The research proved that even though the use of proverbs by elders, chiefs and other traditional authorities during traditional and cultural practices such as rites for ban on noise making, twin yam festival, homowo, naming ceremonies and funerals were prevalent, the older generation complain about the decline or the degeneration of proverbial language among the youth. What was significantly evident was that some of the respondents especially the youthful population were not in sync with the direct role proverbs play on their economic lives but were equally quick to point to how proverbs have served as a guide to good behaviour. The assertion is further strengthened by some inherent values other claim they learnt from proverbs such as punctuality, chastity, hardworking, patience, obedience, humility, honesty, avoiding greed, selflessness and tolerance. The data again point to how proverbs were used as disciplinary whip used to keep members of the community in check during reconciliatory sessions held to broker peace between feuding parties.

In an interview with Asafoanye of Otuopai, she opined that proverbs had had a great influence on their moral upbringing both in the past and present. She however blamed the unavailability of proverbs in visual forms to aid their understanding just like the adinkra symbols as one of the reasons why the contemporary youth have little affinity to proverb usage in recent times. She added that significantly evident in this present study is the ability of Ga Mashie people teaching morals through proverbs. Almost all the proverbs studied showcase several moral lessons and so will guide and guard the behaviours of the people. It can therefore be inferred here that even though the proverbs cited by people are used to sum up situations, pass judgements, reprimand, recommend course of actions, praise, caution, speak the unspeakable, persuade hearers as well as to assert people's status, the common denominator underlying them is to ensure the moral uprightness of the people.

2. Nuumo Akwaa Mensah, Nae Wulomɔ however pointed to persistence chieftaincy disputes within Ga Mashie has contributed a lot to the inability of the traditional authorities and the people to maintain their rich cultural practices and values one of which is the oral tradition where proverbs are the main elements for transmission. Several years of conflicts within the 'We' leading to divisions and cracks making it difficult for one to believe which of the practices and customs to follow. This is largely because claimants to the stools under disputes tend to undertake their versions of Ga Mashie customs and practices. The use of incantations by especially the *Wulomei*, *Mantsemɛi*, *Manyemɛi* laced with very rich Ga Mashie proverbs is fast fading giving way to inexperience claimants to stools who lacks the oral dexterity to the basic know-how and therefore cannot tutor the young ones who are willing to learn. *Nae Wulomɔ* expressed support over what he sees as the technological revolution, the impact of which Ga Mashie is no exception. It obvious that technology

is gradually taking over the traditional modes of communication in both the verbal and the nonverbal platforms and since everybody is almost always engulfed in his or her mobile devices, it is imperative that the research when completed should be uploaded into some easy-to-access platforms for every member of Ga Mashie to access to enhance their knowledge in the use and understanding of proverbs. The *Korle Wulɔmɔ* however agreed that visual images will benefit all levels of the people within Ga Mashie especially the illiterates. He implores authorities of education to include the visual proverbs in the Ga curriculum at the basic level of education because that is the fertile ground to imbibe in them that aspect of the oral culture of the people of Ga Mashie. Another interesting assertion he made was that parents and the families must play a pivotal role to build a strong moral foundation based on good cultural values.

3. Almost all the paremiologist and the curator interviewed, viewed the research as an important attempt to preserve one of the rich oral traditions of the people of Ga Mashie with regards to cultural heritage which involves activities associated with maintaining library, archival, or museum materials for use, either in their original physical form or in some other format. They stressed the importance of preserving the oral culture cannot be overemphasized: Cultural heritage they agreed affirms their identity as a people because it creates a comprehensive framework for the preservation of cultural heritage including cultural sites, shrines, and landmarks that have cultural significance and historical value. “Preservation by itself is instinctive in human beings. Since the beginning, humans were protecting, repairing and cleaning their own shelter, whether it was a cave or an independent standing structure, although at that time there were no philosophies, theories, rules, regulations or standards” (Miri, 2012). They affirm that the protection, promotion, maintenance and

presentation of their culture in its diversity are an essential requirement for sustainable development for the well being of present and generations yet unborn.

4. Two teachers of Ga language pointed to lack of priority given to cultural studies in the schools. They affirmed that students are not motivated to use the Ghanaian language and practices. This problem has led to the drastic decline of Ghanaian cultural practices and values thus created a loophole for bad foreign practices and influences to penetrate and destroy what used to exist and were cherished.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This chapter includes a summary of the research. Conclusions and recommendations are also included in this chapter.

5.1 Summary

The use of visual symbols has been an integral part of the people of Ga Mashie in Accra, in their cloths for festive occasions, images on canoes and at frontage of clan and family houses, paintings on ‘trotros’, It is therefore an old practice that can be traced to antiquity. These symbols were generated from proverbs and other wise sayings. The history of the lives of the people were also incorporated into these symbols for documentation and memorisation to hide secrets and facts that are open only to members of the community or society and also to transfer history and culture to the younger generation. The people of Ga Mashie, therefore, placed much value in these symbols and so used them in all their activities.

In order to preserve these traditions in our contemporary era, there is the need to frequently create and introduce new and innovative symbols from proverbs, otherwise sayings and the life stories of our people into the system to augment the existing ones as well as to educate and to tell their story to the outside world. The inability of cultural pundits and artist to exhibit their skills in generating new symbols to support the academic and cultural industry is alarming, as a result old symbols are being over utilized and their value is falling to that of the clichés. This observation prompted the researcher to conduct research to help solve the problem. The researcher, in order to accomplish the study, set up four objectives:

1. trace the history of proverbs and its relevance to the morality of Ga Mashie people of Ghana from pre-independence to date
2. develop thirty symbolic images to represent selected Ga Mashie proverbs for easy visual recollection
3. to produce demonstrative images on canvas, and on panel with twenty of the symbolic image for painting
4. evaluate the usefulness of the symbolic images of Ga Mashie proverbs rendered through painting.

At the end of the period, the researcher successfully collected thirty proverbs, discussed their socio-cultural meanings and values. Again the researcher created new symbols from the proverbs collected. The researcher then demonstrated how the painters can also use the symbols to enhance their work and create diversity and creativity in their trade. To this end, the researcher painted twenty of the symbols to on a canvas to be kept in the museum.

5.2 Conclusions

On the basis of the findings in question one, the study proves that it is possible to create new symbols to enhance the understanding of our culture. The study also buttresses the fact that the creation of these new symbols to render support to the existing ones (as at the same time to make these proverbs common to everyday use) will create innovation in our traditional art and craft industry and will also foster creativity in our communities and schools.

Furthermore, the study will serve as a guide to students and artist in the industry to express themselves and to create and use their own symbols from proverbs in order to add to the number of symbols available.

The data from question two of the study supports the view that the use of proverbs among the indigenes has seen significant decline and its affecting the moral upbringing of the people especially the younger generation and would be addressed with the use the proverbial symbols through formal and informal cultural and traditional activities. This is so because the Ga Mashie proverbs provides moral guidance and respected as a spiritual wisdom carrying both overt and covert meaning offering a multitude of understanding and teaching. Proverbs are embedded with songs, poems, novels, epics and stories that transcends all generations. The iconic proverbs would facilitate the transfer the rich cultural and traditional codes of behaviour to the members of the community especially the youth. The shape and form of Ga Mashie proverbs has not significantly change because they connote the meaning even though wording may have changed.

The results from question three provided some supports to the effect that symbols generally, are objects that communicate myriad of ideas to us. Proverbial symbols are a rich source that when utilized would guide and direct people. In fact, it could leave imprints to the cultural lifestyle of the people of Ga Mashie. To give meaning to the principal Chinese adage I hear I forget, I see I remember and I practice I understand, the study created proverbial symbols for easy interpretation and recognition but as a documentary step to protect the already existing proverbs from negative cross cultural activities. The representation of the proverbs into aesthetically pleasing symbols would help shape the visual literacy by increasing their image recall of the iconic proverbs of the people of Ga Mashie.

The representation of the selected proverbs on a canvas using the visual elements and principles for the study would aid for a deeper appreciation and understanding of how traditional artistic methods could help to revive and sustain oral

tradition of the Ga Mashie community. The use of visual artistic methods and practices is in sync with a long held vision of the Ga Mashie and their quest to raise a cultural museum to house the collection of both tangible and intangible art forms of Ga Mashie heritage for preservation and education.

Central to this study was to explore the symbolic and socio-cultural usefulness of the selected images rendered in visual forms relative to question four of the study. Its indicates that visual and demonstrative forms of proverbs form an integral part of cultural reawakening and preservation of the oral art traditions in our contemporary era, there is the need to create and introduce new and innovative images from proverbs, wise sayings and the life stories of our people into the socio-cultural systems of the people to help discover, create, and promote the many aspects of visual literacy and learning with this modern society.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

Traditional authorities must play their role in socialising the youth on the values of the Ga Mashie. Community leaders could organise community base programmes for the youth in the society where the youth are educated on their cultural values. Elders in the society, the family and parents must speak their indigenous language with the youth; furthermore, they must endeavour to teach the youth about oral traditions and for that matter proverb. The society must always use proverbs during traditional practices like marriage, outdoorings and festivals etc., this will allow the youth to hear authentic Ga Mashie proverbs and learn the right values. Again, the youth must be involved in festivals and other activities that will provoke the love for their culture as to cause the youth to acquire and internalise the right values.

The society should also promote proverb usage through films, music, dance and visual arts. Again traditional leaders should spearhead the establishment of community-based radio and tv station with local content relevant to contemporary Ga Mashie society. Aside this, characters in contemporary themes can infuse the cultural values of the society through proverbial quotes that promote the values of our indigenous society rather than relying on that of westerners. In visual arts, themes of work should be based on the cultural values of the society. This will indirectly divert the attention of the youth from value which are not based on our culture.

Local writers must be encouraged by the relevant bodies and institution to document proverbs of the society so that the youth can have access to them. Aside this, writers should incorporate Ga Mashie proverbs and other values into their fictional stories. To add to this, a library stocked with books on the cultural heritage of the society should be established in within the Ga state where the youth can read on the traditions and values of the society.

The Ministry of Education should take a look at the visual arts curriculum in terms of its content on culture. This can be done by re-introducing cultural studies as a core subject at the basic and second cycle educational levels. This subject must constitute a content that cut across the ethnic groupings in Ghana. Apart from this, there should be extra curricula activities like debates and symposiums to preserve and promote the interest of the youth in their cultural heritage as well as study of the Ga Mashie proverbs and other oral traditions of other ethnic groups in Ghana.

Technology abounds in all spheres of the life of the modern Ghanaian. In view of this, it will be easy to take advantage of existing and emerging technologies which the youth love to propagate the use of proverbs. The state through the National

Commission on Culture, traditional institutions, stake holders and experts in technology should collaborate and come out with software applications that aid the preservation, dissemination and use of proverbs as well as other traditional values.

In addition, the project also provides room for Ghanaian artists, historians and students to explore this area of business to create varieties of designs and symbols that tell the story of Ghanaian in particular, and Africa in general with artistic and aesthetic precisions.

The work involved critical observation and careful exploitation of the elements and principles of design.

Suggestions for Further Studies

After achieving the set objectives for the research, the following suggestions are made for consideration for further studies:

- Adopting other form of art such as sculpture in documenting Ga Mashie proverbs
- Documenting key cultural practices of the Ga Mashie with visual art forms.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A



Our Ref: SCA/DME/Vol.11

14th August, 2018

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Dear Sir/Madam,

**INTRODUCTION LETTER - SAMUEL ASIEDU BIMPONG
(81717700018)**

Samuel Asiedu Bimpong is a second year student pursuing Master of Philosophy (Arts & Culture) at the University of Education, Winneba, Graduate School

He is currently writing his thesis on the topic "*Iconic Presentation of Selected Ga Proverbs*" and therefore needs your assistance to enable him acquire the necessary information for his thesis

I am officially introducing him to your organization/institution to provide him with the necessary information and assistance that he might need.

We count very much on your cooperation and understanding in this regard.

Thank you

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emmanuel Obed Acquah".

Emmanuel Obed Acquah
Ag. Head of Department

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. a) What is a proverb?
 - b) What will visual presentation of proverbs contribute to the moral and social upbringing of the people living within the Ga mashie community?
2. To what extent will visual representation of proverbs contribute to the preservation of the culture and tradition within the Ga mashie?
3. a) What are some of the proverbs that can easily be translated into visual symbol to aid in cultural education?
 - b) Could you mention and explain some of them?
4. How relevant will proverbial symbols be to the new social acceptable symbolism craze among the people especially the youth within the Ga Mashie?
5. How will visually represented proverbs help to revive the rich Ga Mashie culture and tradition which seems to be dying?
6. How will the current cosmopolitan status of Ga Mashie embrace proverbs in visual form?
7. What specific uses can we put visually represented proverbs within the Ga Mashie?
8. Describe how proverbs translated into visual forms should appear
9. What features do you expect to see in a visually translated proverbs?
10. What kinds of proverbs can be visually represented to help check the falling lack of cultural literacy among the people of Ga Mashie?
11. What cultural impact can proverbs in visual form have in the lives of the people of Ga Mashie?
12. How do you think such works of art can be preserved for both formal and informal education?

APPENDIX C

OBSERVATIONAL CHECK LIST

Observation in philosophical terms is the process of filtering sensory information through the thought process. Input is received by hearing, sight, smell, taste, or touch and then analysed and interpreted

The researcher will observe the use of proverbs and symbols of different kinds at various occasions including:

1. Observe and study the philosophy behind the origin and use of proverbs among the people of Ga Mashie in interviews with traditional authorities
2. Participate in the Twin Yam festival preceding the Homowo festival
3. Attend weekly rites and traditional ceremonies at some clan houses
4. Observe rites performed before, during and after the ban on noise making within the Ga Mashie.
5. Witness the Homowo festival of the Ga mashie traditional area in order to learn more of the tradition and the appropriate use of proverbs in such situation.
6. Observe and listen to songs laced with proverbs and sang by fisher folks when mending, casting and pulling their net from the sea
7. Observe competitors during a traditional quiz competitions among the various houses at Mantse Agbonaa while they compete on proverbs and a number of these proverbs will be recorded, analysed and used.
8. Observe, record and analyse proverbs that will be used at initiation ceremonies and rites of new fetish priests and priestesses.
9. Attend traditional naming ceremonies within the Ga Mashie to observe and record customary proceedings
10. Observe the rituals, incantations, recitations during the rites of passage
11. Attend local churches to observe and listen to church sermons delivered in Ga language
12. Observe and record incantation during libation at various houses within Ga mashie