

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**MOBILE TECHNOLOGY AND AKAN PROVERBS:  
MORAL RELEVANCE IN MODERN GHANAIAN SOCIETY**



**HARRIET AKOSUA AMENEY**

**JULY, 2015**

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A Dissertation / Thesis in the Department of Art, School of Creative Art, submitted to the school of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Master of Philosophy in Art and Culture Degree.

**JULY, 2015**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

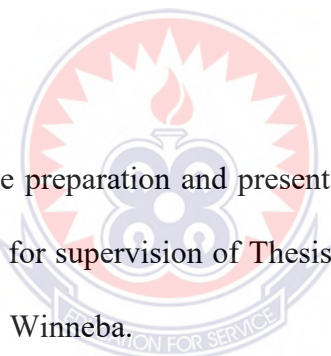
I, Harriet Akosua Amenity declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Supervisor's 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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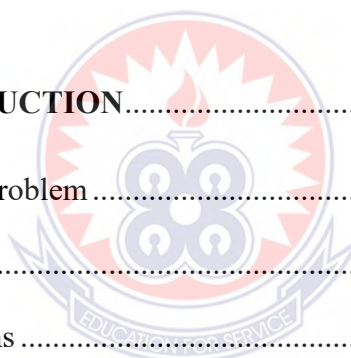
## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my husband Mr. Charles Nana Kwamena Dawson Hinson.



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## ABSTRACT

Akans pride themselves as one of the great custodians of tradition among ethnic groups in Ghana. However recent trends among the younger generation indicate that there is a gradual shift from this age old assumption. A critical look at the behaviour of the youth of the Akan show that they are not in tune with the values of the Akan. Hitherto there were oral traditions of which one was proverbs that steered the youth in the right direction. In recent times proverbs have lost its place in the moral foundation of the Akan youth because they barely know the proverbs. This study aims at making Akan proverbs relevant in the moral education of contemporary Akan youth via the use of mobile technology named Sankofa Abɛbuo. It sought to assemble twenty Akan proverbs on mobile application software to make proverbs readily available to the youth. In doing this, qualitative research instrument such as interviews and questionnaire were used in data collection. However, the descriptive and thematic analysis techniques were used for analysis of data obtained from questionnaires and interviews. The study revealed that proverbs, one of the bedrock of morality, has lost its place in the lives of the youth and will gradually lose its place among Akans with the passage of time. The study also noted that traditional institutions of socialization of the youth on the cultural ideal have given up on their duty, giving way to western values propagated mostly by formal education, media and technology. The implication of this is a social climate where the youth are alienated from their culture and live by an adopted culture that is seen by the society as a deviation from the norm. Therefore, this research recommends that the society should take advantage of the youth's affinity to the media, technology and formal education and channel proverbs to them to reinforce socially accepted behaviour.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

The training of a child according Akan traditions is a shared responsibility of the society and the immediate family. Good behaviour earns the family a good name and honour. In view of this, members of the society strive to live in accordance with conventional practices and behaviour that exude morality. These conventional behaviour however, are not to be compromised. In view of this, stringent measures are put in place to ensure that individuals live with a certain level of discipline.

Proverbs are one of such measures that ensure right behaviour in any communal set up in the Akan society. Proverbs are one of the repositories of morality that stem from deeply rooted philosophical construct and experience embedded in the rich cultural heritage of the society. They express the depth of the Ghanaian outlook on life and are handed down from generation to generation as a way of ensuring a continuation of the bond between the past, present and the future. Proverbs are inspired by the observation of social practices, events and lives of people and how they interact with each other. Aside these, the characteristics of nature and how they relate with each other and their relationship to the attitude of people also inspire proverbs.

Morality to the Akan, embodies a distinction between good and evil, hence, everything that is considered acceptable constitutes good moral while a deviation from the norm is seen to be evil or immoral. In societies around the world, conventions that guide social behaviour emanate from the culture of the people. This implies that, what constitute morality is relative with respect to culture and are adhered to collectively by the members of the community. Although individuals do not lose their rights to do as they please, 'right' behaviour ensures

the collective growth of the society, therefore, their ability to live within a certain remit of the norm is generally accepted.

In pre-independent Ghana, there existed a communal social system of living which reinforced social norms. The people collectively served as the eye of the society and custodians of morality. The young learnt from the examples and wise sayings of the old and were constantly checked by relations and the society. The result was a social climate where everyone was under constant scrutiny regardless of the absence of parents or guardian. This created a society devoid of persistent crime and indiscipline that the modern Ghanaian society is bedevilled with.

In recent times, the close knitted communal system of living has given way to highly individualized relationships in the society. The principles that guided family relationship have changed. This is a source of constant threat to the moral development of the basic unit of the society. The face to face personal interactions between parents and children which was previously the norm in schooling the young on the conventions of the society have gradually given way to the use of technology driven interaction. Parents make up for their absence in the homes with the most sophisticated communication gadgets to aid interaction. While this attempt ensure some level communication, the child is left to make decisions that come with daily living with little or no supervision. Effective communication has become increasingly difficult in families mainly because of the absence of the parents or guardians and to a large extent the community. This creates the situation where parents miss out on the training and shaping of the behaviour of the children in the right direction. Another dangerous situation created by the gap in communication is that, the gadgets which are meant to facilitate communication themselves expose these youth to values and ethics which we consider to be immoral per the cultural ethics of the society.



The current social setting of the Ghanaian puts premium on the use of the English language. Sophistication, respect and intelligence are ascribed to people who are able to speak English language fluently, in view of this; people favour the English language over the indigenous language forgetting that our indigenous languages gives us our identity. Thiong'o in Moon (n.d.:4) sums the dangers of this phenomenon best when he states' "Language as communication and as culture are then products of each other. Communication creates culture: culture is a means of communication. Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature [oral literature] and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world''. This then means our preference for languages other than our own is a destruction of who we are, our values, principles and the virtues by which we can be identified as a people.

The Ghanaian has become a culturally hybrid individual in the sense that the societies outlook on life has gradually shifted from indigenous to a blend of global ideals. It is typical of a modern Ghanaian to adopt western values, ethics as well as standards in the home since they are considered more prestigious. The society has been so encultured that the indigenous way of life has been taken over by western values in most Ghanaian homes: The Akan outlook on life is in consonance with this current trend. Perhaps, whiles we blame colonialism, migration, technology, work pressure and education as the fundamental causes of this phenomenon, we must ask ourselves whether there is enough justification to sacrifices our identity and the ideals that make us who we are in our pursuit of what we consider prestigious. Again we must purse to analyse whether the benefits of neglecting our cultural values outweigh the long term effects it will have on the future leaders. The youth of today are the future leaders of tomorrow, hence society should bequeath to them principles that have deeply rooted foundation in our cultural heritage for we are defined by our cultural values.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

“Din pa ye sene ahonya” means good name is better than riches. This Akan proverb echoes the importance of good morals (suban pa) to the Akan society. The Akan, believes that no one is born with evil or good tendencies, hence good or bad morals are acquired by individuals as a result of the environment they are exposed to. However, the values, virtue, beliefs and practices that make up good morals are enshrined in the oral traditions of which proverbs remain a strong pillar. In view of this, proverbs in the form of moral narratives are employed to help the young to acquire and internalize the moral values and virtues embedded in the culture of the society. These proverbs are meant to constantly draw the attention of the society to live right by adopting appropriate behaviour based on the accepted norms of the society.

Unfortunately, the contemporary Akan youth has little or no knowledge of proverbs because they are barely used in the society. This has led to a situation where proverbs as well as the values inherent in them are gradually fading away from the society. Consequently, the contemporary youth have minimal or no idea about Akan moral values. Proverbs are no more functional in most Ghanaian societies and for that matter Akan home. This is because there is a disconnection between the indigenous Akan and his/her traditional concepts in the face of modernism. The society is no more involved in the training of the child. Parents on the other hand hardly spend time with their children leaving them to do as they please. The indigenous languages that contain the rich oral traditions have been adulterated with English language which has now become a language of interaction in homes.

The face to face interaction that exists in homes is gradually being taken over by the electronic media (social media) such as face book, whatsapp, mobile phones and so on. Another trend of this era is the attachment of the youth to the screens (television, internet, video etc); thus the youth are highly influenced by virtual images on the screens. Whilst this trend has numerous benefits to one’s personal growth and development; it exposes individuals

to values and concept which are considered immoral in our society. Evidence from news papers, journals, articles and the mass media prove the fact that there is a downward trend in the moral standard of the youth of Ghana of which the Akan society is a part. The news of rape, robbery, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, assault among others, covers the front pages of various news papers on daily bases.

This situation should not persist without intervention, because if it does the Akan society will lose its cultural heritage that is meant to strengthen the moral foundation of its people, hence the need to present proverbs to the youth on a platform that will facilitate its use.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The researcher conducted the research under the following objectives:

1. To chronicle the relevance of proverbs on the morality of Akans in the past.
2. To Assess some factors that influence the moral development of the modern day Akan youth
3. To explore the extent to which the integration of mobile technology can promote the use of proverbs among the Akan youth.
4. To produce a mobile application technology (Sankofa Abebuo) to facilitate proverb usage.

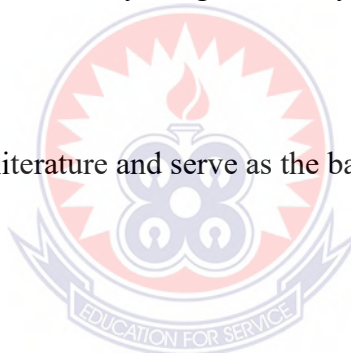
### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What is the relevance of Akan proverbs to the moral development of the Akan youth?
2. What are some major factors that influence the moral development of the modern Akan youth?

3. To what extent will mobile technology aid the use of proverbs in the Akan society?
4. Will the mobile application (Sankofa Abebuo) facilitate the use of proverbs among the Akan youth?

### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

- The study is significant in the sense that it will help in tracing the anthropological background, philosophies, wisdom and the context within which proverbs emanated as well as give in-depth information on how proverbs guided social behavior of Ghanaians in the past.
- The study will help the society to guide the youth with traditional ethical values enshrined in proverbs.
- It will add to existing literature and serve as the basis for conducting further studies.



### **1.6 Delimitation**

The study was confined to Akan proverbs as a tool for instilling morality as well as explores mobile technology as the channel for promoting the use of proverbs among Akan youth. The research was carried out among Akans in central and Ashanti regions.

### **1.7 Importance of the Study**

- People will have better knowledge about historical facts about the Akans of Ghana over the centuries. It will also inform the public on the rich oral traditions of the Akan and their relevance to moral development and character formation of the youth.

- The research will be beneficial to people who are conscious about the sustenance of our cultural values, ethics and beliefs through appropriate moral behaviour among the youth thereby preserving and promoting our dying rich oral traditions (proverbs).
- It will enrich the knowledge of scholars of African art and culture, anthropologist and ethnographers about Akan proverbs as catalyst for moral development.
- The outcome will serve as a guideline for the preservation of oral tradition (more specifically proverbs) of other ethnic groups and societies within Ghana and Africa.

## 1.8 Definition of Terms

**Adulterated language:** the inclusion of foreign language into the indigenous Ghanaian languages in communication in Ghanaian homes.

**Cultural hybrid:** the blending of external cultural ideals with local or traditional cultures almost in equal blends as expressed in moral outlook of the youth.

**Morality:** a social rule that raises the question about good or bad behaviour of individuals through collective decisions taken within a homogeneous society.

**Convention:** a set of stipulated or generally accepted standards, or social norms or criteria often taken from the culture of the people.

**Communal living:** a community of persons or families pursuing common interest or concentrating on certain basic values.

**Youth:** young people within the age of fifteen to thirty-five.

**Electronic media:** Broadcast or storage media that take advantage of electronic technology. They may include television, radio, Internet, fax, CD-ROMs, DVD, and any other medium that requires electricity or digital encoding of information.

## 1.9 Abbreviations

**DVD:** Digital Versatile Disk

**SMS:** Short Message Service

**CD:** Compact Disk

**iOS:** Apple Operating Systems

**SDK:** Software Development Kits

**SSD:** Solid State Device

**GPS:** Global Positioning System

**WAP:** Wireless Application Protocol

**1G:** First Generation

**2G:** Second Generation

**3G:** Third Generation



### **1.10 Facilities available**

- UEW Library(Osagyfo library)
- KNUST Libraries (Kumasi)
- Centre for National Culture (Kumasi)
- Museums (Accra and Kumasi)
- Chieftaincy Institutions (Mankessim and Kumasi)

### **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

According to Akan ethics, the moral principles of a society are enshrined in the ideas and beliefs about what is right or wrong, what is a good or bad character; it is also implanted in the conceptions of satisfactory social relations and attitudes held by the members of the society; it is embedded, furthermore, in the forms or patterns of behaviour that are considered by the members of the society to bring about social harmony and cooperative living, justice, and fairness. Thus the attitude, sentiments motives, intentions and moral dispositions of an individual are determined by the membership in a community. These ideas and beliefs about moral conduct are articulated, analyzed, and interpreted by the moral thinkers of society through practices and oral traditions of which proverb is a part. This view is better expressed by Berger and Luckman cited by Moon (n.d., pg 3) when they state that “‘humans construct society and then society constructs human. They further explain that as the society constructs reality, proverbs help form the sum total of what everybody knows about a social world via an assemblage of maxims, morals, proverbial nuggets of wisdom, values and beliefs, myths, etc. Proverbs then are an important symbol system to help construct and maintain the culture’s view of reality’”. Culture is however is dynamic but the core values does not change. In this vein proverbs can be seen a cultural relic which contemporary society cannot dispense with because in doing so the values of the people will be lost. The words of Ruskin (1849) a

preservation theorist, resonates this opinion best. He believed that nothing from the present should disturb the remnants of the past. In this vein, trends and technologies of contemporary society should rather help preserve our cultural heritage and not to destroy it. This study is therefore based on the philosophy of the community shaping the morals individuals by preserving proverbs an aspect of oral traditions which have their foundation in the cultural heritage of the people. Hence the research seeks to promote the use of proverbs with mobile technology to help train the youth in accordance with the code of conduct of the society.

### **1.12 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, definition of terms, importance of the study, facilities available, theoretical frame work and organization of text. Chapter Two covers the literature review which deals with theories of various authors in connection with morality, proverbs and mobile technology. Areas discussed under this section are; the anthropology of the Akan ; definition of proverbs; origin/creation of proverbs; nature of Akan proverbs, classification of proverbs; significance of Akan proverbs in moral development; definition of morality; nature of Akan morality; and mobile technology. 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 valid data have been assembled, discussed, analyzed. Chapter Five deal with the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

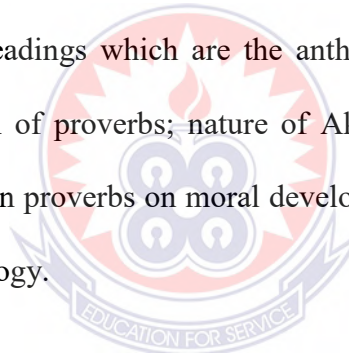


## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Overview

This review shows the degree of work carried out by scholars in the field of the phenomenon being researched. Significant amount of work has been done by scholars in the area of morality, proverbs and mobile technology. The researcher dealt with literature relevant to the study under theories available on the topic; in doing this, the researcher relied on data from books, articles, journals, archival documents, internet sources and other research material that are related to the phenomenon. Data by both Western and African researchers who have done some work relevant to the study were used. Review of related literature in this study is worked in to sub-headings which are the anthropology of the Akan; definition of proverbs; origin and creation of proverbs; nature of Akan proverbs; classification of Akan proverbs; significance of Akan proverbs on moral development; definition of morality; nature of Akan morality and technology.



#### 2.2 Anthropology of the Akan

Akans are one of the ethnic groups in Ghana and part of Ivory Coast. They are a multi-lingual group united by similarity in language, customs and traditional, practices relating to occupation, festivals and other social activities like the rites of passage such as birth, puberty, marriage and death. Aside these, their system of governance, religious beliefs and ideals show that they are a group with a common identity. Danquah cited by Kyeremanteng (2010, pg 26) described the Akan as “nice refined and well mannered man: a civilized or cultured person”. Kyeremanteng (2010, pg 26) notes that “the word Akan can be interpreted as first or foremost to imply that the Akans were the first settlers (aborigines) of Ghana”. The Akans constitute

the Asante (Ashanti), the Fante, the Akwamu, the Akyem (Akim), Akwapem, Kwawu (Kwahu), Assin, the Denkyira, the Brong, the Aowin, the Ahanta, the Anyi, the Baoule, the Chokosi, the Ahafo, Evalue, the Wassa, the Adjukru, the Alladian, the Attie, the Nzema, the Abbe , Nzema, Ahanta, Sehwi (Sefwi) and other Twi-speaking peoples in Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Akans form about two-thirds of the population of Ghana and occupy most of the central and part of the coastal belt-south of the country with slight portions extending into the western part of the Volta Region.

Kyeremanteng describes the Akans as the largest ethnic group in Ghana who constitute 49.1% of the total population and inhabits about two - thirds of the land space. He further identified groups who constitute them as the Adanse, Asante, Akwuapim, Akwamu, Akyem, Assin, Bono, Dankyira, Fante, Gomoa, Kwahu, Sefwi, Twifu and Wassa. However, Kyremanteng noted that the Aowin and Nzema are considered Akans due to their current cultural practices. He calls them half-baked Akans. Briggs (1998,pg 12) compliment the aspect that show the Akans as the largest ethnic group when he described the Akans as people who comprise more than half of the Ghanaian population and inhabits five of its ten administrative regions namely central, western, eastern, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo.

According to Yankah (1989) the designation Akan refers to a wide variety of ethnic groups occupying a greater part of southern Ghana. The groups are culturally and linguistically homogeneous and may be sub grouped as Asante, Fante, Akwapem, bono, Wassa, Agona, Denkyra, Assin, Adanse etc. He further adds that even though each group speaks a separate dialect, and may have subtle variations in cultural practices the mutually intelligibility of their dialects and fundamental uniformity of their cultural norms are beyond doubt.

### 2.3 Origin of the Akans

There are numerous opinions on the origin of the Akans, but most writers are of the view that, they originated from the Northern part of Ghana. Kyeremanten, Meyerowitz and Danquah are among the writers who are of the view that, the Akans migrated from the Sahel to the coastal West Africa.

Dzramedo (2009) Cites Danquah (1988) who traced the origin of the Akans from the old kingdom of Ghana (near present Timbuktu) on the bend of the Niger in A.D. 1076, but stated that, the people initially came from countries beyond Western Sudan near Taurus Mountains. He based his view on the similarity in languages and customs. Danquah throws more light on this assertion in a radio talk on March 7, 1957 cited by Kyeremanteng (2010, 22). Here, Danquah points out that the Akans as well as the Ewes, Ga, Gonja and Bantu are part of the Turannian people of Sumer and Akkad, and that their culture was Turanian. He goes on to say that the migration of the people of Ghana to Africa took place before 750 BC and that they settled first at a place south of Libya where their name was Akane but they left the place as a result of the Assyrian conquest of Egypt in 650 BC and moved across the Sahara and established a kingdom between the Niger and south-western Sahara in about 500 BC which the Arabs named Ghana, a Semitic rendering of Akane. However, Ghana was conquered by the Almoravids in 1076 and the Akans and other Negroes moved south again to "the golden land" between the Comoe and Volta river. From there they moved south in different waves. The first wave were the Nta people, the second were the Fante and the third the Asante, Dankyira, etc, Kyeremanteng (2010, pg 21) quotes Eva Meyerowitz's opinion on the origin of the Akan as "Akan culture was not Negro-African in origin but could be classed on the whole, as Libyo-Phoenician or Carthaginian, a civilization which owed almost everything to the near East and Egypt. Kyeremanteng further give Eva's conclusion as " the ancestors of present Akan aristocracy were descendants of the Dia or Za (originally from Abyssinia or southern Arabia). Libyan Berbers and Gara (originally of Kushite stock)

of the oasis of Djado in the Tibesti region who migrated when the Arabs conquered North Africa and founded the Dia kingdom on the Niger between Djenne and Timbuctoo. From this kingdom part of them conquered and ruled ancient Ghana while the rest of them moved south after Dia was conquered by the Islamised Berbers in 1009-1010 and founded the Bono and Kumbi, both kingdoms which were later destroyed, and from Bono migrated the Fante, the Awafo and the Afutu while from the latter emerged the Akan groups of today.

These views are however not shared by most traditional accounts about the origin of the Akan. In most cases, oral traditional accounts are either shrouded in superstition or myths. The accounts however differ from one sub-group to another, for instance while some believe that the Akans emerged from a hole in the ground, others say they emerged from the sky in an object like a bell. Briggs (1998, pg 12) gives a hint of this view when he states that, “superficially, oral traditions relating to the origin of the Akan vary greatly from one society to another, but in essence they tend to run along one of two basic themes: a migration from somewhere further north, or a sudden emergence from the sky or hole in the ground or somewhere equally improbable” however he concedes that there appears to be a reasonable degree of consensus among historians that the Akans migrated to modern day Ghana from the Sahel.

While the Akans are believed to be a group which is made up of diverse sub-groupings yet culturally homogeneous, their migration into their present locations may probably be due to invasions, wars and molestation from other ethnic groups and the quest for fertile lands as well as expansion of territory. However, there seems to be a general consensus among scholars that they migrated from the north into the south of present day Ghana and that though they are separated by the boundaries they are united by their mutually intelligible languages, beliefs and cultural practices.

## **2.4 Topography and Economic Activities of the Akans**

According to Yankah (1989) the Akans occupy several vegetative zones. Along the Fante coast, there are coastal shrubs and grassland and occasionally mangrove vegetation. In the south-west corner is a tropical rain forest with rainfall averaging 86 inches annually. He concludes that most Akans live in semi moist deciduous forest. Dzramedo (2009) describe the area occupied by the Akans as an area covered with hills and mountains and valleys which abound with subtropical forest of hard wood with small water bodies. He goes on to identify some tree species in the forest as Wawa, mahogany, sapele and odum among others.

The Akans are known to occupy the coastal and forest zones of Ghana. In view of this, the Akans are mainly into fishing and farming. Aside these, there are some groups who are into textile, Hunting, wood carving and other crafts, mineral mining and livestock rearing. Yankah (1989) describes the economic activities of the Akan as one which is primarily based on hoe agriculture. He further cites cocoa, yam, cocoyam, maize, cassava, groundnut, pepper, tomatoes and the egg plant as the main crops cultivated. Aside these crops, he mentioned goats, sheep, chickens, dogs and cats as animals which are raised.

## **2.5 Meaning of proverbs**

Eminescu (1989) referred to proverbs as exquisite flowers of human reason, jewels of thought, Muntean (1969) spoke of them as being the wealth and wisdom of mankind. Homer (see Muntean (1969) and Tudor (1971) referred to them as *epea pteroenta*: meaning words with wings, Bradeanu (2007, pg 22). Cato the Elder, Plutarch, Quintilian, Julius Caesar referred to proverbs as *adagium*, meaning worthy to be taken into consideration, to be memorised, Bradeanu (2007, pg 23). The Yoruba of Nigeria defines proverbs as a horse which can carry one swiftly to the discovery of ideas. Moon (n.d.) in his attempt at giving the meaning of proverbs, tells a story of a young man discouraged at a river bank because he

could not swim across to the other side. An elderly man walked up and rolled up his pants and walked across the river to the other side. Two elderly men crossed the river in the same manner. The young man then rolled up his pants and tried to walk across the river only to sink and be carried away by the swift current. The three elderly men looked back and said if only he had asked we would have told him where the stones were placed across the river safely. To him, proverbs are time tested stepping stone that reveal the soul of oral cultures this, he further explained as deep symbols within a culture that reveal the world view of the people; it provide a key to the thinking, reasoning and value patterns of people. This implies that proverbs are statements that stem out of the depths of the cultural ideals, philosophies, values, ethics, beliefs and social practices that has been proven to be worthy through the ages. Olatunji (1984) in Fayemi (2008,pg 3) corroborates this view when he opines proverb as “an inheritance from elders that might have experienced various things”. Nwoga (1981) in Asika (2012:15), Umeasiegbu (1986) in Ihueze (2011,pg 24), Opoku (1997) and Addo (2001) in Amate(2011,pg 19) have similar ideas when it comes to the meaning of proverbs. Their ideas seem to be centred on proverbs being statements borne out of the wisdom of tradition, ancestors or philosophies of the people. To throw more light on this line of thought, Obiechina (1975) in Ndubisi (2012, pg 13) explains it best when he explain proverbs as the kernel “which contains the wisdom of traditional people”. He further explain it as “philosophical and moral expositions shrunk to a few words and they form a mnemonic device in societies in which everything worth knowing and relevant to the day- to- day life has to be committed to memory”. Whiting (1932) in Fayemi (2008, pg 4), defines proverbs as a “short saying of philosophical nature, of great antiquity, the product of the masses rather than of the classes, constantly applicable and appealing because it bears a semblance of the universal truth”. Oladele (2006) in Fayemi (2008, pg 4) defines proverbs as “cultural relics preserved amid countless destructions by reason of brevity, laconic and in-depth meaning. Proverbs, which are pithy sayings, are popular devices usually used to state metaphorically, certain

general truths about life''. Onuekwuso in Asika (2012, pg 16) gives further clarity to Oladele's definition when he explains proverbs as philosophical, allusive and metaphorical citation that give credence to traditional truth and wisdom. He adds that it is philosophical because it stems out of a long period of experience, reasoning and observation which express timeless truths. Its allusive and metaphorical nature is attributable to the fact that it is a truth outside itself and can be applied to different scenarios.

Although there seems difference in the wording of the definitions by the scholars in their attempt at defining proverbs, there is consensus on some major elements that run through most of the definitions given by the writers. These elements are that proverbs stem out of the philosophies, values, and wisdom that express the truth about life in any human set up. Mieder (1985) corroborates this view when he opines that what most scholars of proverb would agree upon in determining what sentence qualifies as a proverb is the fact that a Proverbial statement can be identified on the basis of a good dose of common sense, experience, wisdom, and above all, truth. To add to this the reference to proverbs as cultural relic by Oladele, traditional truths by Onuekwuso or wisdom of traditional people by Nwoga, Obiechina, Opoku and Addo is in order because tradition is synonymous to culture and culture itself is the people. At any given time whether a society is contemporary or indigenous man is a cultural being and therefore creates proverbs from the existing culture or tradition. Conversely, the contention in the definitions seems to bother on the views expressed by Oladele, Whiting, Nwoga and Addo that proverb are 'short/pithy/terse statements'. While it may be true in certain cultures there is an element of relativity. In this sense one would ask how short is short among different cultures? In the words of Fayemi it will be a conceptual error and indeed, fallacy of composition to conclude that proverbs in general are short. It is indeed an error in practicality to assume that proverbs in general are short. Among the Akans, proverbs are not necessarily short and where they appear to be short; there are always unstated undertones or storey that goes with the proverbs. This provokes deeper thoughts and meaning



and makes it applicable to a wide range of scenarios. For instance the proverb ‘ Wowe εfoo nsa a, na woahwe wo deε’ meaning as you eat the hand of the monkey, observe yours may be seen on the surface as short however its philosophical context may vary from one context to another. The monkey’s hand resembles that of the human being, so as one eats it, one must be reminded it is similar to theirs. As we maltreat a fellow human being we must be reminded that they are just like us. Similarly, the proverb; ‘tume te se kosua’ meaning power is like an egg can be philosophically interpreted as ‘power is fragile like an egg, when held on too tightly it break, when held loosely it will fall and break therefore it must be handled with care. A deeper meaning expresses the authority of people in leadership positions and how they should wield the power given them by the people with care. To this end one can say that proverbs are not necessarily short in nature, and even where they appear to be short, they carry in-depth messages meant to be understood by the listener.

To this end the working definition of proverbs for this work is ‘a proverb is a well crafted speech which is an embodiment of generally recognized truth about life which emanate from the norms, beliefs, values, practices and philosophies of a society’ this however is meant to guide social behaviour of a group of people.

## **2.6 Origin of Proverbs**

Proverbs have been known to be part of the language of human cultures through the ages and are handed down verbally from generation to generation to ensure its continual existence. To this end, one can safely conclude that, proverbs have been in existence since man began to speak and live in organised social systems. Fayemi (2008,pg 7) echoes this best, with the assertion that: “Proverbs have their origin in oral tradition. They existed before written culture. Because of this, they are generally worded or couched in such a way as to be remembered easily. They floated down from age on the lips of successive generations”



Cezar (1982) cited by Bradeanu (2007,pg 22) gives a brief historical account of the origin of proverbs in human culture. According to him, “the oldest proofs of their existence have been found in some Asyro-Babylonian texts from the 4th millennium BC, which contain entire collections of proverbs. The 3rd millennium Egyptian texts also abound with proverbs, maxims, aphorisms. Another important source for a great number of proverbs is represented by the Bible, especially by two of its books: Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, which consist primarily in maxims about the practical, intelligent way to conduct one’s life. Psalms and other books from the Bible also contain Pieces of advice, similar to those given in proverbs. The Bible remains a Reference point in the history of proverbs, although people no longer recognise the connection to the Bible of many of the most common proverbs, while others have been modified in time. The philosophic and mythological literature of the North of India, cultural centre of the world, also abounded in aphorisms, especially between 1000 and 600 BC. It has been noticed that the Indian gnomic poetry was particularly skilful, as in no other part of the world. In Europe, the Greek culture was the first to have a tradition of proverbs and maxims, which had a great circulation. They belonged to such writers as Homer, Hesiod, Socrates, Solon, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, but there are also some that have uncertain origin. From Greece, they spread all around the world. Even the term proverb comes from the Greek word *paroimia*”. This account only made reference to Egypt with regards to Africa. However it is conspicuously silent on the rest of Africa and their perspective and therefore cannot be taken as the true picture of the origin of proverbs.

Scholars of the oral traditions of African cultures do not ascribe the origin of proverbs to any peculiar group of people or era. The general impression given, through oral and written historical account by traditional and academic scholars respectively, points to the fact that, proverbs belong to a group of oral arts which emanate from the culture of a homogeneous society. To this end, proverbs are seen as part of most human existence and are created for the people by the people. They represent the collective thoughts, principles, ideals, experiences,

values and beliefs of the society. This they regard as an unwritten code of conduct which guides behaviours on culture, politics, economy, values tradition etc. The Akans generally ascribe proverb origin to the ancestors and elders who are believed to have been endowed with a rich well of wisdom and experience. Kyeremanteng (2010,pg 28) is of the view that, “proverbs reveal the insight of the aged and what they would do in certain situations”.

## 2.7 Creation of Proverbs/Proverb Authorship

Could it be that the citing of the elders and ancestor before a proverb statement has helped in eliminating the identity of the true composers of proverbs in African cultures and for that matter the Akan society? Or perhaps the often cited reference to proverbs by Lord Russell “the wisdom of many and the wit of one” is really how the African society perceives proverbs, that the authorship of proverbs rely on the collective wisdom of the society and therefore do not take ascribing authorship of proverb to an individual seriously. Most scholars of African culture are either silent when it comes to the authorship of proverbs or attribute its existence to the elders or ancestors. Some express uncertainty while others believe they are statements with no known author; however, they are statements which have been in oral circulation through the ages.

Yankah (1994, pg 2) posits that in scholarship of orally expressed proverbs, uncertainty about proverb composers is even more evident owing to the evanescence of verbal art. He further cites Archer Taylor when he states: “the search for a proverb inventor even in written lore is often an idle task”. To answer the question as to whether proverb have authors or not, Mieder (2004) is of the view that proverbs like riddles, jokes or fairy tales do not fall from the sky and neither are they products of a mythical soul of the folk. He believes that they are always coined by an individual either intentionally or unintentionally. While this assumption by Mieder is true, the structure of proverbs in the Akan society is such that the

identity of the composer is superposed with that of the ancestors/elders/nananom. Therefore, the masses do not get to know the true composer. Typically, the Akan society often prefix proverbial statements with any of the following ‘mpanyinfo bu be se’ or ‘nananom bu be se’: the elders have a proverb that says. the ancestors say’. Consequently, the names of the persons who created the proverbs are not heard. This however does not erase the fact that “each proverb was coined just once in a given locality at a given time by one mind with some gnomic talent” Krappe in Yankah (1989, pg 2). Archer Taylor’s view in Yankah (1989,pg 2) is in consonance with Krappe. To him, “every proverb has been created by an individual and set in circulation by him”

Yankah (1994) however is of the view that though the ancestors and elders are predominantly acknowledged as the authors of proverbs, individuals are equally acknowledged as authors. Yankah gives three ways authors of proverbs in Africa have been known to be acknowledged as:1) the general ascription to the realm of the ancestry or elderhood by the speaker:2) instances of wellersim, whereby proverb authorship or utterance is attributed to animal, plant or an imaginary human entity and 3) where specific individuals are named as proverb authors . The Akans have a very interesting way of ascribing proverb authorship to individuals. According to Yankah (1994), an individual who formulates a proverb in the Akan society, creates a visual icon using an object from the environment. He or she then registers the proverb with a proverb custodian who then adds it to his collection at a fee, and then take the author through an interview where his or her personal information and the situation that triggered the proverb are given. The custodian then makes a public performance out of the icon of the proverb in which the public is educated on the lessons drawn from the proverb. He further gives the formula for ascribing authors of proverbs in Akan society as“.....na obuu ne be se; it’s.....who spoke his proverb that” (eg. Its AA who spoke her proverb: the wretched sponge is picked up in needy times) or its Akosua Ameney who spoke her proverb: the sea is salty but does not produce salted fish.

Do we therefore accept any statement as proverbial? Archer Taylor in Yankah (1994, pg 2) believes that “a man’s aphorism or witty saying does not become a proverb until it has been accepted by popular tradition”. This view expressed by Archer Taylor can be seen as a measure for distinguishing between what truly is a proverbial statement and what is not in order not to confuse adages/clichés/maxims as proverbs. Firth in Yankah (1994) gives insightful information on the process of proverb formulation. He discusses this in three processes: 1) concrete formulation by an individual; 2) acceptance by the people at large as being appropriate to more general situation; 3) possible modification of phraseology or meaning with passing of time. Firth’s stages of proverb formation indicate that for a statement to be accepted as a proverb, it must be created by a person, passed on to others in the society and be accepted by the masses. Again it should be able to withstand the test of time and be able to apply to different situations.

Critical analyses of Firth’s formulation process however, reveal the evanescent nature of verbal art which Yankah talked about. Yankah’s explanation implies that as a proverb moves from the composer to the masses, the original inventor loses control over his or her creation. There may be additions and deductions as it moves from person to person and with time the name of the composer gradually fades out. The name of the wise person, who coined the saying, would in time be forgotten, while the opinion, the metaphor, or the expression, remained consecrated into a proverb. This sentiment is shared by Mieder (2004) who is of the opinion that with verbal folklore in general the original statement might well be varied a bit as it gets picked up and becomes even more anonymous. This in essence shows that there are proverb authors in Africa and for that matter among the Akans. However because they are not documented the names of the authors fade out as they are passed on by word of the mouth through the ages. Again because it is acceptable for people to add and take away from the proverb in the society, at a point in time the original proverb would have evolved into another statement other than what was originally created by the author who might not be

necessarily attributed to the creation of the proverb. This is probably why most proverbs seem not to have authors in African cultures.

## 2.8 Nature of Akan Proverbs

According to oral traditions of the Akan, proverbs (abɛɛbuo/ abɛɛbusɛm/ mmeɛbusɛm) embody the general principles, philosophies, ideals, wisdom and experiences of the society and are handed down from generation to generation. Fayemi also believes that Proverbs are passed down from generation to generation. Sometimes, their specific meanings, change in form as a matter of historical exigencies. he is also of the view that Proverbs are not a priori determined. Rather, they are based on human observations and experiences with the things of nature: human beings, animals, nature itself and the spirit world. Proverbs, relate mostly to abstract issues (death, laziness, envy, love, power, wealth, poverty, strength, weakness, mood, intelligence, etc) that constitute the foundations of the people's mindset.

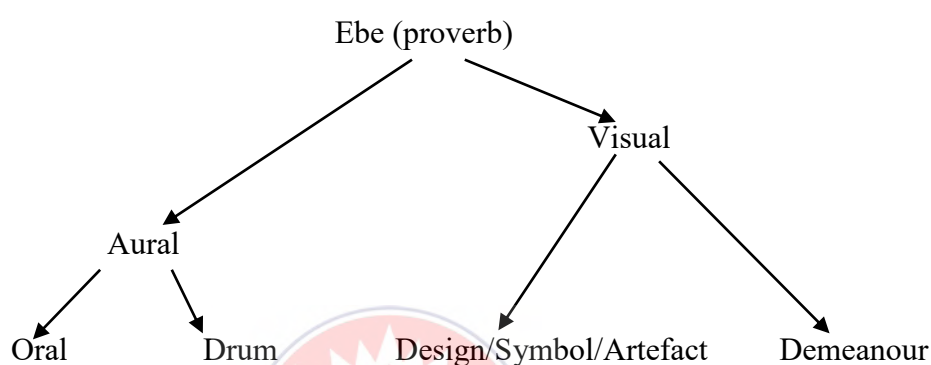
Almost all proverbial sayings in the Akan society show the keen observations that the ancestors made of people, animals and nature. For instance, the Akan proverbs, "Akoko a oben oni no owe abebe sre; A chick that stands by its mother gets the thigh of the grasshopper." Meaning if a person isolates himself, he is easily forgotten when it comes to sharing good things. This is a proverb that shows critical observation of the chick and its mother and the relationship in nature. Similarly, the proverb " ankora hunnu na eye dede" meaning empty barrels make the most noise was borne out of observing the elements of the environment and people. This denotes that those who have nothing doing with their time disturb others most. Again the proverb " Wo ne kwasea goro a, ne kwasia sane wo" meaning if you associate with a fool, you also become a fool, This proverb denotes that bad company corrupts good morals. This proverb was borne out of the observation of human interaction.

Again “*ɔkɔtɔ nwo anoma*” meaning the crab does not give birth to a bird is also a proverb that was borne out of observation of nature.

In a typical Akan setting, the citing of a proverb is generally preceded by the statement “*mpanyinfo bu bɛ se*” or “*nananom bu bɛ se*”: “the elders have a proverb that says”. In a personal interaction with the chief of Donaso (2015), he said the Akans believe that advancement in age brings wisdom therefore preceding proverbs with *mpanyinfo* (elders) gives validity to what is being said. Akan oral traditions puts the elders and ancestors in the situation that portray them as people who have gone through life, made all the mistakes and have been shaped by their personal experiences as well as values and ethics of the society, therefore they are full of goodness and wisdom that can shape the younger generation. Geest (1996, pg 110), notes that “the most prominent feature of the *panyin* is that he has life experience ‘*wanyin*’ (has grown). He may not yet be an old man (*akokora*) or an old woman (*abrewa*), but he will be at least over fifty and advanced in age. His advanced age has brought him wisdom. He has seen many things in life and on the basis of experience he can predict what is going to happen. That is why they say ‘*panyin ano sen suman*’ (the mouth of an elder is more powerful than talisman) if he says something is going to happen it will happen so you should listen to his advice”. Yankah (1989, pg 72) posits that *panyin* (elder) in the Akan society is “generally a person attributed the qualities of authority, wisdom, responsibility and exemplary behaviour”. Therefore *panyin* is a person who knows better in view of this, he/she will not sit unconcern for things to go wrong. In sum, ‘*Opanyin ntena fie mma asedua mfo*’ the elder at home does not sit idle and watch while the loom gets wet. Therefore prefixing proverbs with them give the proverb an element of authenticity and authority. Opoku (1997,pg xvii) explains this better with the view that, proverbs were bequeathed to succeeding generation by the ancestors and therefore they are acknowledged by preceding a proverb statement with ‘*nananom se*’ or ‘*mpanyin se*’ meaning the ancestors say or the elders say to give power or authority to what is being said.

Proverbs are known to be channelled mainly through verbal means; however, the Akan is very much in tune with all forms of communication and therefore relay proverbs through non verbal and symbolic means as well. Yankah (1989, pg 98) opines that “even though the Akan proverb is mainly spoken, it may also be drummed and depicted in visual forms”. Yankah illustrates this with the diagram:

### Channels of proverbs



Aural forms of proverbs can be tales (anansesem) when they appear in illustrative anecdote in conversational context, dirge (nsuie), appellation, poetry (apae) and popular song and drum language. However, while individuals are expected to adhere to norms of situational and cultural propriety, a deliberate deviation can be made to relay a proverb. Yankah emphasize this view when he states that among the Akans a peculiar demeanour, dress style, or a purposive negation of clothing etiquette, may constitute an expression of  $\epsilon b\epsilon$ . He again noted that, proverbs form an important component of the Akan visual arts. Designs in stamped, funeral (adinkra) and the multicoloured kente cloths often depict culturally significant objects but they may also depict orally circulating proverbs. Yankah goes on to identify visual art forms that embody proverbs as gold weights, spokesman staffs and umbrella tops. Opoku (1997,pg 108) elaborate on the visual arts aspects of proverbs, according to him, two kinds of gold weights exist: one assists the memory to recall proverbs and the other represents particular proverbs cast in metal. He further goes on to talk about the linguist staff carved in wood and topped with symbolic emblems as another visual art form



that represent proverbs. According to him the emblem on the staff often depict a proverb or express a highly cherished value in the society. Awake (n.d, pg 3 ) also opines that “though Akan proverbs have been passed from generation to generation by word of mouth, many sayings have been preserved in symbolic art such art is seen in wood carvings, staffs, gold weights, and traditional cloths as well as in modern textile designs”.

Proverbs indeed plays a major role in oral communication among the Akans. They represent a very important element of normal discourse aside embellishing speech and showing a mark of good breeding. While this is true, two questions arise: when are proverbs cited and who is eligible to cite them? To answer the first question, a critical observation of the indigenous Akan society show that proverb use is evident during interactions among all classes of people, to them, discourse will not be complete without the citing of a proverb. The indigenous Akan cites proverbs naturally, without any conscious or special effort during formal and informal interactions. Conversely, proverbs are not cited for the mere sake of it. To emphasise this point the story is told of Nana Amisa the chief of Abeadze (an illustrious master of proverbs) in the central region who was approached by one of the kings in the Asante kingdom to cite seventy proverbs. It is reported that he told the emissaries to close their eyes and after a while he asked them to tell him their dreams. One of the emissaries said how can a person dream when he has not slept. Nana retorted by saying “when the occasion has not arisen, you do not cite proverbs. Opoku (1997,pg xix). Nana’s story is an indication of the position of the Akan when it comes to proverb citing, that a proverb citing should be in context of a situation. Yankah (1989, pg 105) enforce this assertion with his opinion that outside normal discourse a speaker’s proverbial wit is indeterminate: for wit derives from the intrinsic value of the proverb in relation to its logical relevance to the situation at hand thus, one cannot determine how good a person is at using proverbs unless he or she is able to give proverbs that are appropriate to a given situation. This means the true value of a proverb is not seen when it is not intended for a specific context. Awake (n.d., pg 4) corroborate this with



the view that proverbs are cited when there is a problem however; if you want an Akan to recite a string of proverbs, you might succeed in getting only one because there cannot be a dream where there is no sleep”. This means there cannot be a solution when there is no problem. In other words, one cannot use proverbs in a vacuum any more than one can dream while awake. Circumstances determine the use of proverb in interactions. This is to say that to cite proverbs haphazardly is meaningless, for proverbs have meaning only if they are used in a particular context. The Akan usually say: *asem ba a, na abebu ba* (issues or occasions call for their own proverbs).

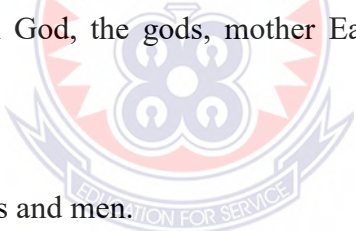
Everyone can cite proverbs. However, Akan traditional ethics dictates that respect is given to the old in view of this it is the old who usually cite proverbs when speaking to the young. However, a young person can cite proverbs to the old in discourse only by beginning with an apology (*sebe*). This is to apologies for any inferences that could be taken as insult to the old. This is not the case among peers; people within the same age range can cite proverbs in discourse to each other. In a situation where a speaker is talking to a much older audience, it is polite to precede the use of proverb with the expression, ‘it is you elders who say...’ out of respect, a young speaker does not want to be seen as teaching his elders the words of wisdom embodied in the proverb, ‘*abofra bo nwa na omba akyikyidie*’ meaning a child must not do what adults do. Yankah (1989, pg 105) notes that “normally proverbs may be used among peer groups or by the socially superior speaking to a subordinate. “A proverb may not be used by one younger than the listener, particularly if it has a didactic flavour or else the speaker may prefix it with an apology (*sebe*) or its is you elders that say” Yankah(1989, pg 106).

*Sebe* is also used in interaction when the proverb about to be given has words which are not usually used in public. In this case whether the statement is meant for peers or older audience the word *sebe* may prefix the proverb to show respect and also to warn those present of the use of the words beforehand. For instance, in the Akan set-up words relating to the

reproductive parts and sex are verbal taboos in public, they are seen to be distasteful when not used candidly in public speaking. Words like that are mostly spoken figuratively (kasakoa) in the Akan society. The proverb ‘eye fe se obaa etu emreka a obeso ninufumu na enye se ebefri ato’ meaning its nice for a woman to hold her breast while running not because her breast will fall off’ will sound more appropriate if sebe is used to prefix the proverb. Again in instances where the speaker is addressing a peer who is in a higher social position proverbs which derogatory in nature in most cases are not cited directly, this is to show respect to the audience. In this instace, the speaker would prefix the proverb with sebe.

## 2.9 Classification of Proverbs

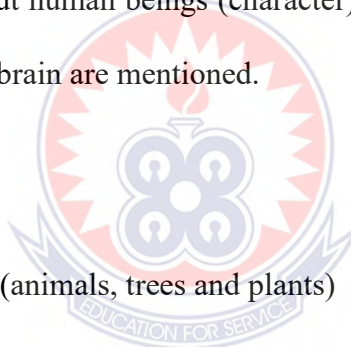
The Ghana Nation News classifies proverbs into the following categories

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- (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 about animals.
  - (f) Proverbs which deal with objects of nature and art, e.g., domestic or wild animals, plants and minerals.
  - (g) Proverbs which refer to the general state of man, his fate, and his destiny.
  - (h) Proverbs that deal with the domestic, social, and political life of the people.

- (i) Proverbs which refer to the intellectual conditions of man, e.g., wisdom, foolishness, rudeness, etc.
- (j) Proverbs that refer to moral values, e.g., patriotism, love, unity, hard work, patience, justice, truthfulness, loyalty.

Opoku (1997) also classifies proverbs as.

- (a) Proverbs that mention God.
- (b) Proverbs about the ancestors.
- (c) Proverbs that talk about human beings (character) as well as parts of the body such as ears, hands, eyes, and brain are mentioned.
- d) Death
- (e) Proverbs about nature (animals, trees and plants)
- (f) Proverbs which deal with human condition.
- (g) Proverbs which refer to marriage. (awarie / awar)
- (h) Proverbs that deal with the family (abusua).
- (i) Mother and father
- (j) Women and wives
- (k) Children
- (l) Men and elders



- (m) Proverbs that refer to value, virtues and vices, wisdom and folly, truth and falsehood.

Though the wording of the classification from the two scholars seem different, their views indicate that God, man, the environment, the relationship between God and man, the relationship between men, the relationship between man and his environment and the relationship between the elements of the environment informed the classification of proverbs.

## **2.10 Nature of Akan Morality**

Man has the tendency to gratify innate drives for personal satisfaction. However, these drives can lead to imbalances detrimental to the harmonious interaction of the environment. To this end organised social systems put in place mores to ensure that man lives within an acceptable limit. These mores are intangible common thoughts that give birth to grounded moral values essential for decent and harmonious living. Gyekye (1996, pg 55) elaborate on this, when he talks about morality “as rules and norms emerged from and are anchored in peoples beliefs about right and wrong conduct and good and bad character”. Morality in societies in African set up is individualistic and communalistic in nature. Thus the society believes in the individual performing his role to ensure the total development of the society. According to Gyekye (1996, pg 50) “the success achievements and well-being of the group (thus society) depend on the exercise by its individual members of their unique talents and qualities. And these talents and qualities are assets of the community as a whole”. He further explains that “the African appreciate both communalistic and individualistic nature of morality in African societies because, the individual cannot develop outside the framework of the community and the welfare of the community as a whole cannot dispense with the talent and initiative of its individual members either. The interaction between the individual and the community (or group) is therefore considered basic to the development of the individual’s personality as well as to the overall success and well-being of the community”.

The Akan view on morality is not different from that of other African cultures. Akan morality is communal, family and individual oriented, thus, they think of morality as how I ought to behave for the good of society, family and myself. This implies that the effect of one's behaviour is not felt solely by the individual but the society as a whole. Mbiti in Ikuenobe (1998, pg 26) sums up this concept with his statement "I am because we are and since we are therefore I am" this is in consonance with the views of Menkiti Cited by Ikuenobe (1998, pg 26) on the African morality. According to him, "the needs, reality and existence of the community takes precedence over similar concerns of the individual in an African society". He further explains that "the attitude, sentiments, motives, intentions and moral dispositions of an individual are determined by the membership in a community. So the sense of self identity which the individual comes to possess cannot be made sense of except by reference to these collective facts". Thus the morality of a person is defined by the moral principles of the community; this in a sense means the individual is the embodiment of what the society stands for.

Wiredu (2006, pg 142) Share more light on the individual and communal sense of Akan morality. According to him, "the Akans are no less emphatic in their articulation of their sense of individual responsibility. He further analyzes it with a popular Akan proverb; it is because God dislikes injustice that he gave everyone their own name (thereby forestalling any misattribution of responsibility). Along with this clear sense of individual responsibility went an equally strong sense of the social reverberations of an individual's conduct. The primary responsibility for an action, positive or negative, rests with the doer, but a non-trivial secondary responsibility extends to the individual's family and, in some cases, to the environing community". He further elaborates that , for the Akans, a person is social not only because he or she lives in a community, which is the only context in which full development, or indeed any sort of human development is possible, but also because, by his original constitution, a human being is part of a social whole.

The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (2010, pg 8) quotes two schools of thoughts with varied views as to the foundation of African morality. The advocates of the first school of thought, made up of Opoku (1978), Danquah (1944), Sarpong (1972), Busia (1967), Parrinder (1969) and Idowu (1962) are of the opinion that “African moral values and principles derive from religion, implying that African morality is, thus, a religious morality. The claim implies in turn that the moral beliefs and principles of the African people derive from those of religion, that religion provides the necessary justification for moral values and beliefs, and that moral concept, such as good, bad, right and wrong are defined (or must be defined) in terms of religious prescriptions of commands”. Proponents of the second school of thought including scholars such as Godfrey Wilson, Monica Wilson, Maquet and Wiredu opines that, African morality is not founded on religion. Kwesi Wiredu in Odera Oruka and Masolo (1983) is of the view that Akan moral outlook is thus logically independent of religion. Godfrey Wilson in Ottenberg and Ottenberg eds. (1960) wrote that “among the Nyakyusa the ideas of social behaviour are not connected with religion, nonetheless they exist” he further added that “but the positive, ideal statement of these virtues is not made in religious terms” Maquet in Forde (1954) on morality of Rwanda wrote that “thus the ethics of the Banyarwanda are not integrated on a religious bases such as the will of God”. Gyekye (1996, ) is of the view that, “traditional African religion is not a revealed religion and therefore the people do not- how could they? have access to the commandments of God to use as the bases of their moral system”. He further reveal the foundation of African moral value as derived from the experiences of the people in living together, or in trying to evolve a common and harmonious social life. That is, the moral values of the African people have a social and humanistic bases, rather than a religious bases and are fashioned according to the peoples own understanding of the nature of human society, human relations human goals and the meaning of human life.

To the Akan, morality embodies the distinction between good (papa) and bad (bone). What constitutes good behaviour promotes the well-being of humanity while what constitutes bad behaviour is detrimental to the well-being of humanity. “An action, a habit, or a pattern of behaviour is considered good only if it promotes human and social well-being. Any list of moral values equated with the good in African societies will include kindness, compassion, generosity, hospitality, faithfulness, truthfulness, concern for others, and action that brings peace, justice, dignity, respect and happiness. Behaviours that are considered detrimental to the well-being of humanity and society are backbiting, selfishness, lying, stealing, adultery, rape, incest, murder and suicide” Gyekye (1996, pg 58).

## **2.11 Meaning of Morality**

Socialization across cultures enable man to make a distinction between good and evil, however, the decision to choose evil over good or vice-versa depends on innate “freedom of choice in man”. What defines a person as a moral being is the ability to use the power of choice to choose responsibly to ensure a harmonious co existence of humans in a society. To borrow the words of Wiredu (2006, pg 141) morality in the strictest sense is universal to human culture. Indeed, it is essential to all human culture. Any society without a modicum of morality must collapse.

Morality transcends culture, ethnicity, laws, race, status, age, or personal interest. It permeates all aspects of human life; it is not conferred on persons but a way of life. What then is morality? Wiredu (2006, pg 141) Defines it as “the observance of rules for the harmonious adjustment of the interests of the individual to those of others in society”. He gives further insight into his claim by stating that the definition, is a minimal concept of morality and that a richer concept of morality even more pertinent to human flourishing will have an essential reference to that special kind of motivation called the sense of duty. Morality in this sense



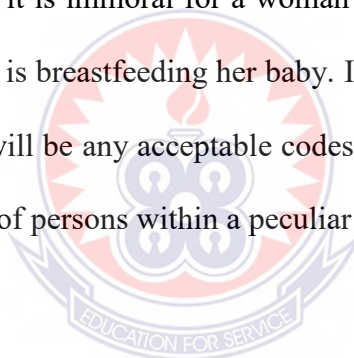
involves not just the de facto conformity to the requirements of the harmony of interests, but also that conformity to those requirements which is inspired by an imaginative and sympathetic identification with the interests of others even at the cost of a possible abridgement of one's own interests. This is not a demand for a supererogatory altruism. But a certain minimum of altruism is absolutely essential to the moral motivation. In this sense too morality is probably universal to all human societies, though, most certainly, not to all known individuals.

Gyekye (1996, pg 55) defines morality as “a set of social rules and norms intended to guide the conduct of people in a society”. According to Gert (2012) the term morality can be used either descriptively to refer to the most important code of conduct put forward and accepted by any group, or even by an individual and normatively as a code of conduct that, given specified conditions would be put forward by all rational persons. He gives further clarity to his assumption by stating that those who use ‘morality’ descriptively hold that it refers to codes of conduct that are actually put forward and accepted by some society, group, or individual. If one is not a member of that society or group, and is not that individual, accepting a descriptive definition of “morality” has no implications for how one should behave. Among those who use “morality” normatively, all hold that “morality” refers to a code of conduct that applies to all who can understand it and can govern their behaviour by it. In the normative sense, morality should never be overridden, that is, no one should ever violate a moral prohibition or requirement for non-moral considerations. All of those who use “morality” normatively also hold that, under plausible specified conditions, all rational persons would endorse that code. He further adds that “morality” in the normative sense has never been put forward by any particular society, by any group at all, or even by any individual that holds that moral rules should never be violated for non-moral reasons”. However both descriptive and normative morality implores the individual to live according to codes of conduct that guide human behaviour. Schulman (2002) cited by Scholl (n.d., pg 1)



defines moral behaviour as “acts intended to produce kind and fair outcomes”. One feature runs through the definitions given by the scholars. They all agree on the notion that “morality” refer to guides to behaviour, that these guides ensures right conducts of persons to ensure harmonious living in the society . This is however in line with how the Ghanaian and for that matter the Akan view morality.

According to the oral traditions of the Akan, “morality”, is seen in the light of right or wrong behaviour in respect of social conventions and context. Morality in the social conventional sense can be defined as the ability of an individual or people to conform to laid down rules that govern the activities of persons living in a particular community. The contextual morality on the other hand has to do with the context within which behaviours are observed. For instance, while it is immoral for a woman to expose her breasts in public, it is not considered immoral if she is breastfeeding her baby. In view of this the working definition of morality for this research will be any acceptable codes, norms, principles or values that are meant to guide the behaviour of persons within a peculiar cultural set up or context.



## **2.12 Significance of Proverbs in Moral Development**

Proverbs are statements that capture a multiplicity of wisdom and truths about life and are veiled in a well crafted speech in which only the wise can decipher. Proverbs are to the Akan ‘a language or discipline’ This sentiment is demonstrated by the Akans proverb “oba nyansa fo ye bu no be yenka no asem” meaning “a wise person is spoken to in proverbs not in prose” implying the wise does not need a lecture in order to understand a concept or be convinced to do the right thing. The place of proverbs in the African societies and for that matter among the Akans is very significant in the area of the moral development of the individual. This is because it served as one of the unwritten laws of how the society believes the behavioural pattern of individuals in the society should be. The authors (elders) of the

proverbs were informed by the environment which was an open book from which they took lessons to benefit individual and the society at large. In the Akan society, the delivery of justice in the customary or traditional legal system are mostly backed by proverbs. Thus, in settling disputes, judgement given are preceded or intertwined with the citing of proverbs to give legal and moral backing to the judgement. This is because proverb usage among the Akan is believed to give moral backing to statements in discourse as well as make past observations and lessons available to the present and future generations.

To the Akan, proverbs are educative. Thus the values of the society are expressed in them, therefore its use inculcates the right ideas in the members of the society. Many scholars of African arts and culture have given diverse views of the importance of proverbs to the moral development of the African. Kyeremanteng (2010, pg 28) is of the opinion that “proverbs are mainly a collection of concise moral and religious sayings. They touch on issues of common sense and good manners i.e. etiquette in social relationships, self control, humility, patience, respect and loyalty”. He further states that proverbs help those who pay attention to them to recognise wisdom and good advice. Abraham in Ihueze (2011, pg 10) believes that Proverbs are traditional answers to recurrent ethical problems; to him, proverbs provide an argument for a course of action which conforms to community values. In discourse, they are used by the speakers to 'give a 'name' to the ethical problem confronting them. Emenyonu in Ihueze (2011, pg 28) is also of the view that African oral and written literatures are but two sides of a coin with common intrinsic values. To him, they are for instruction, for aesthetic pleasure, for culture preservation and for self realization. Opoku (1997, pg xx) however see proverbs as “statements that may express some cultural or infinite truth, they bring special meaning to certain situations and point up the kernel of an idea with vivid clarity. They may be a warning against a foolish act or guide to good conducts. Proverbs are also a reflection on life and how best to live it, understanding Akan traditional ideas about moral behaviour and ethical norms”. Dzobo (1992) cited by Fayemi (2008, pg 16) opines

that “proverbs are generally used to communicate abstract truths that are difficult to grasp. They express all kinds of values from the moral, spiritual, economic and intellectual to the material”. He noted further that proverbs are used as commentaries on human behaviour and provide useful insights into human nature. Oladele (1976) also opine that “Proverbs deal with all aspects of life. They are used to emphasize the words of the wise and are the stock in trade of old people who use them to convey the precise moral lessons, warnings and advice, since they make a greater impact on the mind than ordinary words”.. Okogbule in Ihueze (2011, pg 25) is also of the view that proverbs reveal the cultural attitude and the system of values of the society in which they exist. Imbiti (1995) in Opoku (1997, pg xii) opines that “proverbs stir the conscience, they give assurance, they help in the exercise of deciding between good and evil ,justice, right and wrong”.

The opinions put out by the scholars on the significance of proverbs in moral development vary in structure, yet, the essence seems to run along the same line. Essentially there are reasonable basis of agreement that points to proverbs as social tool for instilling and maintaining good behaviour. They are also for evoking a sense of authority in the traditional legal institutions as well as preservation and promotion of culture. These proverbs nevertheless are anchored by the traditions of the peculiar societies. To this end, the significance of proverbs in moral development can be summed up to be a manual that guides the individual with the conventions of the society to live right.

### **2.13 Technology**

Technology has always been part of the development of man before history could be recorded. The term technology encompass primitive tools and methods of work as well as the sophisticated technology of the contemporary society. The history of technology can be traced from the prehistoric era when man created simple domestic tools for cooking,

building(shelter) and clothing as well as tools for hunting and farming to our current social environment where technology still permeates all aspect of life.

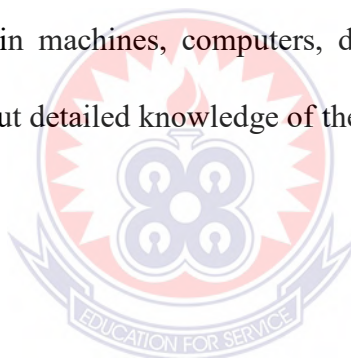
According to the world book encyclopaedia (1994) ever since people appeared on the earth, they have had to work to obtain food, clothing and shelter. they had to work to satisfy their desire for leisure and comfort. in view of this they invented tools, machines, materials and techniques to make work easier.

Technology however has evolved from its primitive era where the emphasis was on fashioning domestic, farming, protection and hunting tools, to industrialized era where the focus was on production of efficient machinery and equipments for industry. In the modern and post Morden era, the emphasis has shifted to creating sophisticated technology that will ensure quick and easy production in industry, easy and quick access to information, research, trade and so on. These technologies consist of devices, ideas and wireless connections that help in the pursuit of knowledge and information.

Wikipedia believes that the human species' use of technology began with the conversion of natural resources into simple tools. The prehistoric discovery of how to control fire and the later Neolithic Revolution increased the available sources of food and the invention of the wheel helped humans to travel in and control their environment. Developments in historic times, including the printing press, the telephone, and the Internet, have lessened physical barriers to communication and allowed humans to interact freely on a global scale.

What then is technology ? Talabi (2004, pg 20) defines technology as an extension of human senses and abilities to perform tasks. This definition implies that any idea, skill, knowledge or device that man adopts to performs beyond his capability can be termed as technology. The world book encyclopaedia(1994, pg 76) confirms this opinion with the view that technology refers to all the ways people use their inventions and discoveries to satisfy

their needs and desires. Davids and Hartley(1972) in Talabi (2004, pg 20) define technology as that complex of human activity which is concerned with using the findings of art and science to solve problems. In a personal interview with Gyapong (2015) he defined technology as the application of ideas, processes and techniques as well as implements, tools, materials gadgets and machines whether basic or advanced that is used by humans to solve practical problems to survive, recreate or reshape their environment to ensure efficiency and progress. The world book encyclopaedia (2001, pg 74) defines technology as the inventions including tools techniques processes that people make and use to survive and prosper. According to Wikipedia technology is the collection of techniques, skills, methods and processes used in the production of goods or services or in the accomplishment of objectives, such as scientific investigation. Technology can be the knowledge of techniques, processes, etc. or it can be embedded in machines, computers, devices and factories, which can be operated by individuals without detailed knowledge of the workings of such things.



## **2.14 Mobile Technology**

The word ‘mobile’ came from the Latin word ‘mobilis’ meaning “to move” in technological terms it means able to move freely or easily. This implies that mobile technology refer to all technologies that are able to move freely and easily. Mobile technology has evolved from its initial state in the 1940’s to date. In the early 1980’s the mobile technologies which were available were first generation (1G) cell phones which were analogue devices that allowed voice and limited data. This was however replaced by second generation (2G) devices which were digital and allowed voice and SMS, from 2004 to date the third generation (3G) has been with us. This is digital but have voice, data and other advance services. Sharon, (n. d.).

There are many types of mobile technology devices that allow people to connect to wireless networks while they are away from home, office or on a journey. Mobile technology devices range from laptops, personal digital assistant, smart phones, P.D.A, Wearable Computers, mobile Gaming Console, Barcode Readers/Scanners, tablets and e-readers. Smaller devices are also known as handheld devices, or simply handhelds.

In an interview with an expert in mobile technology, he identified the scope of mobile technology as portable handheld communication devices connected to a wireless network that allows users to make voice calls, send text messages and run applications. He further gave examples as WAP, SSD, Data, text messaging and internet, tablets, feature phones, smart phones, iPods, smart watches and laptops.

Mobile technologies have over the years become common part of societies across the world. Its use is associated with all classes of people. This is corroborated by Kerry Bruce (2014) where he states that “there were more than six billion mobile phone subscribers in 2012, according to the World Bank and one billion mobile broadband subscribers in 2011 according to the International Telecommunications Union. 75% of the world has access to a mobile phone. The ubiquity of mobile phones is well illustrated in a 2013 quote from the United Nations News Centre: “Of the world’s 7 billion people, 6 billion have mobile phones. However, only 4.5 billion have access to toilets or latrines.” This means mobile technology has become a widely accepted phenomenon in cultures around the world and for that matter Ghana.

## **2.15 Advantages of Mobile Technology**

Technology through the ages has helped man to satisfy his need as well as be more productive in exploring endeavours such as the arts and science. The advantages of using mobile technology are enormous in contemporary societies across the world. The influence of

mobile technology should never be taken for granted for it allows us to talk to other people at anytime regardless of distance or barriers, we can access information at anytime anywhere, take photographs, record our thoughts with one device and share with people we know and others that we may never know or meet in person. Wikipedia believes that technology has helped develop more advanced economies (including today's global economy) and has allowed the rise of a leisure class. However, many technological processes produce unwanted by-products, known as pollution, and deplete natural resources, to the detriment of Earth's environment. Various implementations of technology influence the values of a society and new technology often raises new ethical questions. Huesemann (2014,pg 2 and 5) gives credence to this view when he states that "Negative environmental consequences of technology are inevitable because several ecological principles are violated when we apply technology". he further adds that the application of science and technology have destroyed traditional sources of happiness, such as social interaction with friends, family, and community. to him if one is in front of a screen then he or she is not socially interacting anymore, in person". This is in contrast with the view of Zweibach and Peace (2011) who believe that technology whether we see it as good or bad depends on how one chooses to use it. They believe technology has provided us the internet which gives quick and easy access to a wide range of topics as well as different venues for ministry and evangelization through a host of media. To them, face book and other social networks are also great tools for connecting old friends, staying in touch with current friends and making new ones. Similarly , My Essay Point (2015) believe that the society cannot ignore that there are a number of ways in which technology negatively impacts our society, however, it has greatly helped to make our lives better. Technology has greatly helped us to become more efficient thus increasing our productivity. It has also helped us a great deal to be able to save on many resources such as time and money and these are great benefits that cannot be ignored. It has also worked well



in bringing unity into the world by turning it into a global village which has in turn helped people to more easily overcome their cultural, racial and continental barriers.

This implies that though technology has some negative effect, these effect do not diminish or erode the immense benefit to human society. Around the world technology is helping to solve critical problems in healthcare delivery, education, engineering, military machinery, architecture, data as well as personalized connectivity.

Mobile technology support a range of capabilities such as mobile banking, patient tracking, and crowd sourcing. In the field reliable data and storage, it provides a faster and a more accessible data with the use of mobile devices that allow documentation and storage online or on home office servers, allowing for real-time access to data for analysis and decision making. Bruce (2014) is of the view that mobile technology ensures data collected in the field with mobile devices are accessible and reliable. he further goes on to say that mobile devices have inbuilt functions like GPS coordinate collection, camera capabilities, and audio capture that broaden the scope and type of information that may be collected as well as built-in data visualization some systems, online interfaces permit data visualization or have dashboards that allow data to be manipulated, customized, and downloaded. All these benefits ensure that man is able to do more than his capabilities to ensure that he has control and enjoy his environment.

## **2.16 Mobile Technology and Culture**

According to Cravens (2003) Human culture and technology are continually co-evolving in a dynamic relationship. All technologies develop in a particular cultural context as the result of changing needs or constraints. But once developed, a technology changes the culture that gave it birth. societies around the world do not develop in isolation, thus the changes in one society are transported to others around with the passage of time due to



migration, education, industrialization and so on. To borrow the words of Cravens though all technologies develop in a particular culture context it does not mean that they stay within there. Useful technologies spread, either through migration of populations or by diffusion of techniques to neighboring populations. The needs and norms of the culture that adopts a new technology shape how that technology is used within the culture"

Though the bulk of the technologies in our society were borrowed from other cultures, the society has embraced and adopted them as new ways of doing things in the area of banking, education, medicine, health ,trade, politics and so on , in short mobile technology has affected everything. Cravens believes the diffusion of technologies to other cultures changes those other cultures as well. The changes in culture that one technology creates may then influence the development of another or different technology.

The dynamic nature of culture however must not erode the core values of the society but rather enhance it. Cravens believes that though there is a dynamic relationship between culture and technology, and that these technologies also alter the cultures that use them, the change in culture should presumably be for the better in at least the foreseeable future, or there would be no reason to use the new technology. this in essence means that adoption of a technology as part of the culture of a society must help to strengthen and project the already existing culture and not to destroy it. This in essence means when a technology spreads to another culture, the cultural context affects the speed or way in which the technology is adopted and how it is used. In this vein technology is used to enforce existing culture as well as forge new once to improve life and make it comfortable.

The use of mobile technology in enforcing concepts or socially accepted behaviours around the world is enormous. In the western nations, a lot of strides have been made in the incorporation of mobile technology in various sectors of the society. On daily basis, the internet, u-tube etc are uploaded with text, audio and audio-visual interactions by organisations and individuals to educate and inform people of trends in health, fashion,

engineering, architecture, arts, technology, religion etc. However the same cannot be said of our environment. While the society has emerged as one of the ardent user of mobile technology (mobile phone calls, mobile phone messaging, facebook, whats app, viba, imo media etc), its use in enforcing cultural ideals is not on a wide scale. Though there is a gradual use of social media and technology to promote some aspects of our culture this is not wide spread as personalise connectivity and interactions. In recent times, the media has played a major role in educating the contemporary Ghanaian on cultural values. Notable among them are UTV, GTV, Adom TV, Agoo TV, TV Africa, Peace FM, TV Africa just to mention a few. These media houses have some programmes tailored at promoting and preserving the culture of the society. One notable feature is that interactions are mostly done in the local language among all classes of people in the society on these media platforms.

Again there are a number of videos on u-tube which have indigenous cultural contents like traditional dances, festivals, traditional arts and crafts as well as food. Though they may not have been directly tailored at enhancing the adoption or preservation of a cultural value, indirectly they affect the perspective of those who watch the videos.

With respect to proverbs, mobile technology has been used as a channel for promoting it and has made some strides at facilitating its use among Ghanaians as well as preserving it. Peace FM a radio station in Accra have a programme called 'wobube a meso mestibe' aired every Sunday evening. This programme allows individuals who are prolific in the use of proverbs to compete among themselves by citing as many proverbs as they can. Aside this TV Africa also gives one proverb as proverb of the day. These proverbs however are from all over Africa.

With specific reference to a mobile application for the youth, there are a lot of apps such as whats app, viba, daily bible, wordweb, face book, games, S Health, S Voice, photo editor just to mention a few, most of these apps have western origin though there are few with

African themes. Mobile apps such as wisdom quotes, wise words, African proverbs and quotes are all apps that are tailored at transmitting cultural values.



## CHAPTER THREE

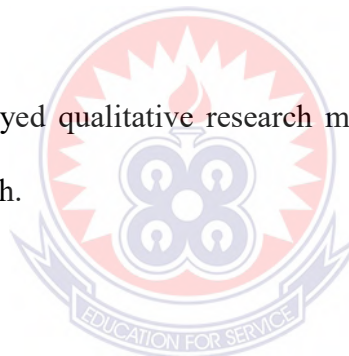
### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overview

This chapter gives information on how data for the research were generated. It primarily focuses on sources of data, data collection instruments, data collection method and the analysis of data. This was however organised under the sub-headings: research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collecting procedures, data collection instrument and data analysis plan.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The researcher employed qualitative research methodology by using the descriptive and the practice based research.



#### 3.3 Descriptive Design

Key (1997) describes Descriptive research as a research used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe'' what exist'. In other words, Descriptive research is about describing how reality is. The descriptive research design was used in this study to elicit the relevance of proverb in the moral development of the Akan youth in the face of modernism and its influence. This design allowed in-depth examination, exploration and description of data in terms of why the youth of today are not familiar with proverbs, what they think about proverbs and how technology can help in reviving or encouraging its use among the youth in the Akan jurisdiction. Aside this, it helped to gain better understanding in terms of the stands of the older generation, the outlook of the youth on

proverbs and for that matter the youths affinity to mobile technology which informed the designing of the Sankofa Abebuo app.

### **3.4 Practice Based Research**

The designing of the app was done by employing the android studio research which is an aspect of practice based research with the assistance of a programmer. This was used for designing the icon, layout, colour scheme, animation and the text for the app. The app was designed to work on all mobile phones with Android operating system with a minimum SDK (Software Development Kits) of version 11 (Honeycomb) which runs on approximately 99.5 % of devices that are active on the Google Play Store.

### **3.5 Population of the Study**

The population for this research is made up of Akan ethnic groups consisting of Fante and Asante's in central and Ashante regions respectively as well as technology experts in Ghana.

### **3.6 Sample**

A sample of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents was selected for the research. These respondents were indigenes selected from Bantama, Abuakwa, Ejisu, Asuoyeboah and Donaso in and around the Kumasi metropolis and Obrom, Twafu and Anafo (Omammu), Nkusukum (Ebir) and Edumadze (Borbor kumkunfi) from Mankessim traditional area. The respondents are in the category of educationist, youth, traditional authorities and technology experts.

Out of the one hundred and twenty (120) respondents who were sampled, ten (10) were to be interviewed and one hundred and ten (110) were to respond to questionnaire. The respondents were categorised into four main groups namely A, B, C and D. The first was category A (Traditional authorities) which were made up of chiefs, queen mothers, elders who are knowledgeable in culture and tradition, historians, curators, archivists and directors of culture. This category was selected because they lived in the past and present and have a lot of information when it come to social behaviour and how it should be according to the Akan traditional values, they have also lived with proverbs and have first hand information on its impact on morality and citing of proverbs.

The second category was B (Youth) which also comprised of members of institutions of learning which mostly includes second cycle and tertiary institutions. Other people in this category are petty traders and apprentice. This category was selected to find out the views of the youth on morality in recent times, the Akan culture and technology and their influence on social behaviour whether good or bad. It was also to find out whether they share in the assertion that proverb can contribute to a change in the current moral outlook of the contemporary Akan youth as well as how technology can be skewed towards transmitting Akan proverbs.

The third was category C (Educationist) is made up of heads of schools, senior high and basic school teachers. This category was selected to give a vivid picture of the type of education the youth receive and whether the traditional values are represented in the syllabus as well as the use of proverbs in the school environment.

Category D (Technology experts) made up of computer programmers, database administrators, systems administrators, computer technical support and a graphic user interface designers, net work engineers and administrators. This category was selected to give

information on the kind of influence technology has on the youth, technologies available to the average youth and how technology can influence the use of proverbs.

The breakdown of this number is as follows: fifteen (15) educationist of which ten (10) are from Kumasi and five (5) from Mankessim; twenty (20) traditional authorities of which fourteen (14) were from Kumasi and six (6) from Mankessim. Out of the sixty-five (65) youths sampled, Kumasi respondents were made up of forty (40) youth while Mankessim had twenty five (25). The twenty (20) technology experts were obtained from institutions in Accra and University of Education, Winneba.

### **3.7 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 (1987) 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”. In doing this, the study relied on variations of the purposive sampling techniques such as the homogeneous, typical case and snowball techniques. The typical case technique was used to select the Akan ethnic group from other existing ethnic groupings in Ghana. The homogeneous sampling however, was used to select the Fante (Central region) and Asante (Ashante region) from the broader group of Akans. The Fante and Asante Twi dialects were used to further select the Mankessim and in and around the Kumasi metropolises respectively. The youth were selected base on being within the stipulated age bracket; however educationist and technology experts were selected by virtue of being in their respective professions. Snowball sampling was utilised in contacting traditional authorities. This was done by contacting people who knew chiefs, queen mothers, opinion leaders at

Mankesim, Ejisu and Donaso palace respectively, and the Centre for National Culture in Kumasi. These initial people led researcher to the appropriate respondents.

### **3.8 Research Instruments**

The researcher adopted two main instruments for collecting data. These are interview and questionnaires. The selection of these instruments was to ensure that each instrument will complement the other on what was not obtained by the other.

### **3.9 Interview**

Two set of questions tailored at getting information on the use of technology as a tool for encouraging proverb usage, proverb, interpretation and the moral orientation of the Akan were asked. In all, 9 people were interviewed, these respondents were drawn from category A (traditional authorities) being 4 and category D (technology experts) being 5 respondents. The traditional authorities interviewed were the chief of Donaso, a curator at the centre for national culture in Kumasi and two elders. The technology experts were a data base administrator, a computer technician, a graphic designer, a systems administrator and a computer programmer. Primarily, each set of interviewees answered specific questions with traditional authorities answering 10 questions and technology experts answering 6 questions. However, other information on the bio data were also obtained in the cause of the interviews. The interviews were done within thirty minutes to two hours depending on the interviewee and were administered with the structured and unstructured methods using the both non face to face and face to face approach. The structured interviews were guided by pre-organised question which were open ended, respondents were allowed to refrain from answering questions they did not want to answer. The unstructured interviews however did not follow any organised format. The researcher mainly had conversations with respondents before or



after the structured interview and documented data that had relevance to the research. Data from interviews were gathered with notes and the audio recorder.

### **3.10 Questionnaires**

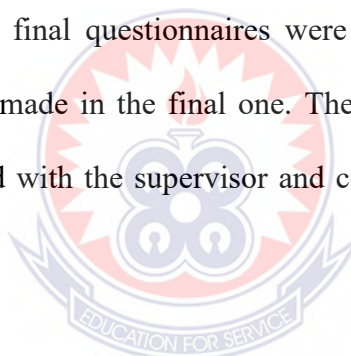
Four set of questionnaires were designed for the research in which respondents had to respond to both close -ended and open -ended questions. The questions were tailored towards the four categories (A traditional authorities, B. the youth, C. educationist, and D. technology experts). Category A is a 36 item questionnaire made up of 16 close ended questions and 20 open ended questions. Items 1-6 sought the bio data of respondents, items 7-16 on the other hand sought the degree of agreement or disagreements to statements while items 17- 36 sought opinions of respondents on issues relating to the study. On the whole, the question items sought data on the place of proverbs among past and contemporary youth, the moral orientation of the youth of today, as well as elicits proverbs and their contextual use. Category B however is a 21 item questionnaire made up of 14 closed and 7 open ended questions. Items 1-6 sought the bio data of respondents; items 7-14 on the other hand sought the degree of prevalence of statements while items 15- 21 sought opinions of respondents on issues relating to the study. All the items were geared towards generating data on agents that influence youth behaviour, influence of technology, cultural orientation and interaction with proverbs.

Category C is a 21 item questionnaire made up of 15 closed and 6 open ended questions, Items 1-6 sought the bio data of respondents, items 7-15 on the other hand sought the degree of agreement or disagreements to statements while items 16-21 sought opinions of respondents on issues relating to the study. These questions basically centred on how the values of the society are reflected in the school curriculum as well as the use of proverbs by educationist in schools.

The fourth category D is a 22 item questionnaire made up of 15 closed and 7 open ended questions. Items 1-6 sought the bio data of respondents, items 7-15 on the other hand sought the degree of agreement or disagreements to statements while items 16-22 sought opinions of respondents on issues relating to the study. Generally the questions sought information on technology and its influence on the modern youth.

### **3.11 Reliability and Validity**

The reliability and validity of the questionnaires were tested by giving them to experts for their comment and the necessary correction. They were then pre-tested on friends, youth and some traditional authorities in Winneba. This brought out errors which were subsequently reviewed and corrected. The final questionnaires were then constructed to ensure that no mistakes or few if any were made in the final one. The Interview guide for conducting the interviews was also discussed with the supervisor and colleagues to test their reliability and validity.



### **3.12 Data Collection Procedure**

Prior to the interviews, notices were given 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 technology experts. Interviews with technology experts 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 asked 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. Four interviews were done

using the face to face approach where the researcher and the interviewees met and had interactions however; one interview was done with the non face to face approach where interactions between the researcher and the interviewee was done on the mobile phone.

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 with both the local Asante Twi and English languages. The interviewees occasionally veered off into related subjects but were occasionally brought back to the main subject with a question from the interview guide. Questions were sometimes rephrased in instances where data provided were not clear to enable the researcher get key information needed for the research. The interviews with the chief and curator were however interjected with demonstrations, stories and exhibition of artefacts to foster understanding of the subject under discussion. All the interviews were done with the face to face approach. With reference to the proverbs given by the interviewees, the language was deep and therefore required further explanation, in such instances, the researcher prompted the interviewees to either explain in Twi or English language. 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.

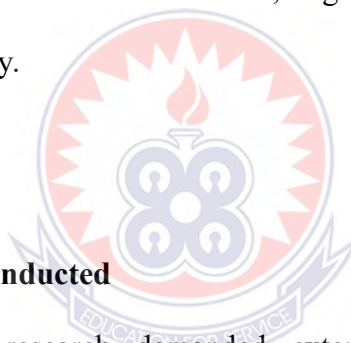
The questionnaires were administered by the researcher herself over a period of one week. In some instances, the questionnaires were read and explained to respondents who requested it before they were guided to respond to the items. Other respondents preferred to answer in the absence of the researcher therefore the drop and pick method where the respondents were given the questions to be answered within a week was used. Aside this, there were quite a number of respondents who could not read or write, in such instances the questions were read and explained to them, the researcher then filled the questionnaire with the responses provided by respondents.

### **3.13 Sources of Data**

Data was collected from various sources for this study. However, these sources can be categorised into two namely the primary data and the secondary data.

A primary data is information obtained from the interactions between the researcher and respondents. In the study, primary data was obtained from questionnaires and interviews. Traditional authorities, elders, youth, educationist and technology experts were the source of primary data for the study.

Secondary data were obtained from libraries, archives and museums. These sources mainly provided information on the Akans of Ghana, origin, nature and significance of proverbs, morality and mobile technology.



### **3.14 Library Research Conducted**

The nature of the research demanded extensive research to be carried out from documented sources. This however necessitated the use of the library, archives and museums. The library research however was done in both institutional and public library facilities. Institutional library such as the UEW Library at Winneba was used. Public library facilities were also used by the researcher, the Ghana Library Board and the George Padmore Research Library which were used on several occasions to collect information,. Other documented sources of information were from books, publications, catalogues, newsletters, journals, magazines and unpublished theses from the internet.

Documented sources of data relating to the topic were however minimal, most of the sources were not directly related to the topic, however only books that related partly to areas

under the sub-headings in the review of related literature were considered. Bits of information were obtained and presented together.

### **3.15 Archival Research Work**

The researcher visited the Manhyia archives in Kumasi to obtain information on the anthropological background of the Akans.

### **3.16 Museum Research Conducted**

The study made use of data obtained from relevant museums; the Manhyia Palace Museum and the Jubilee Museum (Centre for National Culture), all in Kumasi. Here the researcher obtained information from curators and cultural/traditional custodians as well as documented sources. In all these visits, the researcher critically analysed and examined the Akan cultural values with respect to proverbs and its relevance to the moral development of the Akan youth.

### **3.17 Data Analysis Plan**

The analysis of data from interviews and the questionnaires were transcribed manually under topical headings while bio-data from respondents were done in percentages. In analyzing items with a degree of agreement or disagreement, the sum of agree and strongly agree represented 'agree' while the sum of disagree and strongly disagree represented 'disagree'. Items on the degree of prevalence however were analysed by interpreting scale 1-4 as prevalent and scale 5 as not prevalent. However, the descriptive and thematic analyses were used to summarize entire data from respondents.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### 4.1 Overview

This Chapter discusses and analyzes data gathered through interviews and questionnaires administered to individuals of varied backgrounds to seek their views on the relevance of proverbs to the moral development of the modern Akan youth as well as the role technology can play in facilitating the accessibility of proverbs to the youth. Therefore, the study sought to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the relevance of Akan proverbs to the moral development of the Akan youth?
2. What are some major factors that influence the moral development of the modern Akan youth?
3. To what extent will mobile technology aid the use of proverbs in the Akan society?
4. Will the mobile application (Sankofa Abebuo) facilitate the use of proverbs among the Akan youth?

Out of the one-hundred (110) questionnaires sent out to respondent, 107 was retrieved, 9 out of 10 prospective interviewees were interviewed giving a total of 116 respondent representing a total response rate of 97%. Therefore, the analysis will be done based on 116 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.

#### 4.2 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 1: Age range of respondents**

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
15-40	88	76
41-60	19	16
61-80	8	7
81 and above	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2015*

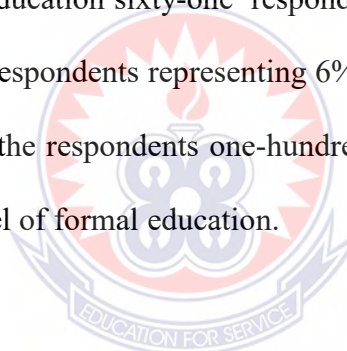
Table 1 shows that eighty-eight respondents representing 76% were within the age bracket of 15-40, nineteen respondents representing 16% were within the ages of 41- 60, eight representing 7% were within the ages of 61-80 and one representing 1 % was 81 and above. This implies majority of the respondents were youthful, however, the older generation were not left out because they were fairly represented by twenty-eight respondents representing 24%.

**Table 2: Educational Level of Respondents**

<b>Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Middle/basic	9	8
Secondary/S.S.S.C.E./W.A.S.S.C.E.	39	33
Tertiary	61	53
None	7	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2015*

Table 2 shows that out of the one-hundred and sixteen respondents, nine respondents representing 8% have had middle or basic education, thirty-nine respondents representing 33% have had second cycle education sixty-one respondents representing 53% have received tertiary education and seven respondents representing 6% have had no formal education. This is indicative that majority of the respondents one-hundred and nine respondents representing 94% have had access to a level of formal education.

**Table 3: Gender of the Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	69	59
Female	47	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Researcher's Field Study, 2015*

Figure 3 above clearly shows that Out of the one-hundred and sixteen respondents, sixty-nine respondents representing 59 % were males and forty-seven respondents representing 41% percent were females. Indicating that, there were (23) more male respondents than female respondents in the study.



## **Section B: Analysis of Data Relating to Research Questions**

### **4.3. Research Question 1: What is the Relevance Of Akan Proverbs to the Moral Development of the Akan Youth?**

This question was answered by category A (Traditional authority; 19).

#### **4.3.1 Proverbs and Past Akan Society**

The respondents demonstrated their knowledge of proverbs by citing and explaining proverbs with dexterity and giving ways in which proverbs were used in the society in the past. This indicated that proverbs were a part of the day to day life of the past Akan society. The respondents gave ways in which proverbs are used as traditional judiciary tool, for hiding information that is not meant to be given in public, for showing the in-depth knowledge of the individual about the language, for spicing the language, for provoking deep thinking, as a sign of maturity, for shaping morals and for entertainment. They however gave proverb channels as storytelling, appellation, symbols, speech, demeanour, music, dirges, dance, and drumming.

Evidently, proverbs played a major role in the moral development of the youth in the past, data from interviewees indicated that proverbs had experiences and aspirations of the society embedded in them therefore society guided itself with them. All the respondents admitted proverbs influenced their moral lives. For more than half of the respondents, the moral lessons in the proverbs served as a guide to their lives. One third of the respondent believed proverbs made the youth fear the elders and gods so they lived right, a few respondents said it made the youth ponder over the consequence of their choices, actions so as not to go contrary to the societal norms. They further gave the values learnt as loyalty, chastity, respect for elders and members of the society, patience, hardworking, truthfulness,

kindness, tolerance, cleanliness, humility, gentleness, avoidance of greed, obedience and selflessness, punctuality, purity of heart and honesty.

#### **4.3.2 Moral Orientation of the Past and Contemporary Akan Society**

The respondents were of the opinion that past youth respected authority and social norms but contemporary youth are indisciplined, they are fearless, curious and have minimum or no respect for authority due to the influence of the media and technology, urbanisation and formal education. They believe that these agents give the youth access to unrestricted information which is more skewed to westernised ideals resulting in behaviours that are not in consonance with the Akan moral values and therefore considered immoral.

Essentially all the nineteen respondents were of the opinion that the youth of the past knew the moral values of the Akan and adhered to them. They believe that the moral situation in their present communities is not good. They used words like deplorable, decay, disorderly and bad to describe the situation that exists. The view that the contemporary youth is not in tune with the Akan cultural values, is backed by their opinion that the youth are not in tune with their culture heritage. Majority of the respondents believe the Akan language, aside having less proverbial content in recent times, is not being used in interactions among members of the family and the society as it used to be in the past.

#### **4.3.3 How Society Maintained High Moral Standards Among the Youth in the Past**

Basically, data obtained shows that almost all the respondents were of the view that social institutions of socialization worked efficiently in the past to ensure the right social behaviour of the youth. They expressed opinions that the past youth were taught the moral values through cultural practices and oral tradition and so they were aware of how society

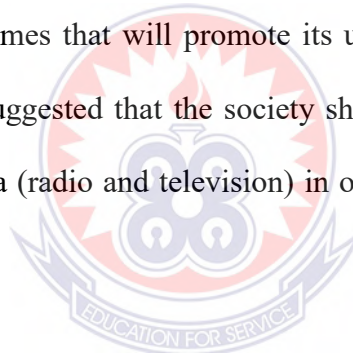
expected them to behave. Aside this the society believed the child belonged to the society and was watched and disciplined by the elderly in the society hence every adult had the right to discipline a child and this made every child behave right. Again the adults exhibited responsible behaviour (they were role models) therefore their good behaviour were emulated by the youth. The youth also took part in cultural activities and understood their culture. The chief of Donaso stressed that the society was able to keep a good moral environment because children were made aware of the Akan moral values and the consequence of good and bad behaviour on themselves and their family, hence they behaved well, he gave this example to stress this point; for instance a girl will not be sexually promiscuous for fear that no family would allow their son to marry her.

#### **4.3.4 The Use of Proverbs in Contemporary Akan Society**

The contemporary Akan society does not use proverbs in teaching the youth moral values. This is so because almost half of the respondents said they do not use proverbs as a disciplinary tool in the home nor in the society. Among the number who uses it, only a few are habitual users the rest use it occasionally. Again proverbs are not prevalent in contemporary society as it existed in the past. Majority were of the opinion that proverb usage is not as it used to be in the past. Less than a third of the respondents were of the opinion that it is used among people who are close to traditional institutions, royalty, elders and those who live in the rural areas. However, it was noted that, the few who use the proverbs are of the notion that the youth are generally interested in knowing proverbs however; they do not get the intended message either due to the Akan language or lack of the traditional foundation to get its philosophical meaning.

#### **4.3.5 Ways in Which the Society can Encourage the use of Proverbs Among the Youth in Akan Society**

All the respondents believe traditional education, formal education and recent technology can encourage the use of proverbs. Averagely almost half of the respondents are of the opinion that the society must go back to the use of the Akan language as a means of interaction at home. A few were of the view that parents should take their children to their indigenous root for them to experience the Akan way of living as well as teach them Akan proverbs. Quite a number also said the youth must be told folktales and be involved in Akan traditional practice (festivals, rites of passage etc) as well as encouraging contemporary musicians to include proverbs in lyrics of their songs and revive story telling in the society. 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 will facilitate proverb usage. A few respondents suggested that the society should take advantage of technologies available as well as the media (radio and television) in organising proverbs competitions and teaching of proverbs.



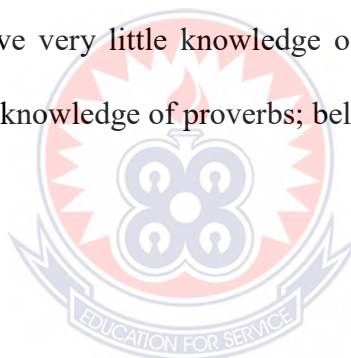
#### **4.4 Research Question Two: What are Some Major Factors That Influence the Moral Development of the Modern Akan Youth?**

This question was answered by category B (Youth; 62) and C (Educationist 15)

##### **4.4.1 The Influence of Akan Culture on the Contemporary Youth**

Data provided by most of the respondents show that of the youth are generally not influenced by the culture of the society. However, a major feature of culture which is language remains the most used channel for communication in the Akan society among the youth. This is demonstrated by a very high prevalence rate as indicated by the respondents.

The English language however, is positioned slightly below the local language; the responses on other languages had very low prevalent rate. This indicates that the youth use the Akan language more in their interactions. On the familiarity of the youth with the oral traditions of the society, the study revealed that, of more than half of the respondents who claim to be familiar with oral traditions, a little over half of this number had information on the oral traditions of the Akan. Among the answers given were; dirges, appellation, storey telling, proverbs and folk music. Again the study indicated that the contemporary youth is not familiar with proverbs. A little over half of the respondents admitted they were familiar with proverbs, out of this number, only a few were able to cite proverbs. Aside the number not being massive, a look at the proverbs cited show that quite a number had foreign origin. Example ‘‘all that glitters is not gold’’, ‘‘a stitch in time saves nine’’ just to mention a few. This show that the youth have very little knowledge of their proverbs yet majority of the youth, though they have little knowledge of proverbs; believe that it can help them acquire the right moral values.



#### **4.4.2 The Influence of Mobile Technology on the Contemporary Youth**

Data on the mediums of communication and how rampant they are among the youth in the Akan society showed non-face to face communication is more prevalent among the youth than face to face communication. Data on non-face to face mediums shows smart phones the highest prevalence rate followed by radio, television, personal computer, desk telephone and tablets. This shows that the smart phone is the most used medium in non-face to face communication followed by the media (television and radio).

The study sought the level of influence of some technology over some social institutions in the society. The responses show the parents, internet, family, television and the society had a very high prevalence rate. The influence of culture on the other hand was below

average. A look at the prevalence rate puts the family and society on the same level followed by television, however, parental influence was highest followed closely by the internet.

The study shows that parents, family and culture influenced the youth to behave right. Parents had the highest prevalent rate followed closely by the family and then culture.

The internet, television and the society came up as the major agents that influenced the youth to behave wrong; this was expressed through the responses which showed the internet had the highest prevalent rate of bad influence on the youth, closely followed by television and then the society.

#### **4.4.3 Mobile Technology and Proverb**

The youth believed in mobile technology as a vehicle for proverbs to the youth. This was expressed by almost all the respondents. They however gave various channels available in mobile technology as ways to facilitate proverb usage. A few respondents believe proverbs can be stored on electronic devices for easy accessibility, a third of the respondents however were of the view that communication technologies such as internet, viba, face book, smart phones etc can facilitate the use of proverbs. Almost half of them believe media education was the way to facilitate proverb usage among the youth. However very few of the respondents did not write anything indicating they did not know. The response is an indication that if proverbs are properly packaged and channelled through technology, the youth will embrace it.

#### **4.4.4 Culture and the School Curricular**

Data provided by the educationists indicate that most of them believe that the school shapes the behaviour of individuals with a blend of western and cultural values. On the curriculum and culture, the study revealed that the culture of the society is not widely covered. Some of the respondents were of the opinion that culture is not represented in the school curriculum, majority of the respondents on the other hand believed culture is represented however, most of this number believe it is represented through the teaching of certain subjects (Ghanaian language and social studies), a few of them also believe it exists through extracurricular activities like art and cultural festivals and exhibition, one respondent is of the opinion that it is only general Ghanaian values which is available to students taking Ghanaian languages as a subject.

The use of proverbs among the youth is also very negligible in the sense that almost all the respondents said the youth do not use proverbs in the school environment; however less than half of educationist use it as a tool for instilling morals, this number gave the youths reaction to the proverbs as; they love to hear proverbs but lack philosophical understanding of the proverbs, they sometimes laugh at those said in the local language, they welcome them and are ready to learn new once, they are fascinated by the proverbs but need explanations to them. These reactions indicate that the youth will not reject proverbs if they are introduced to them in a way they can understand and easily identify with.

#### **4.5 Research Question Three: To What Extent Will Mobile Technology Aid the use of Proverbs in the Akan Society?**

This question was answered by 20 respondents in categories D (technology experts). 5 out of the 20 technology experts were interviewed.

#### **4.5.1 Relevance of Mobile Technology in the Moral Disposition Contemporary Youth**

Data from respondents on the influence of mobile technology on morality indicated that all the respondents believe that technology influences the morality of contemporary youth very much.

Data from five interviewees gave more insight on the influence of mobile technology on morality. The programmer was of the view that technology offers a platform for information (either good or bad) to be disseminated or assessed from varied sources and that the tendency to choose bad information is quite high among the youth in our society probably because they are in their formative years or some level of institutional failure on the part of the society. The database administrator said technology has deep implication on all aspects of the social lives of youth, he added that the youth prefer to interact on their devices rather than face-to-face which is highly influenced especially by western values other than our traditional values. The systems administrator added that technology affects every facet of the life of the youth such as their fashion, learning habits, communication and aspirations; however it can be Good or bad depending on the moral disposition of the individual. The graphic designer and the technician expressed similar views that run along the notion that the use of technology is good if used for learning about the world around us, however, in our setting, technology exposes the youth to negative influence from other cultures as they use it to view immoral videos, engage in virtual sex, fraud and gambling, the Graphic designer added that “it not surprising that betting centres abound in our communities now”.

#### **4.5.2 The Use Of Mobile Technology Among Contemporary Youth**

All the respondents unanimously identified technology as the most used channel of communication among contemporary youth. They further expressed the view that this communication channel is the most effective among contemporary youth. they further



identified the devices that the youth use as mobile phones, laptops, calculator, tablets, smart phones, laptops, mp3 players, flat screen television, iPods, video gaming consoles, television and audio players, camera phone, desktop computers, audio recorders and players. However, the smart phone emerged as the most mentioned device by all the respondents.

#### **4.5.3 Mobile Technology as a Tool for Facilitating Proverbs**

Various modes for propagating proverbs technologically were given by all the twenty technology experts. More than half of the respondents identified modes such as developing software application on proverbs on computer systems and smart phones, through the use of the media (programmes and education on proverbs), through the use of social media (Facebook, Instagram, Viber, web, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Twitter), through documentation and storage of proverbs through film and documentary on electronic and other storage devices (pen drives, CD, S) for sale and by recording visual and audio presentations of proverbs and disseminating them through audio playback and screens.

The respondents constituting the interviewees also identified modes such as quoting and circulating proverbs via the smart phones daily, using video documentaries, video games and exiting application software on smart phones, creating short movies in series with proverbs as dominant means of communication and aired on television and radio as well as presenting proverbs and their philosophical meaning on social media through blogging, through films, articles and journals on the internet.

Again data from the interviewees revealed that technology is a good mode to channel proverbs to the youth. One of them believes that the youth spend more time using technology in view of this; it will be easier for them to assess proverbs and disseminate them to their peers. Another interviewee believes technology has a wide coverage and that it cuts across boundaries so even Akans living outside the country can access proverbs; he added that the

youth can also disseminate proverbs to their peers on other platforms. One is also of the opinion that technology is the closest thing that connects the youth to everyone else; he further explained that the youth will be more comfortable especially if they can learn proverbs on their own through technology. Two of the interviewees however believe technology can transmit the Akan values to the youth quicker and easier. To emphasize this, the respondents identified existing technologies that has aided the acquisition of a social value. The Ananse project on mobile and computer systems, application software games on smart phones, and cartoon animation by Zingaro aired on television were mentioned.

#### **4.6 Research Question Four: Will the Mobile Application (Sankofa Abebuo)**

##### **Facilitate the use of Proverbs Among the Akan Youth.**

#### **4.6.1 Mobile Application Technology; Sankofa Abebuo App**

Data obtained from the analyses affirmed the use of technology in channelling proverbs to the contemporary youth. To this end, Sankofa Abebuo, a mobile application technology was developed. This application works on all mobile phones with Android operating system with a minimum SDK (Software Development Kits) of version 11 (Honeycomb version 3.0) which runs on approximately 99.5 % of devices that are active on the Google Play Store. The choice of using the Android Operating System was due to the affordability of the phones which power the system, ease of use unlike others like apple iOS phones and the affinity of the youth to it.

## **4.7 Making the Sankofa Abebuo App**

### **4.7.1 Designing of the User Interface**

The user interface is basically the way the visual layout and design of a software application, and gadgets or machines are created with the anticipation of the needs of the users in navigating and using of the product. User interface primarily is made with the focus on usability, navigation, user experience and satisfaction. In creating the sankofa abebuo app, the target audience as well as the cultural context was also considered. These two elements influenced the choice of colour, the layout, icon, typography, animation, design elements as well as buttons. These elements are meant to facilitate easy use of the app from start to finish.

Sankofa Abebuo can be used by clicking on the launcher icon (graphic image) of the app displayed on the home screen, this leads to the splash or start up screen which slides off to display the activities on the app. Each activity represents a slide containing one proverb with its literal and philosophical meaning as well as time of use. The animated swipe is used to navigate to other activities in the app where the current page fades out while the new page fades in to allow the user to view the subsequent pages. There is however an 'i' button on the right lower corner which is meant to take the user to the information activity, a click on the 'i' button takes the user to the information on the app. A click on the return button on the device takes the user back to the previous activity.

### **4.7.2 Design Elements**

The design elements in this sense were all the visual elements which aided navigation of the app and added a visual aesthetic and narrative to the app's interface. They include the scroll, the adinkra symbols used as a decorative element, animation, typography, colour, icon (graphic image) and the splash screen.








#### 4.7.2.1 Scroll

The scroll was the main design element seen in the interface. Its use is meant to connote an aged well-kept wisdom. A scroll isn't really a writing material used from indigenous Ghanaian times however, its selection was based on the fact that it seems to have been accepted as a general material which has ancient writings and sayings. It was used as the background for the design of the app so that the texts from the proverbs appeared as written on it.

#### 4.7.2.2 Adinkra symbols

In line with the data from respondents as well as the view of authorities such as Yankah(1989) and Opoku (1997) that proverbs also come in symbolic forms, eight adinkra symbols were purposively selected from existing sankofa symbols to serve as decorative elements on the scroll design. Seven of the symbols served as border design while one served as the icon of the app. The sankofa symbol is an adinkra symbol that stress on the importance of learning from the past (return and get it). In this vein it was adopted as the icon (graphic image) of the app. Its use on the app was to demonstrate the importance of proverbs to the moral development of the Akan and the need to go back for it. The meanings of the other seven symbols are as follows: Gye nyame meaning except God symbolizes the supremacy of God. Nkyinkyim meaning twisting is a symbol of initiative dynamisim and versatility. Funtummireku, denkyem funafu meaning siamese crocodile symbolizes unity in diversity. Ese ne tekrema meaning teeth and tongue is a symbol of friendship. Dwennimmen meaning rams horn symbolizes humility and strength. Mate masie hearing and keeping. Akoma ntoso meaning linked hearts is a symbol of understanding and agreement, These adinkra symbols are narratives and wise sayings of the Akans which are embodied in abstract symbols. They were used to help communicate the indigenous and cultural ideologies embodied in the app.

#### 4.7.2.3 Table of the adinkra symbols and their names

Symbol	Name
	Funtummireku, denkyem funafu
	Akoma ntoso
	Ese ne tekrema
	Gye nyame
	Dwennimmen
	Mate masie/ ntesie
	Nkyinkyim

#### 4.7.2.4 Animation

The animated swipe was the technique employed for the viewing of the proverbs. Animated swipe in this case was chosen for its familiarity among the target audience and the ease of use. In the creation of the app, consideration was given to the navigation through the proverbs. From observations on user habits with other apps, it was realized that the swiping was the most familiar to the users. However, a cross-fading effect was added to this. This is

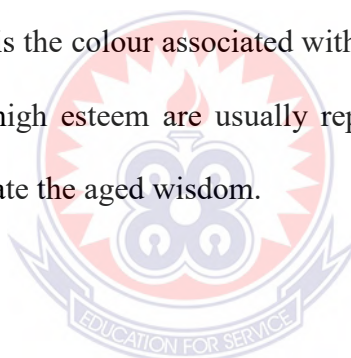
where the current page fades out while the new page fades in. It sought to bring a fluid feel and aesthetic to the app's navigation.

#### **4.7.2.5 Typography**

The typography employed the sans serif typeface. Sans serif was chosen because it is easy to read and calm. Screen pixels density is different across gadgets and as such a sans serif was deemed as more appropriate to avoid illegible body text because of pixelated typefaces. The fonts used were notosans for the headings and sans serif for the sub headings.

#### **4.7.2.6 Colour**

A dingy gold was the key colour scheme employed for the creation of the app. In Ghanaian Akan culture, gold is the colour associated with royalty and richness. Qualities such as richness and beauty and high esteem are usually represented with gold. It being in the dingy colour helps to accentuate the aged wisdom.



#### **4.7.2.7 Splash Screen**

The splash screen of the app is basically the welcome the user to the app. it also serve as the loading screen of the app thus while this screen opens the activities loads asynchronously. This page needs to have information about the app which will be interesting and catchy for the user to get hooked onto the app from the onset. Here, the sankofa adinkra symbol was used since it's the name of the app and also its philosophy of returning to the good old values, a core principle for the creation of the app. Its colour is orange -brown with the name of the app written in a stylish typeface in black and brown colours respectively. The adinkra symbol sankofa was embossed and a drop shadow applied to separate it from the background and were arranged horizontally at the top and bottom of the page.

## **4.8. Creation of some parts of the interface in adobe Photoshop**

### **4.8.1 Preliminary sketches**

There were a variety of quick idea sketches of the apps interface based on respondents ideas and observation of how similar apps are created and used. Comps and loops were used to represent text while image placeholders were used to represent the images.

original adinkra symbols used for the app

### **4.8.2 Roughts**

This stage of the design process is where the possible layout was selected and refined. dummy text was inserted into the space for the text. The centered layout was chosen for the headings and sub headings, and a left aligned layout for the body text.

### **4.8.3 Comprehensives**

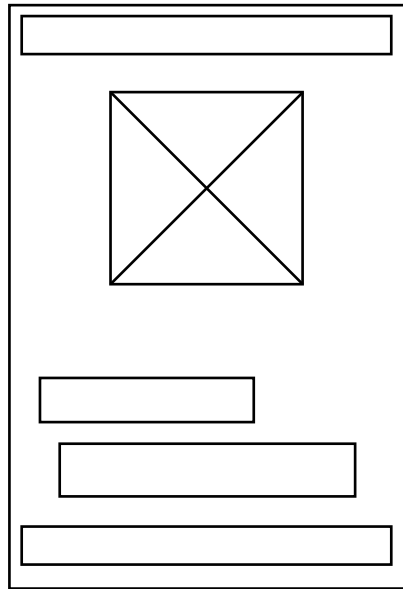
With the comprehensives, the final layout was refined. Adobe Photoshop was then used to create the design. The scroll was an image gotten from a royalty free website and treated to look a bit old with a brush effect. In creating the splash screen symbol, the image was scanned into Photoshop. It was then traced again with the pen tool and filled with the orange -brown colour. From the filters palette, emboss was selected and drop shadow was applied through the layer blending properties. The images were all created in 72dpi screen resolution since it was targeted at screens of gadgets. And they were exported as PNG (portable network graphics) file formats with a bit of sharpening for screens. All through the creation of the app interface, consideration was given to simplicity and less file size, to aid in the creation of the app, and the final app size. A heavy file size wouldn't encourage downloading and installation, unusable on some lower end devices, and affect user experience in the slower animations. Java was the language used in the programming of the app. It is the

main language used in developing android applications. The platform targeted was the android OS. It's the widespread operating system at the moment and the Playstore of google accepts any application without many restrictions as other platforms like apple or windows.

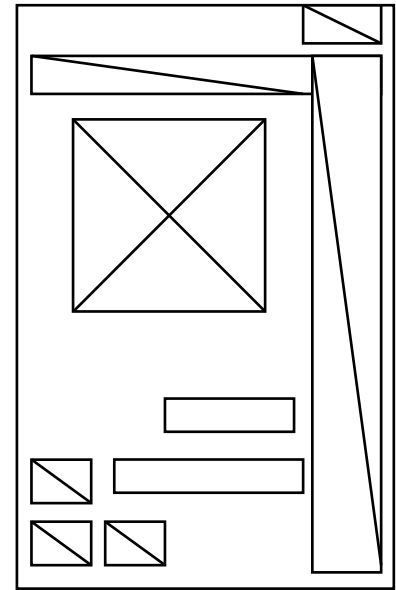




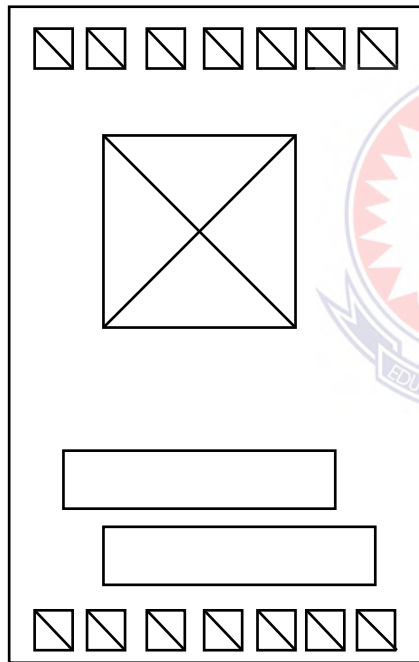
#### 4.8.4 Preliminary layout of splash screen



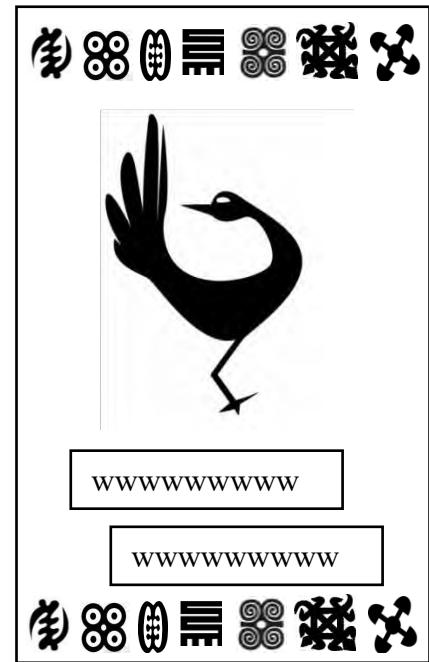
Stage 1



Stage 2



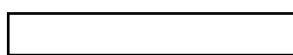
Stage 3: Selected layout



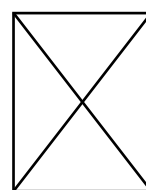
Stage 4: Rough design of splash screen

Figure 1: Idea Development of Splash Screen

Key



text

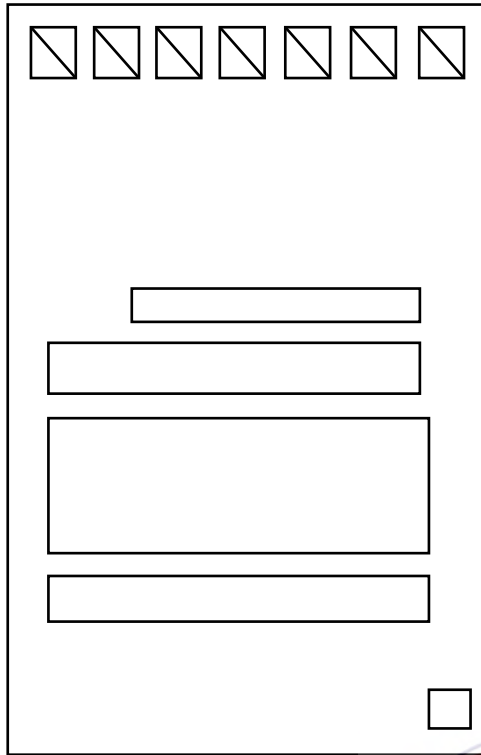


icon

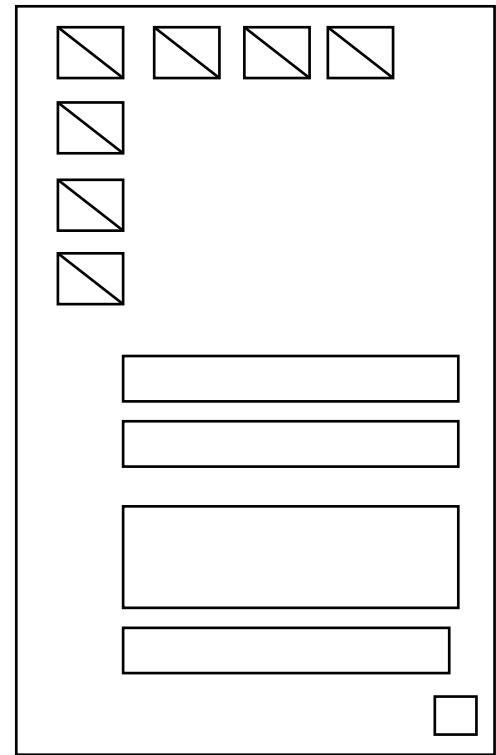


symbol

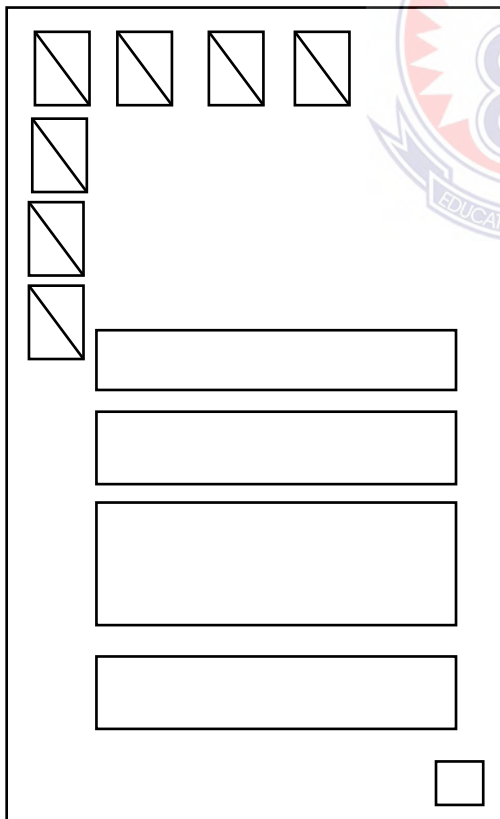
### 4.8.5 Preliminary Layout of Main Activity Pages



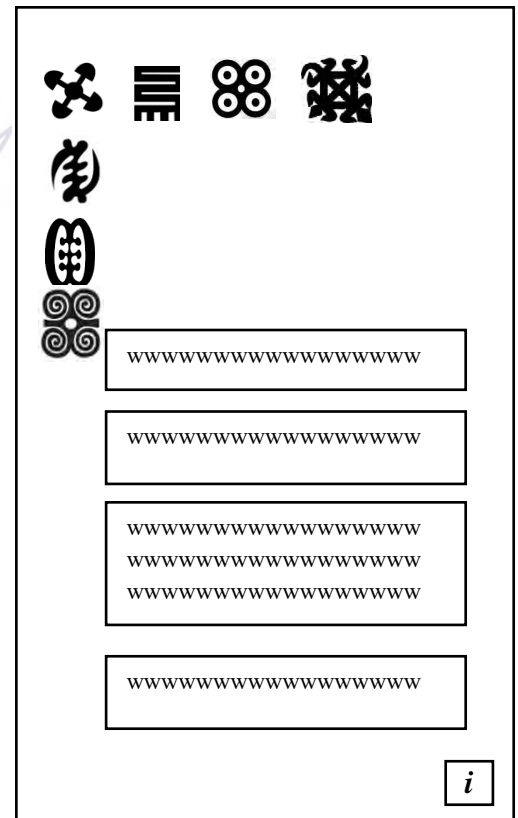
Stage 1



Stage 2



Stage 3: Selected layout



Stage 4: Rough design of layout

Figure 2: Preliminary Layout of Main Activity Pages

#### 4.8.6 Design Based on Layout of Activity



Figure 3: Design Based on Layout of Activity

#### 4.8.7 Design Based on Layout of Splash Screen



Figure 4: Design Based on Layout of Splash Screen

#### 4.8.9 Snap Shots of the Mobile Application Technology ‘Sankofa Abebuo’



Figure 5: Sankofa splash screen



Figure 6: Layout



**Figure 7: : Layout**



**Figure 8: About the app**

#### 4.9 Proverbs on the Sankofa Abebuo app

This app seeks to promote morality among the youth in view of this, the values of proverbs as discussed in chapter two and four by scholars and respondents respectively, played a major role in the selection of the proverbs for the designing of the app. Twenty (20) carefully selected Akan proverbs collected from respondents have been translated into English with its philosophical meaning, as well as time of use and have been placed on this app. Below are the twenty proverbs as presented on the mobile application (Sankofa Abebuo).

1. **Proverb;** Wowe εfoɔ nsa a, na woahwε wo dee.

**Literal Translation;** As you eat the hand of the monkey, observe yours.

**Philosophical context;** The monkey's hand resembles that of the human being, so as one eats it, one must be reminded it is similar to theirs. As we maltreat a fellow human being we must be reminded that they are just like us.

**Time to use the proverb;** This proverb is used to warn against unjust behaviour against humanity.

2. **Proverb;** Adifudepe na emaa adowa kaa nsa tumpan mu.

**Literal Translation;** It was greed that trapped the bee in a palm wine bottle.

**Philosophical context;** The pursuit of too much pleasure leads to trouble.

**Time to use the proverb:** It's an advice for people to do things in moderation.



3. **Proverb;** Abebeko n'akyinkyinakyinkyin na odzeno ko wie akoko nenum.

**Literal Translation;** It was the wayward attitude of the grasshopper that landed it in the chicken's mouth.

**Philosophical context;** This proverb looks at the wayward behaviour of people in the society, or the kind of friends one associate with.

**Time to use the proverb;** It is used to counsel against bad behaviour.

4. **Proverb;** Dua a osi koko do nkyer tenten ye .

**Literal Translation;** A tree that stands on a hill becomes tall very quickly.

**Philosophical context;** A life based on good foundation (values) proves fruitful.

**Time to use the proverb;** This proverb is used as an advice to young people to acquire and apply the right values to issues of life.

5. **Proverb;** Wotan wo ni a, womfa no mma dom.

**Literal Translation;** If you hate your mother, you do not hand her over to her enemies.

**Philosophical context;** There is a connection between a mother and child that can never be severed no matter how much you dislike her.

**Time to use the proverb;** The proverb is used to draw the attention to the unbreakable ties that binds the family regardless disagreements that may ensue.

6. **Proverb;** Kwatrekwa se obema wo ntoma a, tie ne din.

**Literal Translation;** If nakedness promises to cloth you, listen to its name

**Philosophical context;** Nakedness has no covering therefore it needs clothe more than the one it has promised.

**Time to use the proverb;** This proverb is used to caution the society not to rely on empty promises (to analyze situations and not always rely on hearsay).

7. **Proverb;** Funtummireku, denkyem funafu didi gu y'afunu kro mu, nso minimu twetwie nti wɔ didi a wɔfom.

**Literal Translation;** The Siamese crocodile have a common stomach yet when they are eating, each struggle to get more than the other.

**Philosophical context;** The society is made up of individuals with diverse taste, aspirations and desires hence the two heads, limbs and tails of the crocodile. However, the common stomach represents the bond that binds the society. This means no matter how individualistic our needs are, we our collective contributions unite us.

**Time to use the proverb;** This proverb is used as advice to young against overbearing attitude, selfishness, jealousy and greed.



**8. Proverb;** Mpasompaso a ɔpa nwoma so, enye no enumde adie yie na ɔpɛ.

**Literal Translation;** The person who removes the skin of fured animals does not do so because of the meat that will be left on the fur but the betterment of the skin.

**Philosophical context;** The mediator is not self seeking but brings reconciliation. The proverb is used to emphasis the impartial nature of the mediator.

**Time to use the proverb;** The proverb is used in instances where the helper is treated with suspicion or mistrust.

**9. Proverb;** Ɔson nhwɛ ne to na woatsew ahaban ekitew.

**Literal Translation;** The elephant does not look at the size of its buttocks before it takes leaves to wipe the anus.

**Philosophical context;** The elephant is a huge animal that symbolizes authority and greatness; however its use in this proverb connotes moderation in dealing with emotions such as joy, sorrow, anger etc.

**Time to use the proverb;** It is used to advice people to not to react to situations according to their level of emotion.

**10. Proverb;** Akoma bɔn kum ne wura.

**Literal Translation;** Bad temper kills its owner.

**Philosophical context;** A person who gives in to excessive anger or frequent fights dies as results because the heart is a delicate organ which cannot withstand excessive aggression.

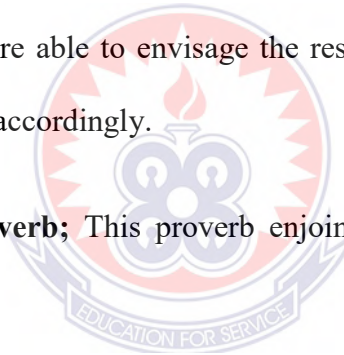
**Time to use the proverb;** The proverb is use to warn against bad temper.

**11. Proverb;** Ọpanyin na obi nyɛɛ bi da, na abɔfra dze obiara ayɛ bi da.

**Literal Translation;** Everybody has been a child before but not everyone has been an old person before.

**Philosophical context;** Wisdom comes with the experience that goes with ageing in view of this, the old are able to envisage the results of the actions of the young and therefore advice them accordingly.

**Time to use the proverb;** This proverb enjoins the youth to pay attention to the advice of the old.



**12. Proverb;** Ọpanyin a odze asem biara ekyer no ɔbɔ man.

**Literal Translation;** An elder who is petty over every little issue destroys the society.

**Philosophical context;** The elder is considered a very important figure in the society. In most instances the elder has the final say in issues, therefore if the elder is petty; he or she will misguide the society.

**Time to use the proverb;** This is a call to the old not to misconduct themselves in the society.

**13. Proverb;** Tsir kor mmpam.

**Literal Translation;** One head does not go into counsel.

**Philosophical context;** Wisdom does not exist in the head of one person hence the views of everybody in the society count.

**Time to use the proverb;** This proverb is to encourage collective decision making at all levels.

**14. Proverb ;** Nyaa ɔwɔ aka no da no suro nsunsuma.

**Literal Translation;** One who has been bitten by a snake before fear a worm

**Philosophical context;** The experiences that we go through are supposed to inform our behaviour, choices and decisions.

**Time to use the proverb;** The proverb is meant to warn the society to reflect on past actions and their results.

**15. Proverb;** Obaa kɔ awar a ɔdze ne na kɔ.

**Literal Translation;** A woman goes into marriage with her mother.

**Philosophical context;** A woman's attitude in marriage always tells who her mother is or the sort of training she received from her. If her mother taught her well she will behave well and if her mother did not train her well it will be seen in her behaviour.

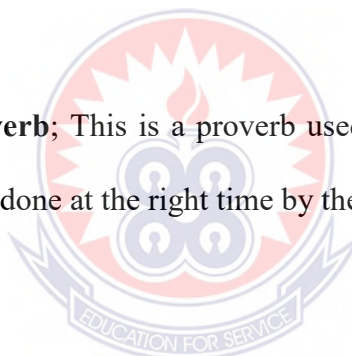
**Time to use the proverb;** This is a proverb that warn young ladies to learn the right values before they go to marriage hence they will tarnish their mother's image in the society.

**16. Proverb;** Akokɔ bedɛ nim adekyee nso otie firi onini ano

**Literal Translation;** The hen knows its dawn but it waits to hear the cock crow.

**Philosophical context;** Responsibility must be left to those whose duty it is to perform them. For instance every woman knows when marriage is due but it is the duty of the man in the Akan society to ask for her hand in marriage and not the other way round.

**Time to use the proverb;** This is a proverb used to advise individuals to be patient and allow things to be done at the right time by the right people.



**17. Proverb;** Akyekyedee nni nufu, nso ɔwo a, onim nea ɔye yen ne ba.

**Literal Translation;** The tortoise does not have breast milk but it knows how to take care of its offspring.

**Philosophical context;** With determination, nothing is impossible in life.

**Time to use the proverb;** The proverb is used to give encouragement to discouraged persons.

**18. Proverb;** Nsamanpomu sodro ,woni wu a w'abusua asa.

**Literal Translation;** He who loses the mother to death has no family.

**Philosophical context;** This shows the tenderness, love and selflessness of a mother towards her children. It means when a mother dies no one in the family can make the sacrifices she made in caring for her children.

**Time to use the proverb;** This proverb is used to draw the attention of children to take good care of their mothers.

**19. Proverb;** Aboa no ntakra na ema no ye kɛsɛɛ nanso ntakra bɔne deɛ fanyinam kwatrekwa.

**Literal Translation;** The feathers of a bird makes it big, however, it is better to be without feathers than have bad ones.

**Philosophical context;** It is better to have little with peace than plenty with sorrow.

**Time to use the proverb;** It is used to teach contentment.

**20. Proverb;** Tsir wɔ hoɑ kotodwe nhye kyew.

**Literal Translation;** The knee cannot wear a crown while the head still exist.

**Philosophical context;** Honour must be given to whom honour is due.

**Time to use the proverb;** It is used to emphasize respect for succession.

#### **4.9.1 Testing of the Mobile Application**

Twenty (20) Akans made up of people in Winneba and students of the University of Education, Winneba who fall within the stipulated age brackets (15-35 years) as youth were selected for the testing of the mobile application software called Sankofa Abebuo. This was done by sending the app to them via their email addresses, face book and whatsapp; they subsequently downloaded and installed the Sankofa Abebuo app on their mobile phones. Responses were however sent through mobile phone interactions (whats app, face book, text messages and phone conversations) and emails. Aside this, the app was shown to some of the participants in the test by the researcher who verbally gave their views on the Sankofa Abebuo app.

#### **4.9.2 Results of the Testing**

The results of the test showed that the participants were fascinated and interested. Some shared it with others who were not within the scope of the testing and this indirectly widened the scope of the test. A quarter of the participants Commented that it is interesting, a few participants said it is very insightful, a few also said it is a good work because it will help people to know proverbs. One participant said it is user friendly and it will help the youth to bond with their culture. A quarter of the respondents felt the app will give them the chance to access proverbs with ease. Quite a number of the participants were also of the opinion that since the youth are so into the use of the technology, the app being technology base will easily facilitate the use of proverbs.

Out of this number, a few participants gave suggestions like add more proverbs, provide that of other ethnic groups and add audio to the proverbs.

The responses and comments received indicate that the app is good and will successfully facilitate the use of proverbs among the Akan youth in Ghana. To this end the

app has been made available on the Google Play Store so every youth who has a phone with Android operating system can have access to the proverbs with ease.

#### **4.10 Discussion of Findings**

Data presented showed that past youth were people with better moral standards compared to contemporary youth. A critical look at the data indicate that this view is informed by the fact that the past youth were trained based on the authentic Akan moral values engineered by proverbs and other oral traditions and practices and were exposed to the right social behaviour, however the contemporary youth has minimal or no idea about proverbs nor practices as well as the social norms and therefore does not have good morals. Data shows that the past Akan society, placed premium on proverbs as a tool for instilling good morals. This is because all the respondents in category A claim to have been influenced by proverbs in their personal development. Their claim however is given authenticity by their identification of values learnt from proverbs such as loyalty, respect for elders and members of the society, patience, hardworking, truthfulness, kindness, tolerance, cleanliness, humility, gentleness, chastity, neatness, avoidance of greed, obedience and selflessness, punctuality, purity of heart and honesty. Another interesting feature is their ability to cite proverbs, give its philosophical meaning and enumerates situations that called for the proverb usage. This shows that proverbs indeed permeated all facets of their lives.

Aside this category, all the other categories with the exception of category B were able to cite proverbs though some of these proverbs were of foreign origin. They also had the opinion that proverbs influenced the moral behaviours of the youth of the past greatly, however, contemporary youth have very little affinity to proverb usage in recent times. This view is corroborated by the response of the youth on their familiarity to proverbs where only a few of youth who claim to be familiar with proverbs were able to cite proverbs. This

nonetheless does not mean they are completely ignorant of their culture. Contrary to the opinions of respondents on the use of the local language among the youth, the study revealed that its use is still highly prevalent among the youth, however it does not have proverbial content otherwise they would have been able to cite proverbs. On the oral traditions of the Akan, while majority of the respondents said they were familiar with oral tradition, very few of them were able to cite oral traditions, indicating that the youth's familiarity with the culture of the society is below average. Nonetheless, the youth are aware of the benefits of proverbs to their moral development. This is seen in the responses of more than half of the number who are familiar with proverbs. According to them, proverbs helped them to reflect on actions, decisions as well as serve as guides to good behaviour, this coupled with most of the respondents who believe that proverbs can help foster good morals among the youth, it can be guaranteed that the youth will generally listen and use proverbs if they are exposed to them in a way that they will understand.

The problem of lack of use of proverbs among the youth in the society can be attributed to the pseudo image the society project when it comes to upholding and transmitting its cultural values to the next generation, because of this, the youth are not equipped with the adequate information on culture; neither does it inform their day to day lives because the society itself does not live by the tenets of the Akan culture of which proverb is a part. This is attributable to the society itself been influenced by western values in a way that the traditional responsibilities of its agents of socialization (thus society, parents and family) is not as active as it use to be among past Akans. The responses of respondents on their use of proverbs as a disciplinary tool in the contemporary Akan society proved that more than half of them did not use it. Again data indicate that the use of proverbs is not prevalent among members in the society as it used to be in the past. Aside this the contemporary youth lives in a society where its educational system is more geared towards foreign values other than the indigenous values. Data provided by respondents on the cultural content of the

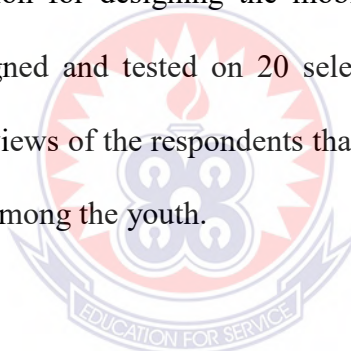


curriculum show that very little consideration is given to it in terms of content and coverage. This indicates that the contemporary society does not facilitate the use of proverbs among the youth.

A critical study of the data shows that non face to face communication is predominant among the youth with over face to face communication. The confirmation that technology is gradually taking over the traditional modes of communication be it verbal or non verbal is seen through the youths preference for interaction on their devices rather than engage in face-to-face interaction which is the traditional means through which oral traditions of which proverbs is a part are passed on to the younger generation. These devices run on mobile and computer systems application software which has information that is highly influenced especially by western values other than our traditional values. These devices range from mobile phones, laptops, tablets, smart phones, laptops, mp3 players, flat screen television, iPods, video gaming consoles, television and audio players, camera phone, desktop computers, audio recorders and players. This implies that the society is gradually losing its personal touch with the youth. To emphasize this point, a look at the influence of some technology versus social institutions show that the influence of television and internet have high prevalent rate. Similarly, parents, family and the society also showed relatively high prevalent rates. Implying that, technology and social institutions of socialization are almost neck to neck on their influence. Culture on the other hand showed a very weak prevalent rate. Again data revealed that parents, culture and the family were the major agents that influenced the youth to behave right however, the internet, television and society influenced the youth to behave wrong. Per the data provided by the respondents, it implies the youth are exposed to agents that influence them to behave wrong more than they are to the agents that influence them right. Another interesting revelation is that the society which hither to was on the watch for good moral behaviour is now noted for making the youth behave wrong according to data

received from the respondents. The parents and family are part of the society so the question is; what are the foundations of the moral values being imparted to the younger generation?

Data indicates that technology exposes the youth to immoral videos, virtual sex, fraud and gambling, yet evidence show that despite the bad influence of technology, it can be put to good use. The words of Mario Morino expresses this view better when he says " technology itself is never the reason things change. Rather, it is how people choose to apply technology – and whether they make wise decisions and address real needs – that makes the difference in the long run". The study revealed some existing technologies that have made contributions in encouraging good social values. These are the ananse project and Zingaro's animated series on television. This coupled with the views of the respondents on the use of technology among the youth, were the foundation for designing the mobile application technology (Sankofa Abebuo). The app was designed and tested on 20 selected individuals. The results of the testing however attest to the views of the respondents that mobile technology is a good means of facilitating proverb usage among the youth.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter focus on the summary, conclusion, recommendation and suggestions for further studies.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to make Akan proverbs relevant in the moral education of the modern Akan youth via the use of mobile technology. To achieve this, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the relevance of Akan proverbs to the moral development of the Akan youth?
2. What are some major factors that influence the moral development of the modern Akan youth?
3. To what extent will mobile technology aid the use of proverbs in the Akan society?
4. Will the mobile application (Sankofa Abebuo) facilitate the use of proverbs among the Akan youth?

The main research instruments used to gather data for the study were questionnaire and interview guide. A sample size of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents was obtained through variations of purposive sampling techniques such as homogeneous sampling, snowball and typical case sampling techniques. This sample was categorised into four namely A, B, C and D and were used to answer the research questions. Analysis was done with the thematic and descriptive techniques and percentages presented in tables. The data obtained proved that the use of proverbs is minimal among folks in the Akan society in

recent times; however the same cannot be said for the youth who form the core of this study. The study proved that most of the youth did not know proverbs. Again they had very limited access to proverbs because most oral traditions of the Akan are transmitted by word of mouth; this however is not effective because the traditional institutions (thus, parents, family, and society) that are to do this do not do it. A notable feature of the youth was their genuine interest in knowing the proverb and their insatiable desire for technology at all levels of communication. In view of this, the researcher capitalized on the interest of the youth in technology coupled with their interest in knowing proverbs and collated twenty Akan proverbs on application software named 'Sankofa Abebuo'. The proverbs were presented with their literal translation in the English language, philosophical context and instances that could warrant its use. This was then testing on 20 youth in Winneba and the University of Education, Winneba who downloaded and installed the Sankofa Abebuo app on their mobile phones. The results of the test showed that they were fascinated and interested. Some shared it with friends and even widened the scope of the test. Comments like interesting, very insightful, good work done, user friendly were received. For some they felt the app will give them the chance to access proverbs with ease. Some said since the youth are so into the use of technology, it will easily facilitate the use of proverbs. Suggestions like add more proverbs, add other ethnic groups and add audio were also given.

### **5.3 Summary of Key Findings**

The following findings emerged from the study:

Oral traditions were catalyst that engineered good moral development among the old generation Akan societies. Older Akan generation believed that moral values are embedded in proverbs, as such members were taught proverbs and lived in an environment where proverb usage was rampant. In view of this members had knowledge of proverbs, understood and related the values expressed in them to their moral development.

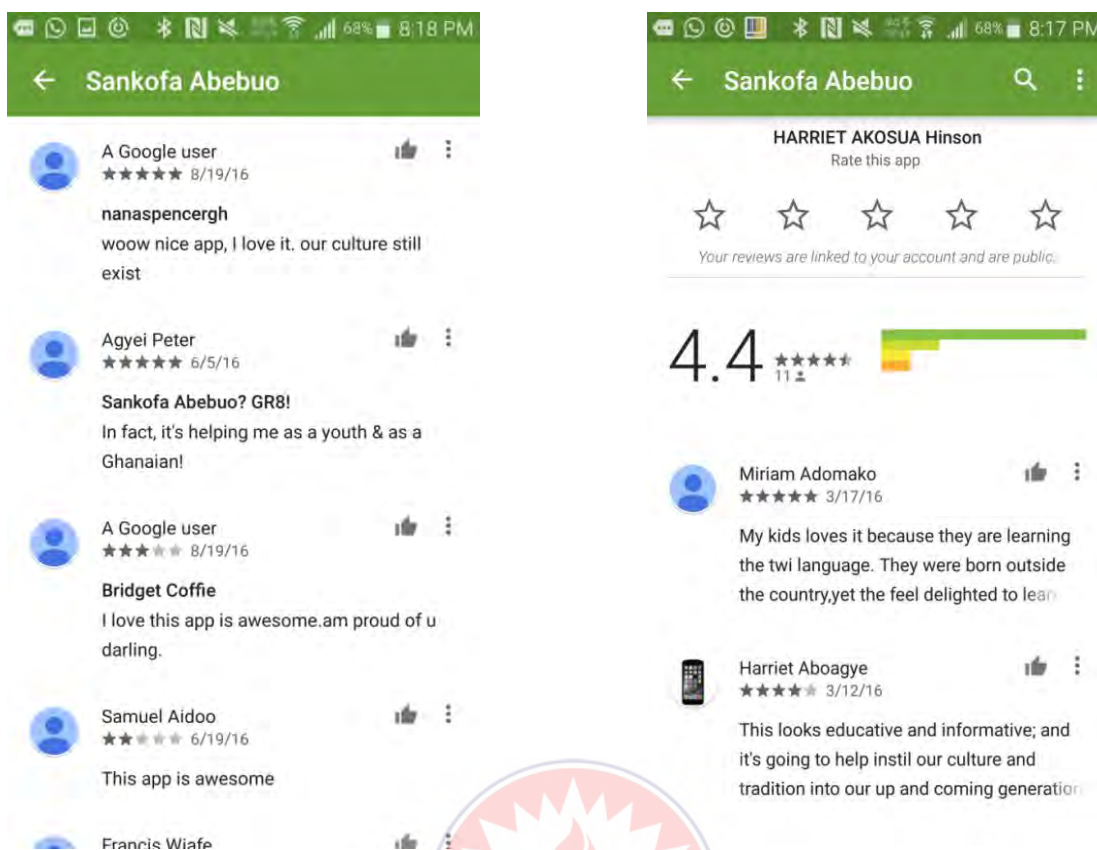
The study revealed that the society does not educate the contemporary youth on the Akan culture. The youth have very little or no knowledge of proverbs or the traditions of the Akan. This can be attributed to the absence or little presence of proverbs in the social life and education of the youth making it so difficult for the youth who are genuinely interested in finding information on their own to easily do so. The study found out that the contemporary Akan youth is very interested in knowing about the cultural values and specifically proverbs of the Akan, however, the traditional institutions of socialization (society, family and parents) have failed in their duty of educating them as such. There is so much reliance on western values other than the indigenous values in the social environment of the contemporary youth. Contemporary Akan youth are generally influenced by the society (modernization), technology, formal education and urbanization.

Although there have been attempts at including themes that reflect the culture of the society in the curriculum, it has not made much difference because, it is restricted to only a few students who are privileged to be studying specific subject, aside this, the topics are not very detailed to have the impact it is supposed to have.

The youth rely on available mobile technologies for quick and easy access and dissemination information. To them, technology provides the most reliable and easy and effective way of communicating with the world around them. Mobile technology is widely used in all facet of the life of the contemporary youth and has evolved as a way by which they learn about themselves and their environment.

The mobile application was well received by the respondent involved in the testing of the application. Aside this many people have downloaded the Mobile application (sankofa abebuo) since it was placed on Google play store.

### 5.3.1 Snap Shots of Responses of Some Users of the Sankofa Abebuo App on Play Store



**Figure 9: Snap Shots of Some Users Comments of The Sankofa Abebuo App On Google Play Store**

### 5.4 Conclusions

The essence of who we are is not based on where we are or where we are going but on where we have come from. The founding fathers of every society thought of unborn generation and couched their life's experiences and observations in the form of oral traditions as guides to a harmonious and peaceful co existence with others. Proverbs is one of such traditions which are tailored at enabling individuals in the society to become the best they can be by knowing the values and allowing the values to permeate all facets of their lives. In view of this, the study made the following conclusions:

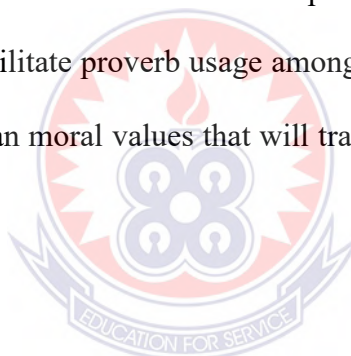
Social institutions of socialization worked efficiently in the past to ensure the right social behaviour of the youth. members were taught the moral values through cultural practices and oral tradition and so they were aware of how society expected them to behave.

in view of this older Akan generation knew and applied the values inherent in proverbs in their moral development therefore they lived in accordance with the moral values of the Akan society.

Contemporary youth have very little or no knowledge of proverbs or other oral traditions of the Akan. However, they will probably live in accordance with Akan moral values if they had more exposure to Akan moral values and little or no exposure to the factors that presently influence them.

Mobile technology is a widely used medium for interactions among the youth, in view of this it can serve as the tool for facilitating the use of proverbs among the Akan youth.

Sankofa Abebuo application has made some proverbs available to the contemporary Akan youth technology to facilitate proverb usage among the youth, this is to assist the youth to acquire and internalize Akan moral values that will translate into good moral behaviour for national development.



## **5.5 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

Chiefs, queen mothers, parents and stakeholders in the society must play their role in socialising the youth on the values of the Akan. Chiefs and queen mothers can 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 endeavour to use proverbs during traditional practices like marriage, outdooing and festivals etc., this will allow the youth to hear authentic Akan proverbs and learn the right values. Parents, families, society must ensue



to create environment influenced by Akan values at home, school, places of socialization. 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 through the creative industry can also promote proverb usage through films, music, dance and visual arts. Musicians can use classical folktales and their moral implication as well as proverbs as lyrics of their music. Again aside making glamorous contemporary movies, movie writes and producers could focus some attention on producing movies that has ancient heroic stories and myths that still have relevance in the contemporary Akan society. Aside this, characters in contemporary themes can infuse the cultural values of the society through proverbial quote 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 Akan 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 every district capital of the country so that the youth can read on the traditions and values of the society.

The Ministry of Education should take a look at the curriculum in terms of its content on culture. This can be done by 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 Akan proverbs and other oral traditions of other ethnic groups in Ghana.



Technology abound 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.

### **5.6 Recommendations for further research**

Based on the responses of the participants involved in the testing of the Sankofa Abebuo app, study recommends that parallel research should be conducted in other ethnic groups in Ghana.



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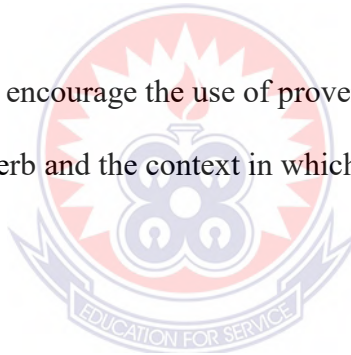
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## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY

1. Comment briefly on the morality of past and recent Akan youth?
2. How did society maintain moral ethics in the society the past?
3. In what way did proverbs influence your character formation as a youth?
4. What were the values instilled in you by proverbs?
5. How is proverbs used in Akan society?
6. When were proverbs used in the society?
7. What are the channels of proverbs?
8. How do you see the use of proverbs in the society, is it prevalent as it use to be in the past?
9. How can the society encourage the use of proverbs among the youth
10. kindly give one proverb and the context in which it can be used





## APENDIX B

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS

1. Please state your area of expertise
2. To what extent does technology influence the moral disposition of the youth of today?
3. Kindly identify some of the devices used by the youth in recent times.
4. In what ways can technology facilitate the use of proverbs among the youth in recent times?
5. Please identify some existing technologies that have helped in the development of a social value.
6. Would you recommend technology as a channel for proverb to the youth? If yes please state why.



## APENDIX C

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ART EDUCATION

#### QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE RELEVANCE OF PROVERBS TO THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AKAN YOUTH.

This questionnaire is designed to collect data from **traditional authorities** to help in a research on the moral relevance of proverbs to the Akan youth, as part of the requirement for the award of Master of Philosophy in Art and culture. Data collected will be treated in strict confidence and shall be used for educational purpose only and in no way shall it be associated with the respondent.

Please indicate your choice of answers by ticking (✓) the right option that best suit your response to the items in this section of the questionnaire.

#### SECTION A

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON RESPONDENTS

1. Please indicate your gender

Male

Female

2. Age range you fall within

20-40     41-60     61-80     81 and above

3. Educational level

Tertiary     Secondary     Middle/ Basic     None

4. Religion

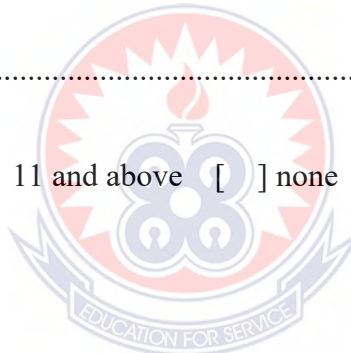
Christian     Islam     Traditional     Other

5. Marital status

single     married

6. Number of children .....

1-4     5-10     11 and above     none



This section has statements that are designed to seek your views on certain issues relating to the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each statement depending on your degree of agreement or disagreement. Kindly tick [  ] against the response that express your views. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the statements.

	STATEMENTS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	The role of the society in the training of the child is as vibrant today as it used to be in the past.				

8	The local language is still the main means of communication in the home.				
9	The language of the modern day Akan is as rich in proverbs as that of the past.				
10	Proverbs are deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of the society.				
11	Proverbs are a product of religion.				
12	The youth of today are in tune with the use of proverbs in interaction.				
13	The youth will be more disciplined generally if they are exposed to proverbs.				
14	The youth of today are in tune with the cultural values of the Akan?				
15	The family's role in moral development of the youth in the modern Akan society is very vital				

### SECTION C

This section has questions that are designed to seek your views on certain issues relating to the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each questions by providing answers based on your opinion, facts and observation. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions.

16. In what ways are the youth of today different from the youth of the past?

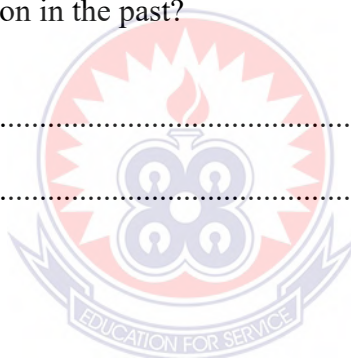
.....  
.....

17. Comment briefly on the general moral situation in your community

.....  
.....

19. How was the moral situation in the past?

.....  
.....



20. How did the society maintain the moral ethics of the society in the past?

.....  
.....

21. When were proverbs used in interaction in the past?

.....  
.....

22. In what way did proverbs influence the moral behaviour of the youth in the past?

.....  
.....

23. How did the youth of the past use proverbs?

.....  
.....

24. How is proverbs used in the Akan society

.....  
.....



25. What are the channels of proverbs?

.....  
.....

26. Who are the originators of proverbs?

.....  
.....

27. Were you exposed to proverbs as a youth? If yes how did proverbs help you with your character as a youth?

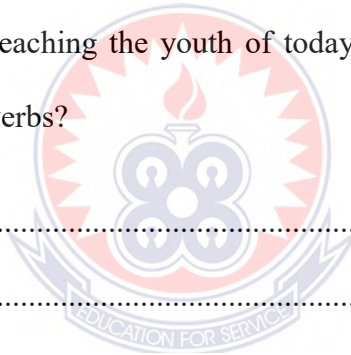
.....  
.....

28. What were some of the moral values proverbs instilled in you?

.....  
.....

29. Do you use proverbs in teaching the youth of today moral values? If yes, how do they react if they hear you use proverbs?

.....  
.....



30. Are there youth in the society who use proverbs?

.....

31. Is the use of proverbs prevalent among members of the society?

.....

32. As a parent how often do you use proverbs as a disciplinary tool in the training of your youthful children?

.....  
.....

33. Give three ways in which the society can encourage the use of proverbs among the youth in Akan Society?

.....  
.....

34. Do you have any proverbs of your own? If yes, state one

.....  
.....



35. Do you know any proverb author in your community?

.....  
.....

36. Kindly give one proverb and give the context in which it can be used

.....  
.....

Thank you



## APENDIX D

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE YOUTH

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ART EDUCATION

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE RELEVANCE OF PROVERBS TO THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AKAN YOUTH.**

This questionnaire is designed to collect data from **the youth** to help in a research on the moral relevance of proverbs to the Akan youth, as part of the requirement for the award of Master of Philosophy in Art and culture. Data collected will be treated in strict confidence and shall be used for educational purpose only and in no way shall it be associated with the respondent.

Please indicate your choice of answers by ticking (✓) the right option that best suit your response to the items in this section of the questionnaire.

#### SECTION A

##### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON RESPONDENTS

1. Please indicate your gender

Male                       Female

2. Age range you fall within

15-20     21-25     26-30     31-35

3. Educational level

Tertiary     Secondary     Middle/ Basic     None

4. Religion

Christian     Islam     Traditional     Other

5. Marital status

single     married

6. Children

1-4     5-10     11 and above     none



**SECTION B**


This section has questions that seek your views on certain issues relating technology, and the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each question by ticking [√] against the response that expresses your views on the degree of prevalence on the scale of 1 - 5. Kindly provide answers based on your opinion, facts and observation. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions.

7. Which of the following is rampant in your community?

BEHAVIOUR	1	2	3	4	5

Stealing					
Violence					
Internet fraud					
Vandalism					
Sexual promiscuity					
Substance abuse					
Improper dressing					
Verbal abuse					

8. What way do you communicate with people most



COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5
Face-to-face					
Non-face- to- face (eg. Phone communications, whatsapp, viba, email, face book, skyp, twitter etc.)					

9. What medium do you use for face-to-face communication?

COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5
Verbal					

Non verbal(sign, demeanor and symbols)					
--	--	--	--	--	--

10. What language do you communicate in most?

VERBAL COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5
Local language					
English					
Others					


11. What kind of medium do you use most in non face- to- face communication?

COMMUNICATION GADGETS MOSTLY USED FOR COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5
Smart phones					
Personal computer					
Desk telephone					
Television					
Radio					
iPod					

12. Which of the following agents influence your behaviour most

AGENTS	1	2	3	4	5
Society					
Family					
Parents					
Television					
Internet					
Culture					

13. Which of these agents influence the youth to behave right?

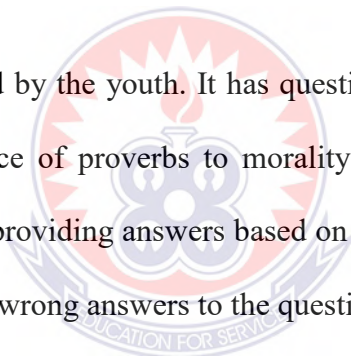


AGENTS	1	2	3	4	5
Society					
Family					
Parents					
Television					
Internet					
Culture					

14. Which of these agents influence the youth to behave wrong?

AGENTS	1	2	3	4	5
Society					
Family					
Parents					
Television					
Internet					
Culture					

This section is to be answered by the youth. It has questions that seek your views on certain issues relating to the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each questions by providing answers based on your opinion, facts and observation. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions



15. Are you in touch with the cultural values of the society?

Yes       No

16. Are you familiar with the oral traditions of the society? If yes give three oral traditions of the Akan.

.....

.....

17. Are you familiar with proverbs?

Yes       No

118. Kindly cite one proverb you know

.....  
.....

19. Can you relate proverbs to your moral orientation? If yes, how do proverbs influence your morals?

.....  
.....



20. Do you think proverbs can help the youth to reform from vice they are exposed to?

.....

21. In what ways can technology facilitate the use of proverbs among the youth in the modern society?

.....  
.....

Thank you.

## APENDIX E

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TECHNOLOGY EXPERTS

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ART EDUCATION

#### QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE RELEVANCE OF PROVERBS TO THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AKAN YOUTH.

This questionnaire is designed to collect data from **technology experts** to help in a research on the moral relevance of proverbs to the Akan youth, as part of the requirement for the award of Master of Philosophy in Art and culture. Data collected will be treated in strict confidence and shall be used for educational purpose only and in no way shall it be associated with the respondent.

Please indicate your choice of answers by ticking (✓) the right option that best suit your response to the items in this section of the questionnaire.

#### SECTION A

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON RESPONDENTS

1. Please indicate your gender

Male                       Female

2. Age range you fall within



20-40     41-60     61-80     81 and above

3. Educational level

Tertiary     Secondary     Middle/ Basic     None

4. Religion

Christian     Islam     Traditional     Other

5. Marital status

single     married

6. Number of children .....

1-4     5-10     11 and above     none



**SECTION B**

This section has statements that are designed to seek your views on certain issues relating to the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each statement depending on your degree of agreement or disagreement. Kindly tick [  ] against the response that express your views. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the statements.

	STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly
7	Technology influences morality more than the institutions of socialization among the youth of today.				
8	Face- to face interaction remains the				

	most used means of communication among the youth of today				
9	Technology provides the most effective communication channel among the youth of today				
10	The most used communication channel is technology based				
11	The school shapes the behaviour of individuals with a blend of western and the cultural values of the society				
12	The youth of today are exposed to proverbs as the youth of the past				
13	The youth are very much in tune with the local language and understand proverbs				
14	Aside verbal proverbs, the youth know the non- verbal forms of proverb and they understand them				
15	Technology can make proverbs popular with the youth.				

### SECTION C

This section has questions that seek your views on certain issues relating to technology and the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each

questions by providing answers based on your opinion, facts and observation. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions

16. Comment briefly on the general moral situation in your community.

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17. How would you describe the moral orientation of the youth of today in your community?

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.....



18. Is technology relevant in the moral disposition of the youth of today? If yes state how it influences the morals of the youth

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.....

19. Are you familiar with proverbs?

Yes  No

20. Kindly cite one proverb you know.

.....  
.....

21. In what ways can technology facilitate the use of proverbs among the youth in the modern society?

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## APENDIX F

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATIONIST

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ART EDUCATION

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE RELEVANCE OF PROVERBS TO THE MORAL

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE AKAN YOUTH.

This questionnaire is designed to collect data from **educationist** to help in a research on the moral relevance of proverbs to the Akan youth, as part of the requirement for the award of Master of Philosophy in Art and culture. Data collected will be treated in strict confidence and shall be used for educational purpose only and in no way shall it be associated with the respondent.

Please indicate your choice of answers by ticking ( $\surd$ ) the right option that best suit your response to the items in this section of the questionnaire.

#### SECTION A

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON RESPONDENTS

1. Please indicate your gender

Male

Female

2. Age range you fall within

20-40     41-60     61-80     81 and above

3. Educational level

Tertiary     Secondary     Middle/ Basic     None

4. Religion

Christian     Islam     Traditional     Other

5. Marital status

single     married



6. Number of children .....

1-4     5-10     11 and above     none

## SECTION B

This section has statements that are designed to seek your views on certain issues relating to the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each statement depending on your degree of agreement or disagreement. Kindly tick [  ] against

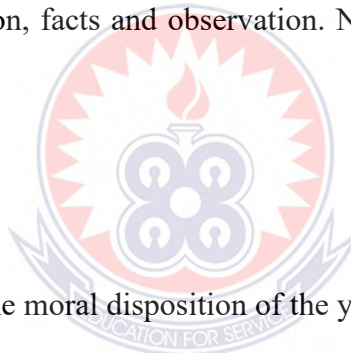
the response that express your views. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the statements.

	STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	Technology influences morality more than the institutions of socialization among the youth of today.				
8	Face- to face interaction remains the most used means of communication among the youth of today				
9	Technology provides the most effective communication channel among the youth of today				
10	The most used communication channel is technology based				
11	The school shapes the behaviour of individuals with a blend of western and the cultural values of the society				
12	The youth of today are exposed to proverbs as the youth of the past				
13	The youth are very much in tune with the local language and understand proverbs				

14	Aside verbal proverbs, the youth know the non- verbal forms of proverb and they understand them				
15	Technology can make proverbs popular with the youth.				

SECTION C

This section has questions that seek your views on certain issues relating to the relevance of proverbs to morality of the youth. You are required to respond to each questions by providing answers based on your opinion, facts and observation. Note that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions



16. How different is the moral disposition of the youth of the past from the present

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17. Are the cultural values of the society reflected in the curricular of the school? If yes, how are the cultural values of the society reflected in the curricular of the school

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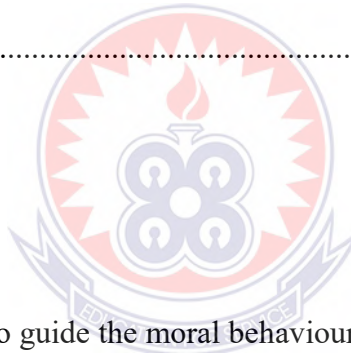
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.....  
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18. Are you acquainted with proverbs?

Yes     No

19. Kindly cite a proverb

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20. Do you use proverbs to guide the moral behaviour of students? If yes, how do students react to the proverbs?

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21. Do students use proverbs in discourse with peers?

Yes     No

22. Are the students attached to technology? If yes, state precisely the kind of devices they use

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Thank you

