

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**CHANGES IN MARRIAGE PRACTICES AMONG THE KASENA IN
NOGSENIA TRADITIONAL AREA OF NAVRONGO**



MAVIS AYI

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NOGSENIA TRADITIONAL AREA OF NAVRONGO**



**A thesis in the Department of Social Studies Education,
Faculty of Social Science Education, submitted to the school of
Graduate Studies, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
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OCTOBER, 2023

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

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

Signature:

Date:

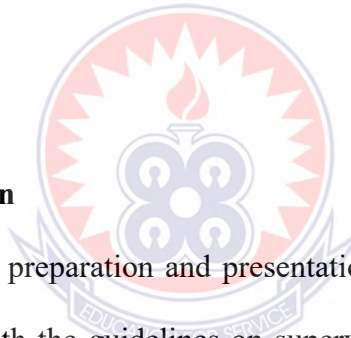
Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised by me, in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the School of Graduate Studies, University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Mr. Cletus Ngaaso

Signature:

Date:



DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my late parents, Mr. William Ayi and Mrs. Mariama Mahamadu.



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First and foremost, I am grateful to the Almighty God, for his direction, love and protection, which have supported me throughout the programme. My profound gratitude also goes to my supervisor, Mr. Cletus Ngaaso, under whose guidance, ideas and critical review and patience made this work possible. His efforts and encouragement from the beginning to the end enabled me to finish writing the thesis.

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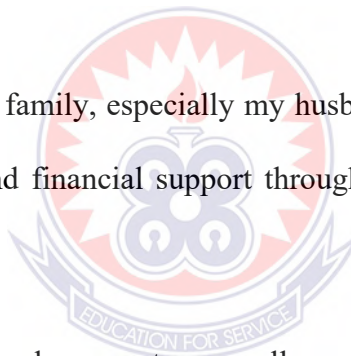
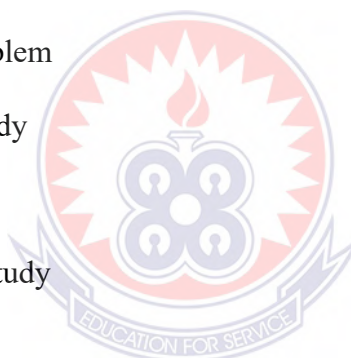


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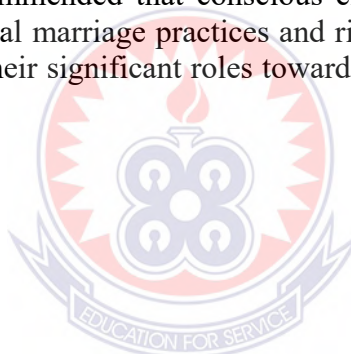
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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to explore the changes in traditional marriage practices among the Kasena in the Nogsenia Traditional Area of the Upper East Region. The study was guided by the interpretivist philosophical position, which assumes that reality is socially constructed and subjective. The study adopted a qualitative research approach, using an exploratory case study design. The study's population consisted of elders and clan heads from the Nogsenia Traditional Area of the Kasena-Nankana Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The sample consisted of 20 respondents selected based on data saturation. The study revealed that the marriage practices of the Kasena have undergone significant transformation overtime, especially in terms of mate selection, bride wealth, marriage ceremonies, marital rights and obligations, the prevalence of endogamy, and the neglect of the extended family in marriage processes. The study also found that these changes have multifaceted implications for the socio-economic systems in the district, such as a shift in gender roles among the Kasena people, challenging or reinforcing patriarchal structures, and empowering or disempowering women. The study recommended that a study be done on the effects of these changes on other aspects of their culture and society, and it also recommended that conscious efforts be made to document and preserve certain traditional marriage practices and rituals, and pass them on to future generations because of their significant roles towards marriage sustainability over the years.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Marriage is one of the most important social institutions found in all societies in the world, notwithstanding different forms of mate selection and different types. Generally, views on marriage around the world tend to be similar. All over the world, individuals let go of their parents, guardians, and other family members to begin a relationship with people who were unfamiliar to them (Elleamoh & Dake, 2019).

Defining the term, “marriage”, can come across as a daunting task because, indeed, there are a lot of variations in marriage systems across the globe. According to Agbontaen (2017) rightly notes, marriage has no universal definition, but denotes socially-approved and culturally-specific institutionalised relationships between a man and a woman and their kinsmen; a family may be defined as a system of roles and relationships amongst a man, his wife or wives, and their children, alone or as part of a larger kin group; and third, the various types of marriage and family systems in the socio-culturally differentiated ethnic groups.

Marriage refers to a lawfully acknowledged and communally accepted agreement among two or more persons that entails definite privileges and obligations, and furthermore, it often entails sexual interaction (Anzagra et al., 2013). Generally, marriage is reckoned as a collectively recognized coming together of a male and a female, celebrated via some kind of open wedding ceremony (Akpadago, 2020). He further asserted that, the marriage ceremony is a procedure involving numerous steps, from the initial rites to the complete reception of the husband and wife as a unit of society. The family is founded on marriage, and it is a social institution that serves to

regulate sexual activity, produce and raise children with a particular social identity and cultural skills, and constitute a basic economic unit. This leaves us with a question, why do people get married? The reason is definitely not couched in them needing assistance or merely support, because in reality they can get that from their own families. It would therefore augur well with reason to assume the main reason for marriage is to grant access to having sexual relations with an individual—access that would have been deemed improper and frowned upon with regards to family members or relatives. It creates new social ties, or families (spouses and in-laws) that provide a setting for important sexual, economic, and educational activities. One of the core issues of this institution is that it sanctioned the union of male and female for the purpose of establishing a household, procreating, and providing care for the offspring. The marriage is the most basic and important unit of society because of the role it plays in the generation of human capital resources and the power that is vested in it to influence individual, household, and community behavior. It is also a major source of nourishment, emotional bonding socialization and continuity (Dodua & Dodoo, 2018).

Change is a law of nature. Everything in this world is under a change. The social institution like family and marriage are also getting influenced by the societal forces. Both the institutions have withstood the ravage of time and the shocks of centuries. Whereas the family has largely been changed from joint to nuclear one, the institution of marriage in Ghana has undergone vast changes like age at marriage, spread of divorce, reduction in times of marriage and extravagant expenditure on it etc. some changes are considered good for society while some are felt in negative term (Chowdhary, 2016).

Every society accords marriage a great deal of importance, because they signify a movement or change from infancy to maturity. Every society has patterns of celebrating marriages that are unique to it and these patterns have been handed down continuously from one generation to the next. Marriage is a very significant way of showcasing the cultural heritage of any particular society. Customary guiding principles are very important when persons take decisions regarding significant happenings in their life, such as marriage and childbearing (Agbontaen-Eghafona, 2019). These normative guidelines shape and imbue these life decisions with meanings. More so, normative guidelines provide means of justifying and approving life decisions. The decision to marry is thus guided by normative cultural patterns.

Through marriage, new rights, roles and new social relationships are formed not only between the spouses but also between the families of the spouses. In most societies, marriage involves a mutual commitment by each partner, and linkages between two individuals and families are publicly displayed (Mawere & Mawere, 2010). Marriage is a major event, not only for the two individuals who are most directly involved, but for the society itself, as it marks a new alignment of ties and obligations between individuals as well as groups (Cantius & Komla, 2015). It is not surprising that weddings reflect and express basic cultural principles of marriage in several ways. Through marriage, the family, which is a relatively universal institution is formed and the weddings as varied as cultures of the world are central in importance and observed in most societies. The wedding ceremony is often preceded by ritual preparations and celebrated according to customs prescribed by the culture.

Marriage rites draw on civil and religious authority to sanctify the union of a man and a woman and establish the parentage of any children born of the marriage. The rites

often include formal removal of one party (usually the bride) from the family group, feasts and exchanges of gifts between the families, honeymoon seclusion, and the re-entry of the newlyweds into society (Cantius & Komla, 2015).

In the African front the institution of marriage is likewise an integral one is an important rite of passage in Africa. Konlan et al. (2023) sums up the relevance of marriage in the African communal way of life as he emphasized that marriage is the most important socio-cultural foundation of any African society. According to him, there cannot be any society without family; there cannot be any family without marriage; there cannot be any society without marriage. He believes that the values in African marriage practices are divine, natural, cultural and social. It is divine, because it is believed to have been instituted by God as a natural response to procreation, manifested in cultural practices that socially bring families together. He goes further to say that an authentic unadulterated African marriage is truly a social union of not only a man/woman love affair, but more so, it is a social union in a larger sense, involving families of the two lovers. The wedding ceremony which marks the beginning of the married life, is often an elaborate one in Ghana, answering the question of why this is so, remains very integral to understanding the marriage institution today (Adebola, 2021).

In Africa, ceremonies hold a place of value in social life, Adebola (2021) asserts that in contrast to the marriage ceremony as a discrete event in Western societies, the African marriage is a complex institution that generally proceeds by stages, most of which are characterized by the performance of prescribed rites. African societies see marriage not only as a relationship between two individuals, but also as a structural link between families. The ritual exchange of kola nuts or marriage drinks is typical

in traditional wedding ceremonies in many West African societies. The payment of this bride wealth, in part or in full, guarantees the husband rights to the sexual and economic services of his wife. In many cases, it also gives him the right to the children born to his wife (Judiasih et al., 2020).

Cantius and Komla (2015) assert that the patterns of marriages are relative to the socio-cultural landscapes in which they are perpetuated. Hence, each pattern is highly driven by cultural and social undertones which prescribe and proscribe the appropriate ways of wedding. It is however important to know that cultural patterns in different parts of the world are driven by meanings attached to them. Regardless of how an act or pattern is exhibited, what matters is the meaning. This being said, ceremonies are immensely laden with meanings. Each particular act, word, move and action is influenced by many of pre-existent cultural and socially significant meanings. Regardless, despite the availability of many other lines of action, people still subscribe to certain patterns even if the individuals involved do not agree with these patterns. It imposes on individuals getting married a set of ritual requirements to fulfill in order to socially be sanctioned and in order to avoid the social backlash of an unsanctioned matrimony. As observed in other aspects of social existence, individuals and groups try as much as possible to satisfy social prerequisites (Cantius & Komla, 2015).

The Kasena are one of the ethnic groups in Ghana with unique cultural practices, particularly in relation to their marriage customs. These customs have been in existence for many generations and form essential part of their identity. Marriage is considered a significant event in the life of the Kasena and is marked by elaborate ceremonies that involve the entire community. However, over the last two decades,

their marriage practices among them appear to have undergone significant changes due to various cultural, economic, religious and social factors. Social change seems to have had and continues to have significant alterations on this institution, which also appears to have a toll on the stability or longevity of marriages in recent times. This study, therefore, sought to examine the changes in marriage practices among the Kasena in the Nogsenia Traditional Area of Navrongo.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Bentil (2021) notes that colonialism resulted in the subjugation and domination of Africa, the Western culture and European mode of civilization began to thrive and outgrow African cultural heritage. Traditional African cultural practices paved the way for foreign way of doing things as Africans became fully westernized. Western culture now is regarded as frontline civilization. According to Elleamoh and Dake (2019) African ways of doing things became primitive, archaic and regrettably unacceptable in public domain. Not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms. This seems to be the case with marriage ceremonies in Ghana, they have become a sort of hybridization, a Janus-faced issue of a sort, with Western models of meeting spouses, engagements leading the fore, the question some might pose is the fact that culture is dynamic, and subject to change, while that is true the change in Ghanaian traditional marriages was not inspired by internal factors. This is because in a way it is very difficult to change the ideological roots of any society, and this change I speak of is not a change facilitated naturally, I speak of a forced change that society was not prepared for, a very vivid

example of such is colonialism. Foreign marriage practices are being incorporated and are taking center stage in contemporary weddings (Afful & Nantwi, 2016).

The implication of this for traditional customs and rituals is that they are being replaced or being redefined. In fact, most traditional practices and wedding rituals have lost their value and those that still persist are not accorded full importance. Hence, the modern wedding practices present a picture of dying patterns as well as emergent patterns. This presents a very huge concern for the Ghanaian Society which the Kasena community is not in isolation. One of the core essences of research is to fill gaps that exist in literature, of a truth there are only extremely few studies that have been conducted on. For example, Patel (2019) posits that economic and social implications of bride price has influence on marital dynamics, shifting patterns and strains associated with the negotiation of bride wealth and was also highlighted by Evans in his study Flux and strain in marriage contraction: The changing face of bride wealth in contemporary Ghana (Evans, 2018). Appiah-Kubi (2019) explains how the stability of marriages are strongly influenced by socio economic and cultural factors while Owu confirms that marital quality, satisfaction, and other various dimensions in marriage contribute to the overall subjective well-being of an individual as he highlighted in his study Marriage and Subjective Well-being in Ghana (Owu-Ewie, 2019). However, the focus for all these is on only on one aspect of the marriage practices which is bride price and how that stabilizes marriage and its survival, this therefore creates a gap since marriage practices involves a lot and only ends with bride price.

One notable gap in the literature pertains to the limited attention given to the broader socio-cultural and economic implications of the changes in marriage practices among

the Kasena community. While some studies, such as those by Afful and Nantwi (2016) and Patel (2019), have touched on aspects of marriage dynamics, such as bride price negotiations, there remains a lack of comprehensive exploration into the multifaceted dimensions of marriage practices within this community. For instance, there is a dearth of research examining the influence of globalization, urbanization, and other external factors on traditional marriage customs, as well as the implications of these changes for social cohesion, gender dynamics, and economic livelihoods within the Kasena community.

Moreover, existing studies tend to focus predominantly on specific aspects of marriage practices, such as bride price negotiations, without providing a holistic understanding of the complex interplay between cultural traditions, socio-economic factors, and contemporary influences shaping marriage dynamics among the Kasena people. This narrow focus limits our understanding of the broader transformations occurring within the community and overlooks the interconnectedness of various elements within the marriage institution. Therefore, there is a critical need for research that adopts a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to examine the evolving nature of marriage practices among the Kasena community, taking into account the socio-cultural, economic, and political factors at play.

Furthermore, while some studies have explored the stability and survival of marriages in Ghana, including the Upper East Region, where the Kasena community resides, there remains a gap in understanding how changing marriage practices impact individuals' subjective well-being, family structures, and community dynamics. By expanding the scope of inquiry to encompass these broader dimensions, researchers can provide valuable insights into the implications of shifting marriage practices for

social cohesion, gender relations, and community development within the Kasena society.

This study, therefore, sought to fill that gap by exploring the changes in the marriage practices among the Kasena people as well as their social and economic implications and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the unique dynamics and transformations within their community.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this research were to:

- (i) explore the marriage practices among the Kasena before independence.
- (ii) analyse the changes that have taken place in the marriage practices among the kasena.
- (iii) assess the factors responsible for the changes in the marriage practices among the Kasena.
- (iv) examine the effects of these changes on the social and economic systems among the Kasena.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How were marriages contracted among the Kasena before independence?
2. What changes in the marriage practices have taken place among the Kasena of Nogsenia?
3. Which factors are responsible for the changes in the marriage practices among the Kasena of Nogsenia?
4. How has the changes in the marriage practices affected the socio-economic systems of the Kasena?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The Kasena have a distinct cultural heritage that includes various traditional practices and customs. Among these customs, the marriage practices hold immense importance as a cornerstone of their society. The study provides valuable insights into the cultural anthropology of the Kasena community in Navrongo. By examining the evolving marriage practices among the Kasena, it can contribute to the preservation and understanding of their unique cultural identity. Marriage is not only a personal union but also an institution deeply rooted in cultural norms and traditions. Understanding how the Kasena marriage practices has changed over time will shed light on the dynamics between tradition and modernity within their society. It will help identify the elements that have been retained, modified, or completely replaced, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the cultural evolution of the Kasena people.

Studying these changes will provide insights into the impact on family structures, gender roles, and the roles of elders and community leaders. Moreover, it will enable an exploration of the changing expectations and aspirations of individuals within the context of marriage, which can contribute to a deeper understanding of social bonds and the complexities of interpersonal relationships.

The study on changes in the marriage practices among the Kasena fills a gap in the existing academic literature. While there may be some studies on marriage customs in Ghana, specific research on the Kasena community in Navrongo is likely limited. This study, contributes new knowledge and insights to the fields of anthropology, sociology, gender studies, and development studies. This research can serve as a foundation for future studies.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this research was limited to the examination of changes in the marriage practices among the people of Nogsenia. The study explored the Kasena traditional marriage practices, how these practices have changed overtime, the factors that have influenced these changes and the socio-economic implications of these changes on marriages among Kasena people.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The study is organised into five chapters; Chapter One focuses on the introduction and discusses the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and the significance of the study. Chapter Two highlights literature that delved into the culture of the Kasena relating to their former ways of performing marriages and other areas relating to social change. Chapter Three presents the methodology adopted for the study, and it consists of the research approach, research design, the study area, participants of the study, sample, sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical consideration. Chapter Four is organised based on the research questions to generate results for discussion, while Chapter Five the last chapter, summarizes, concludes and suggest some recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on a review of literature that is relevant to the study. The review specifically covers geographical and historical origin of the Kasena people of Navrongo, their social and economic activities. The review also looks at how marriages were performed among the Kasena, the importance of marriage rites and the changes and emerging patterns on their marriage practices.

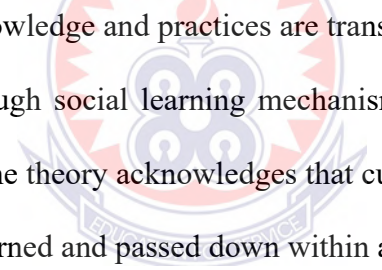
2.1 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is the blueprint or guide for research (Herliana et al., 2018). The theoretical basis for this study is the Cultural Evolution Theory. Cultural evolution is an evolutionary theory of social change. It follows from the definition of culture as information capable of affecting individuals' behavior that they acquire from other members of their species through teaching, imitation and other forms of social transmission (Shanneik, 2017). Cultural evolution is the change of this information overtime.

Cultural evolution, historically also known as socio cultural evolution, was originally developed in the 19th century by anthropologists stemming from Charles Darwin's research on evolution. Today, cultural evolution has become the basis for a growing field of scientific research in the social sciences, including anthropology, economics, psychology, and organizational studies. Previously, it was believed that social change resulted from biological adaptations; anthropologists now commonly accept that social changes arise in consequence of a combination of social, evolutionary, and biological influences.

Some other proponents of Cultural Evolutionary Theory notably, Richard Dawkins, an evolutionary biologist, introduced the concept of memes, cultural units of information that are subject to replication and selection similar to genes in biological evolution. Other prominent figures in cultural evolution research include anthropologists such as Robert Boyd, Peter Richerson and Joseph Henrich, who have made significant contributions to understanding the dynamics of cultural change focuses on the processes of cultural change over time, including the transmission, variation, and selection of cultural traits (Devlin et al., 2019).

The Cultural Evolutionary Theory is an interdisciplinary framework that encompasses various assumptions underlying the study of cultural change. As asserted by Masele and Lakshmanan (2021), the following are some common assumptions:

- 
- (i) That cultural knowledge and practices are transmitted between individuals and generations through social learning mechanisms such as imitation, teaching, and language. The theory acknowledges that cultural traits, including marriage practices, are learned and passed down within a community or society.
 - (ii) Variation and selection: That cultural traits exhibit variation within a population. Different individuals or groups may have different practices or beliefs related to marriage. Cultural Evolutionary Theory also posits that variation in cultural traits can undergo selection, where certain traits are more likely to be adopted, imitated, or retained based on their perceived fitness or benefits.
 - (iii) Cumulative cultural change: That cultural change can accumulate over time. New ideas, practices, or variations in marriage practices can arise, and if they provide advantages or benefits, they may spread and become more prevalent

within a population. This cumulative nature of cultural change allows for the emergence of complex and diverse cultural practices.

- (iv) Cultural adaptation: Those cultural traits, including marriage practices, can serve as adaptive responses to social, economic, or environmental conditions. Cultural practices are seen as mechanisms for addressing challenges, fulfilling social needs, and maximizing individual and group fitness within a given context.

By applying The Cultural Evolutionary Theory to the study of marriage practices among the Kasena, the researcher explored how these practices have evolved and transformed within the cultural context of the Kasena community. It allowed the researcher to investigate how knowledge, norms, and rituals associated with marriage are transmitted within the community, as well as how external cultural influences may have contributed to the changes in marriage practices among the Kasena's socio-cultural context, such as shifts in gender roles, economic factors, or external influences, and the influenced in the selection and modification of marriage practices. It helps identify the adaptive value of certain practices and understand why they may have changed or persisted over time.

2.2 The Concept of Marriage

According to Sakharina and Daud (2020), marriage is the recognized institution for the establishment" and maintenance of family life the world over. Marriage in the Ghanaian culture is seen as a means to foster unity and solidarity among families and communities. They are valued for their role in continuing family lineages and ensuring the preservation of cultural traditions. The practices and beliefs surrounding

marriage serve not only as a union between individuals but as a bridge that connects communities, honours ancestors, and preserves cultural heritage (Waddell, 2019).

Forkuor et al. (2018) opine that the present definition of marriage is different from what it was several years ago. Marriage was defined as the union of a man and a woman for reproduction reasons. However, the definition has changed globally, according to (Ahonsi et al., 2019). Today, marriage can be defined with different viewpoints, as an institution, a partnership, and as a responsibility. Generally, marriage can be defined as the legally recognized union between two persons that is based on a sexual relationship (Ahonsi et al., 2019; Forkuor et al., 2018; Evans, 2018).

Marriage seems to be the most important institution of human society. It is a universal phenomenon. It has been the backbone of human civilization. Marriage creates new social relationships and reciprocal rights between the spouses. It establishes the rights and the status of the children when they are born. The society prescribes rules for prohibitions, preferences and prescriptions in deciding marriage. It is this institution through which a man sustains the continuity of his race and attains satisfaction in a socially recognized manner (Handayani et al., 2022).

Marriage as a term is translated into almost every known language yielding different definitions by dissimilar ethnic groups. These definitions, however, are all linked to the same basic idea of the combination of minimum of two partners with a set of rules, obligations, and understandings. In this 21st century, marriage comes in different forms e.g., dog marriages, humans and animals as well as with various objects and the most common between two or more humans (Kim & Vang, 2022). Many definitions of marriage are long studied and found through various disciplines

such as law, anthropology, and sociology. This denotes the concept as an evolving term that changes with societal norms and ideologies. For example, the evolution of interracial marriage, same-sex marriage and age requirements for marriages can be cited. The social resemblance and divergence of marriage can be experienced in various ways with some similar results (Blondell, 2023). One initiation can be through bride prices and engagements that include families or legal documents securing recognition by the State. These different definitions and understanding of marriage show a discrepancy across cultures as diverse cultures have dissimilar meanings to marriage. This means that what may be considered as marriage depends on the beliefs and practices of a particular group of people who share a common culture (Teuku Islahuddin et al., 2022).

Marriage in Ghana is a universal social event that is guided by the customary and common laws of the country. Traditionally, marriages in Ghana were arranged by the parents of the couple, who would select a suitable partner based on their family background, financial stability, and social status (Azumah et al., 2017). However, in modern times, many Ghanaians choose to marry for love, and the decision is often made by the couple themselves. Marriage is a central institution in Ghanaian culture, encompassing a complex web of social, familial, economic, religious or spiritual dimensions (Elleamoh & Dake, 2019). It is not just a union between two individuals but involves the merging of families, the continuation of lineage, and the reinforcement of communal ties. It holds significant cultural importance in the Ghanaian society, reflecting traditional values, social norms, and communal ties. It serves as a cornerstone of social organization and plays a crucial role in shaping individual lives and community dynamics (Prempeh, 2020). In the Ghanaian culture, marriage is seen as a lifelong commitment, and divorce is rare. Couples are expected

to work through their problems and stay together for better or for worse. However, in modern times, divorce rates have been increasing in Ghana, particularly in urban areas where Western values and lifestyles are more prevalent (Bentil, 2021).

2.3 Historical and Cultural Context

Marriage is a fundamental social institution that has existed across cultures and throughout history (Devlin et al., 2019). While the definition of marriage may differ across cultures, it generally refers to a legally or socially recognized union between two individuals, often with the aim of creating a family unit. The processes of marriage have evolved over time and have been shaped by cultural and historical factors. In ancient societies, marriage was often arranged by families as a way to establish alliances and secure economic stability. For example, in many traditional societies, marriages were arranged between families and often based on factors such as social status, wealth, and political alliances. Marriage was seen as a way to ensure the continuation of the family lineage, and in some cases, it was used as a way to strengthen alliances between tribes or nations (Evans, 2018).

In the West, the institution of marriage has evolved from religious sacrament to legal contract. The early Christian church considered marriage to be a holy sacrament, while in medieval Europe, marriages were often arranged by the church or the state. Over time, the role of the church in marriage declined, and civil law began to regulate marriages. In contemporary Western societies, marriage is viewed as a personal choice, based on love and mutual commitment. This shift in attitudes towards marriage has led to changes in marriage practices, such as an increase in cohabitation, delayed marriage, and a decrease in the importance of religious and cultural traditions (Adebola, 2021).

Cultural factors also play a significant role in shaping marriage processes. For example, in many Eastern cultures, marriages are seen as a union between families rather than just individuals. In some cultures, the family's reputation is at stake in the marriage process, leading to stricter adherence to traditions and customs. The concept of marriage also varies across cultures, with some cultures recognizing polygamous or polyandrous marriages (Hiekel & Wagner, 2020; Lowe et al., 2022).

The historical and cultural context of marriage processes has a significant impact on the practices and attitudes towards marriage in different societies. In traditional societies, marriages were often arranged by families, and the bride and groom had little to say in the matter. The marriage ceremony was often accompanied by a variety of rituals and customs, which were believed to ensure the success of the union. In contemporary societies, the role of the family in marriage has decreased, and individuals have more agency in choosing their partners (Adebola, 2021).

The changing cultural and historical context of marriage has led to changes in marriage practices. For example, in some cultures, the concept of "love marriages" has gained acceptance, where individuals are free to choose their partners based on mutual attraction and compatibility. In other cultures, the practice of arranged marriage continues to be prevalent, although it may be accompanied by a greater degree of agency for the individuals involved (Mawere & Mawere, 2010).

2.4 Overview of the Ghanaian Culture in Relation to Marriage

Culture is the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. (Appiah-

Kubi, 2019). Ghanaian culture refers to the set of beliefs, traditions, customs, art, music, language, and social norms that characterize the people of Ghana. It is one which is rich in heritage and has been passed down from generations to generations, it is one which seems to be quick to embrace change when it is good and do away with anything negative. It encompasses various ethnic groups (including the Akan who are the most numerous, the Ewe, Ga, Adangme, Guan, the Gonja, Dagomba, Mamprusi among others), each with its own unique practices, but there are also shared elements that define the broader Ghanaian society and identity. These elements include traditional clothing, music genres, like highlife, festivals, marriage ceremonies, food, and values centered around community, respect, and hospitality. From a distance the general outlook of a typical Ghanaian society is one which is very conservative but in practice or reality, it is one which is very progressive (Appiah-Kubi, 2019; Essuman et al., 2023; Konlan et al., 2023).

Although Ghana is primarily a rural country, urbanization has a long tradition within indigenous and modern society (Issaka-Toure, 2022). In Ghana every ethnic group has its own traditions which evolve to deal with human situation of the time. The major decisions regarding any custom including marriages and other tribal matters are taken by leaders and chiefs within the family and the community respectively. This diversity is a testament to the country's history and geography. Within this cultural mosaic, marriage holds significant importance and it often bridges these ethnic boundaries, fostering unity and understanding between different communities (Amissah & Amporful, 2018).

Traditional Ghanaian marriages are characterized by elaborate ceremonies and rituals (Jawad & Elmali-Karakaya, 2020). These ceremonies can vary widely from one

ethnic group to another, but they often involve rituals like libation pouring, dowry exchanges, and symbolic gestures that showcase respect for ancestors and communal values (Mourtada et al., 2017). Ghanaian culture places a strong emphasis on the extended family system (Owu-Ewie, 2019). Marriages are viewed as unions not just between individuals but between families. The involvement and approval of both families are crucial, and the extended family provides a support network for the couple throughout their married life (Suhasti et al., 2018). Family is a very strong bond in Ghana and is the primary source of identity, loyalty and responsibility. Ghanaians emphasize communal values such as family, respect for the elderly, honoring traditional rulers, and the importance of dignity and proper social conduct (Prempeh, 2020). Individual conduct is seen as having impact on an entire family, social group and community; family obligations take precedence over everything else in life. Individuals achieve recognition and social standing through their extended family. The entire family shares any loss of honor, which makes the culture a collective one. In order to protect this sense of face there is a need to maintain a sense of harmony; people will act with decorum at all times to ensure they do not cause anyone embarrassment (Afrakomah Amoah & John, 2019).

Elders (older people) also hold a revered status in Ghanaian society. Their blessings and guidance play a vital role in marriages. Elders are often granted respect, consulted, and their wisdom is considered in ensuring a successful union (Adjei & Mpiani, 2023). Ghanaian society is hierarchical and people are respected because of their age, experience, wealth and/or position (Osei-Tutu & Ampadu, 2017). In a group one can always see preferential treatment for the eldest member present. With respect comes responsibility and people expect the most senior persons to make decisions that are in the best interest of the group (Adjei & Mpiani, 2023). Customs

are often passed on through the extended family, and the customary leaders or chiefs, are given historical authority over social, marital, family, and communal-related matters. Relationships within traditional society are based on family membership, inherited status, and ancestral beliefs. In modern society however, relationships are determined by achieved status, formalized education, membership in professional associations, and ethnic affiliation. The result is that, even those who live primarily in the modern urban settings remain bound to traditional society through the kinship system and are held to the responsibilities that such associations entail (Ermakova et al., 2019).

2.5 The Customary Marriage Act of Ghana

Customary law marriages in Ghana derive their legitimacy from sections in Parts 2 and 3 of the Marriages Act, 1884/5. The Act defines marriage as a union between a man's family and a woman's family, but it is also a contract between two people – a man and a woman. Marriage therefore is purported to be a legal agreement between a man and a woman entering into a recognized relationship. The agreement has the effect of creating a certain status whereby the couples enjoy certain rights and assume certain responsibilities (Dankwa et al., 2022).

Marriage in Ghana is primarily governed by two main statutory laws: I) the marriage ordinance of 1884 (Act 127) and II) the Marriage act of 1985 (PNDC Law 111). These laws outline the requirements, procedures, and the legal aspects of marriage in the country. Under the Marriage ordinance, there are three recognized forms of marriage in Ghana: i) Customary marriage. ii) Marriage by license and iii) Marriage by Registrar.

Customary marriage is the most common form and is based on traditional customs, practices and ceremonies. It is recognized under the Customary marriage and Divorce Registration Law of 1985 (PNDC Law 112). To enter a customary marriage in Ghana, both parties must meet certain basic requirements, such as being of legal age (18 years or above), being of sound mind, not being closely related by blood or marriage. The marriage must also be registered with the Customary Marriage and Divorce Registration Unit. An important element of customary marriage is consummation of the marriage by cohabitation, and its potential for polygamy (polygyny). However, among the Christian majority, marriage is understood as the voluntary union for life between one man and one woman. Interestingly, under the common law, marriage is defined as a contract and a mutual agreement between a man and a woman, with a mutual promise of marriage for both partners. Common-law marriage has been codified into the Marriages Act, 1884/5. The main feature of a common-law or ordinance marriage is that it is monogamous, i.e., it is the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others (Ofosuware, 2021). Although modern aspects of marriage decisions have penetrated into Ghanaian culture, especially mate selection (Banwo, 2018), the extended family continues to referee the marital process.

Marriage by License is available for couples who wish to have a civil or non-customary marriage. The couple must give notice at the Registrar's office and obtain a marriage license. The marriage ceremony must then be performed in the presence of a Marriage Officer and a marriage certificate is issued to the couple. This process involves obtaining a marriage license from the Registrar of Marriages. The couple needs to give notice to the Registrar, and after a waiting period, they can proceed with

the marriage. This method requires more administration steps and documentations (Osei-Tutu & Ampadu, 2017).

Marriage by Registrar is similar to Marriage by License, but it bypasses the requirement of a notice period. This form of marriage can only be performed by designated Marriage Officers at the Registrar-General's Department. In this method, the Registrar of Marriages performs the marriage ceremony. This process is more straightforward compared to the License method, as the Registrar oversees the entire process without requiring the couple to obtain a separate license (Abubakari, 2022).

It is important to note that both Marriage by License and Registrar are governed by the Marriage Act of, 1884 (Act 127) and the Marriage of Mohammedans Act, 1884 (Act 129), which outline the legal requirements and procedures for marriage in Ghana. Again, it is worth noting that, the common law marriages, where a couple lives together without formal registration or ceremony, are not recognized in Ghana. However, couples who have been living together for a significant period may be considered as having entered into a customary marriage. In 2003, Ghana passed the Customary Marriage and Divorce Registration Regulations to regulate the registration and dissolution of customary marriages. This law requires couples in customary marriages to register their marriages within three months of the marriage of the marriage ceremony. Failure to register a customary marriage can result in penalties such as fines or imprisonment (Morhe & AdomakoKwakye, 2019).

In recent years, there have been discussions and efforts to revise and modernize Ghana's marriage laws to address issues such as forced marriages, child marriages, polygamy, and rights of women within marriages (Osei-Tutu & Ampadu, 2017). These discussions aim to align Ghana's marriage laws with international human

rights standards and promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Overall, the laws of Ghana regarding marriage seek to provide legal recognition, protection and regulation to ensure the validity and stability of marriages in the country.

2.6 Theories in Relation to Marriage Practices

The Modernization Theory: Modernization theory proposed by many scholars such as Talcott Parsons, Kingsley Davis, Wilbert Moore Emerged in the 1950s. They posit that as societies undergo modernization and industrialization, traditional marriage practices and values change. It argues that urbanization, education, and economic development lead to shifts in family structures, gender roles, and expectations within marriages. Modernization theorists suggest that as societies become more industrialized, marriages become more egalitarian, individualistic, and based on personal choice rather than traditional or familial arrangements.

Structural-Functional Theory: The structural-functional theory, popularized by sociologists such as Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons in the 1950s, views marriage as a fundamental social institution that contributes to social stability and cohesion. According to this theory, marriage performs essential functions in society, including the regulation of sexual behavior, procreation, socialization of children, and economic cooperation between spouses. It emphasizes the role of marriage in maintaining social order and the division of labor within families.

Symbolic Interactionism: Symbolic interactionism, developed by sociologist George Herbert Mead in the 1930s, focuses on the meanings and symbols that individuals attach to marriage. This theory emphasizes how people interpret and construct their marital relationships through daily interactions. Symbolic interactionists argue that individuals negotiate and create shared meanings through communication and mutual

understanding. They examine the processes of courtship, relationship formation, and marital interactions to understand how couples develop shared meanings and construct their marital identities.

The Conflict Theory: The Conflict Theory, influenced by Karl Marx in the 20th centuries, focuses on the power struggles and inequalities within marital relationships. It views marriage as a site of social conflict and competition, particularly related to gender, social class, and other forms of social stratification. Conflict theorists argue that marriage can reproduce existing social inequalities and power imbalances. They examine how gender roles, economic disparities, and cultural norms shape marital dynamics and contribute to conflict and oppression within marriages.

2.7 Functions of Marriage in the Context of the Ghanaian Culture

When we refer to the functions of marriage in the context of the Ghanaian culture, we are discussing the various roles and purposes that marriage plays or serves within the Ghanaian society (Osei-Tutu & Ampadu, 2017). These functions can include social, economic, and cultural aspects that contribute to the overall well-being and development of individuals and the community at large. In Ghana's traditional marriage system, the husband is the primary or sole breadwinner, and the wife is responsible for all aspects of household maintenance and child-bearing, or with the wife bearing primary or whole responsibility for both (Adjei & Mpiani, 2023).

In the Ghanaian culture, marriage is not only seen as a union between two individuals but also as a merging of two families and probably communities. It serves various functions that are deeply rooted in tradition, social norms, and religious beliefs. Understanding these functions helps us to appreciate the importance of marriage in

the Ghanaian society and its impact on various aspects of life (Osafu et al., 2021).

Here are some functions of marriage in the Ghanaian culture:

- (i) **Reproductive and Family Functions:** Marital unions are seen as essential for procreation and maintaining family structures. One of the primary functions of marriage is to ensure the continuation of the family lineage. Marriage is expected to result in the birth of healthy children, who are seen as the future generation and the ones who are to carry on the family name and traditions. Children born within marriage are considered legitimate members of both families and provide diverse support in old age, ensuring the intergenerational transfer of traditions, values, and resources. Within the context of marriage, children begin to learn their gender roles and other cultural norms. Marriage serves as a way to establish responsibility for children and legitimizes their birthrights within society. Fertility also plays a significant role in Ghanaian culture. Women are believed to have been created to have healthy babies. So, if a woman does not give birth or gives birth to a child suffering from a physical, or psychological disorder it is occasionally viewed as a disgrace upon herself and her family. Belief in supernatural forces is common in Ghana and other African countries and diseases are sometimes attributed to witchcraft. There are believed to be spirits of mystical powers e.g., agents of witchcraft, magic and sorcery with powers to aid or harm man so women in such conditions are usually pressured to go every length, both spiritual and physical means, to have babies or children for the family. Marriage is nearly universal in Ghana, and couples are expected to have children. The family is the basis of social organization, the main source of security in old age and the primary caretaker of the young (S. Cotton, 2020; Ofosuware, 2021).

(ii) Economic stability function: Marriage provides a foundation, a home, and a livelihood together. It often results in the formation of new economic units as couple establish households. Joint efforts in raising children, managing resources, and sharing responsibilities contribute to the overall stability and well-being of the family unit. Marriage provides the framework within which people's needs are met: shelter, food, clothing, safety, etc. This cooperation extends beyond the immediate couple, as extended family members and even other community members may collaborate on agricultural activities, trade, and other economic endeavours to support the couple economically. Through the institution of marriage, people know for whom they are economically responsible. Marriage also involves significant economic exchanges between families is also seen as a means to establish social and economic stability. Dowry systems, for example, facilitate the transfer of wealth, property, and resources usually from the groom's family to the bride's family. These exchanges help to strengthen social ties, promote cooperation between families, and contribute to the overall economic stability within the community (Bentil, 2021).

(iii) Preservation and transmission of culture: Marriages are mostly conducted based on the blueprint that has been used over the years. Sometimes, there are variations that have found their way into the practice but the mainframe remains. The marriage ceremonies help to preserve the culture of the people (Appiah-Kubi, 2019). The marriage ceremonies include activities like the consultation of families, presentation of bride wealth by the groom's family, and the acceptance of the same by the bride's family. It also involves the presentation of the woman to the family of the groom. These activities are transmitted from generation to

generation. Therefore, traditional marriage ceremonies are transmitted across generation.

(iv) **Cultural and ritualistic function:** Marriage ceremonies in Ghana are elaborate and rich in cultural traditions and symbols. These rituals serve to reinforce the importance of marriage and its significance within the community. They connect couples to their cultural heritage, fostering a sense of belongingness and pride (Essuman et al., 2023). They often involve the participation of the extended family members, community leaders, and religious figures, further emphasizing the communal nature of marriage. They are occasions for the community to come together, reinforcing communal bonds and celebrating cultural identity.

(v) **Alliance and social cohesion (Kinship):** Marriage in Ghana often involves the formation of alliances between families. Marriage is not only between the couple but rather between the two families. It unites the families of the couple. It serves as a way to strengthen relationships and create connections between different ethnic groups, clans or tribes. The union of two individuals from different families or even ethnic groups fosters social cohesion and strengthens relationship between communities. They share every moment of joy and get to know each other. This is seen as a bond that extends beyond the couple themselves, encompassing their families and communities. This contributes to the overall harmony and stability of society (Issaka-Toure, 2022).

(vi) **Social status and identity:** Marriage plays a significant role in shaping an individual's social status and identity within the Ghanaian society. Being married is often associated with maturity, responsibility, and a sense of belongingness. It

can also influence an individual's standing within their community and provide a sense of social recognition. The marriage serves as an honour and dignity to the couple and their families. In the eyes of the people, the couple is responsible. They are ready to take up responsibilities in marriage, this gives them social recognition and dignity in society (Judiasih et al., 2020).

(vii) Companionship, support and legitimate sexual avenue: Marriage gives a legitimate means by which people get companionship. It also helps to provide moral, emotional and financial support to the couple. The individual gets the opportunity to legitimately have sex with the opposite sex. The couple shares both moments of sorrow and joy together. Marriage provides a lifelong partnership where individuals can rely on each other for love, care, and mutual understanding. The idea of "two becoming one" is deeply ingrained in the Ghanaian culture, emphasizing the importance of unity and shared experiences within a marriage (Sieverding et al., 2020).

(viii) Social and psychological functions: Marriage carries significant social status and plays a role in defining individual's identity and role within the community. It provides emotional support, companionship, and a sense of belonging (Mustasaari & Al-Sharmani, 2018). Marital relationships contribute to the formation of extended families and social networks that offer a safety net and assistance during times of need.

(ix) Gender roles and dynamics: Traditional gender roles are often reinforced within Ghanaian marriages. These roles prescribe distinct responsibilities for men and women. While these roles are evolving due to changing social norms, they still

shape expectations within the marriages and influence the division of labour, decision-making and power dynamics (Osei-Tutu & Ampadu, 2017).

- (x) Moral and religious significance: Marriage is often viewed as a moral obligation and it is associated with religious and spiritual beliefs. Many Ghanaians consider marriage as an institution sanctioned by their faith, reinforcing the importance of commitment, fidelity, and family values. It is expected of the couple to have sex only with each other and not with any other person. This is especially expected of the wife (Osei-Tutu & Ampadu, 2017). This is a traditional way of controlling illicit sex and adultery particularly with the money.

2.8 The Determinants of Mate Selection

All marriages begin with the choosing of a suitable companion. It may entail selecting and studying one or more suitable individuals. Individual qualities, social and economic standing, and other essential aspects relating to an individual and/or his/her family are used to determine suitability. There are few arranged marriages in modern America, but free mate choice does not imply that a person can marry anyone. All societies have some marital rules (Sedziafa et al., 2019). Whereas marriages are arranged for couples in certain cultures, courtship is an individual process in other cultures (S. R. Cotton & Diala, 2018). According to Oyelade and Abuloye (2023), partner choosing is a culturally defined process. Physical qualities, socioeconomic status, education level, and family status are some of the parameters used in spouse selection. In many societies, women have traditionally had no say in partner selection. According to Dhevi et al. (2017), modernization has resulted in a more outspoken and opinionated generation of young women who have more definite concepts of desired attributes in a mate and are more public about their marriage expectations.

Based on these studies, it can be inferred that physical appearance, age, social, socioeconomic, religious, physical experience, ethnic, and educational aspects are prominent as partner choosing criteria; nevertheless, these factors are not exhaustive.

2.8.1 Educational Background and Mate Selection

Hegland (2020) explained that education is an important factor in marriage partner choice in many societies. Gwidi et al. (2023) posited that in marriage partner choice surveys women consistently express a preference for marriage partners who are of high educational background and of the same educational qualification as themselves. Also, Kasim et al. (2023) revealed that college graduates prefer to marry college graduates like themselves. However, female graduates also like to marry men that are educationally advanced than them. Corroborating Manswab & Abdullahi (2018) in their study of undergraduates' mate choice indicated that they prefer college graduates with good earning capacity. Similarly, Kelley (2023) posited that undergraduates prefer partners of similar educational qualification and background. A study conducted by Jimo (2023) and Wohabie and Teka (2018) revealed that respondents prefer potential partners that are educated and those with interesting professions. Nave (2017) discovered that educational level is essential in mate selection. Individuals tend to marry persons of the same educational attainment. For example, school systems serve as marriage marketplaces, allowing similarly educated people to meet and create love connections. Traditional gathering sites, such as workplaces and communities, where people are typically sorted according to education, can also result in educationally homogamous partnerships (Blondell, 2023; Park, 2020). According to Willem (2017), academic prestige is highly valued by online daters. The reasons for educational choices, however, were gendered, with

only men stressing the relevance of their spouse's degree for their children's future. Women, on the other hand, tend to utilize educational status to predict men's incomes but not the quality of child parenting.

2.8.2 Economic Standing and Mate Selection

Nwoko (2020) highlighted the relevance of economic status in mate selection in their study. They demonstrated that young women desire men with a good career or a successful business, as well as a wealthy and comfortable lifestyle. In a similar vein, Chatterjee (2022) discovered that male medical students believed that their rising economic status would enable them to be in a relationship because the social norm that the man should be the family's primary breadwinner and the woman should be in charge of household duties and child care was still firmly in place. Furthermore, according to Singh and Jaswal (2022), the majority of university-going people place a great value on their financial situation. He also found that having similar financial circumstances is an important aspect in sustaining pleasant ties between two families and/or partners. According to Karimi (2023), women place a high value on men who have a promising career direction, are hardworking, and ambitious, and are more likely to abandon partnerships with men who become jobless, and lack professional desire.

2.8.3 Ethnicity and Mate Selection

Fauzi (2021), asserts that, when one ethnic group develops unfavorable opinions toward members of other ethnic groups, ethnic consideration in marriage is elevated. According to Karimi (2023) cited in Fauzi (2021), a man who marries a woman from a distant country will enrage his parents. The disappointment is typically lessened when he selects a member of his own tribe since she is dependable, polite, sober, and

her family is devoid of leprosy, witchcraft, and other mental illnesses. Crane went on to argue that the ethnic aspect in marriage could be due to a strong sense of loyalty to parents or devotion to local town, as well as differences in customs and language of the people involved. She mentioned once more that people marry from the same ethnic background to promote effective and seamless conflict resolution. Crane also mentioned ethnic stereotypes towards a particular ethnic group as a factor or reason why some people do not marry from that tribe. One ethnic group, for example, may define other ethnic groups as having or specialized in bad and undesirable attributes such as a proclivity to steal, practice witchcraft, deceive, or be evil, and so on. They may refer to them with adjectives like "bush" and "uncivilized."

2.8.4 Religion and Mate Selection

Religion, according to a large body of literature, has a vital role in important life decisions such as spouse choosing (Abegaz, 2022; DiGregorio, 2019; Wejak, 2020). Choosing and marrying partners who have similar religious beliefs is not a recent occurrence, People are particularly picky about the demographic characteristics of their potential wives, as noted by Karimi (2023). According to research by Alqawasmi (2021), the desire to be in a relationship with a person is influenced by his or her morality, virtuousness, and piety. The perceived morality of the potential partner is a significant factor in deciding the continuity of the relationship. People judge the outcomes of relationships based on whether the other person was fair or unjust, morally upright, or religiously. Nasiri (2022) also asserted that, a lot of people preferred getting married to members of their own religion as opposed to someone else's. They emphasized that because each religion has a different set of principles and beliefs, someone from one religion can try to impose those principles on someone from another, resulting in conflict. Similar to this, it has been observed that certain

Christians do not desire to wed members of other Christian denominations; for instance, a Pentecostal Christian does not desire to wed a Jehovah Witness.

2.8.5 The Family/Parents and Mate Selection

In traditional communities, the potential partner's family background is given great consideration. According to Karimi (2023), in most situations, the prospective partner's family and kinship was the sole consideration used to settle the marriage decision. Family background plays an important effect when two families choose a potential son or daughter-in-law. Guo (2017) discovered that the prospective family's socioeconomic status was seen as an essential consideration in selecting a good mate. Furthermore, in traditional and collectivist communities, family origin is significant when choosing a mate (Adawiyah et al., 2022; Kelley, 2023; Snow, 2021). Social and financial stability, as well as an acceptable family background, continue to be important selection criteria in most cultures where parents decide who gets married. Most cultures consider marriage to be a family matter, therefore in collectivist societies, the role of parents and family elders is particularly evident during partner selection or matrimonial interactions. The opinion of parents and family elders weighs more than the decision of a girl for whom a partner is being sought (Hegland, 2020). Girls are either subordinate or have little say in choosing an intimate relationship. Their function is passive, consisting solely of accepting the decisions of parents and family elders. Young people are supposed to respect family elders' or parents' decisions. According to Kudo (2021), women are more likely than males to consider family input when choosing a mate. It is considered normal to emphasize and accept family/parental choices in practically all major decisions, including school, employment, and notably marriage (Gwidi et al., 2023). Children's so-called "free choice" is not complete without parental input.

2.8.6 Personality (Physical Appearance, Attitude and Character) and Mate Selection

Men and women who prioritize having a healthy and handsome spouse tend to prefer spouses with more attractive faces. Mutual attraction and love are regarded as the most essential characteristics in picking a partner by some men and women (Kasim et al., 2023; Lee, 2023; Wepukhulu et al., 2023). Tokur-Kesgin et al. (2019) investigated Intergenerational Comparative partner selection factors based on personality. They divided the ladies into three generations: first, second, and third. The first generation stated that they prefer a husband who is attractive, tall, fair, intelligent, and forward-thinking. The second generation stated that they prefer a husband who is handsome, good looking, intelligent, compassionate, and loving. The third generation stated that they desire a husband who is good looking, tall, clean, independent, sharing workload/cooperative, free, compatible, and communicative. These discrepancies were linked to a socio-cultural change brought about by women's improved education.

According to Manswab and Abdullahi (2018), mate selection preferences among young people examine certain characteristics before identifying their wives. People with good manners, who are polite and neat, are among these qualities. These factors can be combined together under a factor known as nurtured partner. According to the authors, when it comes to marrying, young people choose those who are daring, spontaneous, and extroverted. The authors' data also reveal that some people value persons who are gifted in areas such as creativity and musical ability. The authors go on to say that young people, particularly men, value persons with domestic abilities,

which include those who can cook and handle other household chores such as laundry.

Although individuals' attitudes are highly important factors in marital selection, scientists have discovered that trustworthy views are not just formed by individuals' educational backgrounds. It should be emphasized that well-cultured attitudes are exhibited when children are raised with traditional practices and values by their parents.

2.8.7 Age and Mate Selection

Age is an essential internal component that influences judgments when choosing a spouse for marriage. Some people consider age similarities when choosing a mate, whereas others do not (Mantawil, 2022). According to Ismayawati and Ngazizah (2022), male tertiary students do not desire to marry someone older than them. They sought to marry someone younger than them in order to have complete reign over them, as males are born to rule their households. Men are afraid to marry someone older than them because they believe that person will not appreciate them. Tertiary female students, on the other hand, tended to marry individuals who were younger than them. They added that an older spouse may be able to talk with them in a more mature manner and manage them with more care than those who are neither older nor younger than them. This implies that age similarity and marriage selection are related, particularly among tertiary students. Women in their twenties are attractive to guys of all ages. Younger people (especially younger women) tend to be more fertile than older people, and evidence suggests that men may have evolved to favor them for this reason.

2.8.8 Mutual Attraction (Love) and Mate Selection

According to Banwo (2018), effective friendship with the possibility for marital selection begins with attraction; consequently, the selected person to marry must be appealing before mutual love may develop. They went on to say that most people evaluate attractiveness first when choosing a partner, and mutual attraction leads to intimacy, which allows "the potential would-be spouse" to progressively develop sentiments of commitment and attachment towards each other. This suggests that the strong sense of attraction initiates romantic love in order to fulfill a role of commitment, which supports long-term connections of relationship and helps students decide on whom to marry. However, Thakur (2019) argued that attraction rarely leads to love and, in most cases, results in relationship breakdowns, leaving few students, particularly women, emotionally disturbed. Mutual attraction can be seen as 'an appetizer' that wets the tongue of the love arousal for a spouse to be chosen for marriage. It is widely assumed that love promotes mate selection, which leads to marriage. Marriage, according to Zucker (2021), is mostly dependent on a person's ability to love the other without fear. Singh reveals that love is an effective instrument that contributes to the power of many personal relationships. According to Zucker, love and romance have been naturalized as feminine commodities. The author, on the other hand, stated that children are mainly stuck inside gendered discourses of romantic love, which prevents men and women from exploring alternate perspectives on future marriage aspirations.

2.9 The Importance of Marriage Rites

Marriage is a significant institution in Ghanaian society, deeply rooted in cultural traditions and customs. The country's diverse ethnic groups have their unique

marriage rites, which play a vital role in shaping family structures, maintaining social cohesion, and preserving cultural heritage.

- (i) Preservation of cultural heritage: Marriage rites in Ghana serve as a means of preserving and perpetuating cultural traditions from one generation to another. Each ethnic group in Ghana has its distinct marriage customs, encompassing pre-marital rituals, dowry negotiations, and wedding ceremonies. These rites symbolize the values, beliefs, and norms of the respective ethnic communities, promoting cultural identity and pride. According to Singh Jaswal (2022), the observance of traditional marriage rites ensures the continuity of cultural practices, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural cohesion within the Ghanaian society (Cantius & Komla, 2015).
- (ii) Strengthening family bonds: Marriage rites play a crucial role in establishing and strengthening family bonds in Ghana. These rites often involve the active participation and involvement of both immediate and extended family members. For instance, in the Akan tradition, the 'Knocking' ceremony serves as an opportunity for families to meet, interact, and forge relationships (Abegaz, 2022). The involvement of family members in the various marriage rites fosters unity, support, and solidarity within the family structure. Additionally, it promotes the integration of the couple into their respective families, establishing a foundation for mutual support and intergenerational connections.
- (iii) Legal and social recognition: At marriage, the gift symbolically replaces the bride's presence, reminding her family and clan that though she has left, she is not dead. In the same vein, the marriage rite is an assurance that she is not stolen but going away under mutual agreement between the two families. In reality, the gift legalizes her

value and the marriage contract. Marriage rites in Ghana hold legal and social significance. While traditional marriage rites are culturally binding, the state recognizes them as a precursor to legal marriages. According to the Marriage Act of 1985, traditional marriages conducted in accordance with customary laws are deemed valid and legally recognized (Republic of Ghana, 1985). This recognition ensures that couples who undergo traditional marriage rites enjoy legal protections, rights, and responsibilities similar to those of civil or religiously recognized marriages. Moreover, traditional marriages are acknowledged and respected within the Ghanaian society, providing social validation and acceptance for the couple and their union (Cantius & Komla, 2015).

(iv) Symbolic meaning and spiritual significance: Marriage rites in Ghana are deeply embedded with symbolic meaning and spiritual significance. Many traditional practices and rituals are performed to invoke blessings, seek divine intervention, and ensure a prosperous union. It is an act of invoking the spirit of the ancestors through libation prayers of the clan to shower their blessings on the new couples and to thank the Almighty God for their protection and guidance. The various priests, chiefs and family heads present at the function also shower their blessings on the new couple. Palm wine is served and everybody who took part in the drinking of the wine was considered a fighter to protect the marriage from breaking apart. For example, among the Ewe people, the 'Akpele' ceremony involves the pouring of libation and prayers to the ancestors, seeking their guidance and blessings for the couple (Bentil, 2021). These rituals do not only serve as a link between the physical and spiritual realms but also reinforce the belief in the interconnectedness of generations and the importance of ancestral heritage.

Culturally, as asserted by (Cantius & Komla, 2015) the arts relate to everyday life in customary marriage. They are so integrated with life that the absence of singing, drumming, dancing during the performance of any marriage rites in Ghana would make it meaningless and boring. In Kasena marriage customs, the art objects such as drums, wua, kono - a type of appellation are used to enhance the aesthetic value of the customary gathering during marriage. These arts continue to secure the spiritual, physical and economic welfare of the community.

2.10 The Concept of Social Change

Social change occurs in all societies because it is a universal phenomenon. It is said that the only thing that is constant in life is change. The rates or levels of change in every society need not be the same because social change does not occur with equal rapidity in all societies. Adjei (2019) described social change as the alterations in the pattern of culture, social structure and social behavior over time. It refers to the modifications that occur within social attitudes, beliefs, values, and patterns of relationships and. social change as a term signifies modifications which occur as humans interact and relate with one another. Society indeed is a mesh of social relations, thus against this background a social change can typify an alteration in the structure of social associations. Furthermore, the social procedure, in which attitudes, values, social institutions of any given society become changed or altered is referred to as social change. It refers to a shift in the norms of a society, showing that a society in its entirety has embraced and enacted a pristine deportment or method of thought. According to Akter et al. (2022), norms are the agreed-upon expectations and rules by which a culture guides the behavior of its members in any given situation. Therefore, social change is a significant alteration over time in behavior patterns and cultural values and norms. According to Garfes (2022), culture is a system of collective

habits. The collective habits may be habits of actions, i.e., customs, or habits of thoughts, collective ideas.

These habits are learned collectively. A handful of these habits for instance norms guiding marriage, may have a widespread acceptance throughout society while others may be limited to certain classes or groups. If the situation of the society changes, old behavior patterns may be discouraged and new patterns are encouraged.

2.11 Factors of Social Change

Scheel and Gutekunst (2019) point out very succinctly that missionaries, trading of slaves and colonialism are the mainstay of African people being dominated by Westerners in every aspect of their cultural, political, economic, religious facets. This assertion is true to the extent that colonialism fuels the budding of social change and cultural imperialism in Africa. This is correct to the extent that colonialism serves as a vehicle of implantation of cultural imperialism and social change in Africa. Colonialism, bearing the fore-mentioned in mind refers to an imposition of foreign rule over indigenous traditional political setting and foreign dominance and subjugation (Jones et al., 2017). The culture and civilization started to find its way into the socio-cultural environment of Africans, beginning through Europeans having a contact with Africans, as a result of the conference held in Berlin, which basically propagated a search for stealing Africa's resources, this would later be solidified or cemented, by a wave of globalization, which was almost totally unavoidable. It is imperative to note that colonialism served as a distortion and retardation to speed and pulse of the growth of culture in Africa and its civilization pattern as well.

Standing out among the effects of colonialism is what Bulten et al. (2018) refers to as the political and economic rape of the colonies has also led to what sometimes seem

to be an unbridgeable cultural gap between the nations that were the beneficiaries of colonization and those that were the victims of the colonial assault. The era of colonial pillage and plunder led to the relative stagnation and often precipitous decline of traditional cultural pursuits in the colonies. African cultural traditions began to decline and were quickly overtaken by Western and European culture and civilization. Western culture and European mode of civilization began to thrive and outgrow African cultural heritage. Indigenous practices peculiar to the African culture, began to give way to the foreign mode of doing things as in truth Africans became Westernized or better still Europeanized. Today, while speaking of front-line or civilization, it has to be with regards to Western civilization, as African culture and practices became tagged as primitive, fetish and archaic and totally unacceptable in the public realm. Bulten et al. (2018), rightly notes not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms.

The consequences of European and western culture and civilization for Africa, are indeed reflected in a lot of stages. It is however imperative to discuss the sources of change for the African socio-cultural practices and its effects on the various African social Institutions. In talking about the origins of social change in African societies. Bulten et al. (2018) states that the significant fact about African cultural history is the convergence upon the indigenous tradition of the two external influences the Arab-Islamic and the European-Christian and also colonialism which the continent has been exposed for well over a millennium. The values and lifestyles associated with these traditions have been assimilated and to a large extent indigenized on the continent. Christianity and Islam have functioned as a means of solidifying external

and foreign cultural practices on African societies. Vedadhir et al. (2017), notes that the effects of western civilization and culture on Africa are in several phases however the most important three of these phases, are political effect, economic effect and social effect.

2.12 Changes in Marriage Functions in the Ghanaian Culture

In the context of Ghanaian culture, the traditional functions of marriage have undergone several changes overtime. Traditional Ghanaian society viewed marriage as more than just a union between the couple; it was seen as social institution with broader functions but today, there have been several observable changes in the traditional functions of marriage in the Ghanaian culture. They include the following:

- (i) **Procreation and family building:** One of the primary functions of marriage in Ghanaian culture has been procreation and family building where couples could give birth to ten children and over in the name of “Badu dwan” which was very typical of the Asantes. This was because marriage was seen as a means of ensuring the continuity of lineage and the passing down of cultural values, traditions, and wealth to future generations (Wejak, 2020). However, with changing societal attitudes towards family structures and an increase in alternative family models, such as single parenting households or cohabitation, and also economic hardships for many ordinary Ghanaians, the emphasis on marriage for procreation is gradually diminishing.
- (ii) **Changing gender roles:** With the increasing recognition of gender equality and women’s rights, traditional gender roles within marriage are being challenged. Traditionally defined gender roles are evolving, leading to changes in the way certain rituals and customs are carried out. There is a greater emphasis on

equality and shared responsibilities between the husband and the wife. Women's empowerment and economic independence have led to shifts in power dynamics and decision-making within marriages, affecting traditional functions (Alqawasmi, 2021).

- (iii) **Economic functions:** In traditional Ghanaian culture, marriages served as an economic function, as it established alliances between families, clans, and tribes. It was a means of consolidating wealth, resources and social status (Guo, 2017). However, with the growth of modernization and urbanization, the economic function of marriage is diminishing. People are now more inclined to economic independence and personal achievements rather than relying on marital alliances for stability. Again, many couples are becoming economic considerate during marriage ceremonies. The cost of traditional marriage ceremonies can be substantial, leading some couples to make adjustment or compromises in order to fit their budget. This might involve scaling down certain aspects of the ceremony.
- (iv) **Social and emotional support:** Marriage in Ghanaian culture has traditionally provided social and emotional support to individuals. It served as a foundation for companionship, love, and stability. While this function is still valued, changing gender roles, increased educational opportunities, and evolving social norms have expanded people's choices in terms of seeking social and emotional support outside marriage and even the family (Snow, 2021).
- (v) **Emphasis on legal requirements and social recognition:** Another function of marriage in the Ghanaian culture is legal and social recognition. Marriage provided legitimacy and inheritance rights for children, as well as access to

social benefits and privileges. However, with the rise of cohabitation and changing attitudes towards non-marital relationships, the legal and social recognition of marriage is being reevaluated. Again, in recent times, governments have instituted legislations on marriages. Modern Ghanaian couples often prioritize legal aspects, such as obtaining marriage certificates, alongside traditional ceremonies. This legal recognition is becoming more important as couples navigate issues like inheritance and property rights (Elleamoh & Dake, 2019).

- (vi) Divorce rates: Another aspect of marriage that has been affected seriously by urbanization and social change is divorce. Traditional values that have made marriages to stabilize have broken down. Today, marriages are not properly contracted so divorce has become very common. The increase in divorce rates in Ghana challenges the notion of marriage as a lifelong commitment. Changing societal values, economic pressures, and increased educational opportunities contribute to higher divorce rates and subsequently impact the traditional functions of marriage (Azumah et al., 2017).
- (vii) Decreasing role of parents in choice of partners: Modernization has affected the role parents play in marriages. During the Pre-colonial era, parents had very important role to play in the selection and counselling of partners. Due to modernization, individuals now select or choose their own partners and present them to their parents for their consent or approval (Issaka-Toure, 2022).
- (viii) Decline in early marriages and many child births: This is mainly due to formal education. During the pre-colonial period, girls could marry when they were teenagers. Today, a large number of these girls are in school. Since school

attendance and marriage are in conflict with each other, girls get into marriage at a higher age (Sarfo et al., 2020).

- (ix) Attitudes towards polygamy (Polygyny): In Ghanaian traditional societies polygamy (polygyny) was seen as a prestige because wealthy people went into it. Today, social, economic and religious factors have made polygamy (polygyny) less attractive. While polygamy (polygyny) was more accepted in the past, societal attitudes have shifted, and monogamy is becoming more common. This change has influenced marriage customs and expectations within the Ghanaian culture (Jawad & Elmali-Karakaya, 2020).
- (x) Inter-ethnic marriages: Most men and women would prefer marrying from their own ethnic group, but due to the influence of change, mobility and education, they develop a liberal attitude in the selection of partners (Mourtada et al., 2017).
- (xi) Advent of other forms of marriage and influence of religion: Social changes have also come with new types of marriages. As the Christian churches brought in Christian marriages, the colonial authorities also introduced their form of marriages under the Marriage Ordinance of 1884. Religion plays a significant role in the Ghanaian society, and religious practices have become more integrated into marriage ceremonies. Many couples now prefer to have their marriages or weddings officiated by religious leaders, adding a spiritual dimension to the traditional customs (Horner, 2020).
- (xii) Cultural fusion and technology: Globalization has led to the fusion of different cultural elements in marriages. Couples often incorporate ideas and practices

from other cultures, leading to blends of traditions and a departure from strict adherence to old customs. The attire worn during Ghanaian marriage ceremonies has evolved over time. While traditional clothing such as kente and adinkra patterns are still popular, there's also a growing trend of incorporating modern and western inspired fashion elements into the bridal and groom's attire. Again, modern couples seek to infuse their personalities into marriage ceremonies. They often personalize various aspects, such as the décor, music, and even the order of events, making the ceremonies more reflective of their individual tastes and preferences. The use of technology and social media has changed how information about marriages are shared and disseminated. Couples use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to invite guests, share updates, and document the events in real time (Melnikas et al., 2020).

2.13 The Origins of the Kasena–Nankana People of Navrongo

The Kasena and Nankana are separate people with different historical origins. The Kasena believe that they were the first to settle in the area, but some writers, notably Cardinal (2010) asserts that, there is evidence of some ethnic groups who occupied this area which are now extinct. Linguistically, they both belong to the Gur speaking group; but while the Kasena speak Kasem, the Nankana speak Nankani. He explains that Kasena oral tradition has it that, they originated from holes at a place called Telania in present day Navoro Pungu. No archaeological evidence has yet unveiled the myth surrounding when they came to settle in the area. However, since the hole from which they allegedly emerged to settle on ground surface is still available, future archaeological excavation may unravel this myth from cultural and linguistic evidence; the Kasena can be traced to Upper Volta, now Burkina Faso. They are the same as the Awuna who claim to have migrated from the north–east from a place

called Pina. It is possible to accept this explanation on the grounds that other Kasena groups who arrived at different times have legends which trace their origin to Burkina Faso. This argument is even more acceptable because of the fact that the Kasem language is only spoken in the north and north-western areas from where the legends of the other Kasena groups claim to have come (Sarfo et al., 2020).

It is likely that some of the Kasena might be autochthons of Navrongo. That is to say the people have lived in the area for centuries and believe they came from the “caves” from which they lived. The Nankana are royals in Navrongo. They actually introduced the institution of chieftaincy in the area. There is a detailed narration of this episode, which has it that Butu is the legendary founder of Navrongo. Naga – this refers to leg in Kasem. Voro – signifies the sound emitted from stepping on soft ground. Thus, Navoro became the name of the area, but was later corrupted to Navrongo by the Europeans (Sarfo et al., 2020).

Cardinal also explained that there is a royal legend in Navrongo which traces the origin of the Nankana to a town called Zikku also in Burkina Faso on the north-eastern border of Navrongo. The legend has it that, Butu, who was a royal at Zikku migrated with two of his brothers to the hole-dwellers in Telania whom he had earlier on encountered on one of his hunting expeditions. They then moved to settle in an area they called Navoro, which was later corrupted to Navrongo by the British. He further added that, this account of a people from different linguistic and ancestral backgrounds tends to negate the contention that the Kasena and Nankana are one ethnic group. For so many reasons, however, it is not contradictory to refer to the Kasena - Nankana of Navrongo as a people. This is because since the *Nankana* came to meet the Kasena hole-dwellers at Telania there evolved a system of close

association between them. Thus, hundreds of years of close association of a people within a common geographical region, with distinct social and political organizations and a common culture have broken the bounds of different ethnic and linguistic origins to make the Kasena–Nankana one people. That the fusion of these two groups of people took place over a long period is convincing and acceptable if one appreciates the fact that the Kasena are among the oldest settlers of the North (Sarfo et al., 2020).

It is significant to distinguish between the Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo and the other Kasena and Nankana groups in particular, who live outside the Navrongo Township, but within the same District. There are individual towns and villages within the Kasena-Nankana District (where Navrongo is the Capital), who speak either Kasem or Nankani alone, but not both. For example, predominant Nankana groups such as Mirigu, Sirigu and Kandiga do not speak Kasem, just as predominant Kasena like Paga, Chiana and Katiu do not speak Nankani. (Amissah & Amporful, 2018) explained that Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo can thus be considered as one people and to a lesser extent, one ethnic group because they speak both Kasem and Nankani (infact, more Kasem than Nankani). It is reasonable to argue that the Nankana migrants under Butu coming from an area where they were already conversant with chieftaincy started the fusion of the ethnic groups by quickly adopting the Kasem language to legitimize their rule over the Kasena. For example, Na–Voro that Butu used to name his settlement is Kasem and not Nankani.

Hence, the adoption of the Kasem language dates back to the time of settlement of the Nankana in the area around the second half of the seventeenth century. Furthermore, the individual or distinct Kasena and Nankana groups reject the Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo from referring to themselves as either Kasena or Nankana, but prefer to

refer to them as Kasena–Nankana. It is also worthy to note that, the Kasena and Nankana both frown on the Kasem and Nankani spoken by the Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo. They consider it as inferior and polluted (Amissah & Amporful, 2018).

2.14 The Economic Activities of the Kasena–Nankana People of Navrongo

The Tono Irrigation Project is located in the Kasena-Nankana district of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The project is being managed by Irrigation Company of Upper Region Ltd. (ICOUR). ICOUR is a Ghana Government organization established to promote the production of food crops by small scale farmers within organized and managed irrigation scheme (Morhe & AdomakoKwakyee, 2019). The vegetation and climatic conditions of the area has fundamentally influenced the economic and social life of the people. The main economic preoccupation of the people is subsistence agriculture and a poorly developed exchange economy. This is supplemented by hunting of game for meat. More than eighty per cent of them engage in agriculture. However, the launch of the Tono Irrigation Project in the early 1980s, coupled with the construction of dams in most parts of the area has generated increased agricultural activities among the people, particularly, the large–scale production of rice and tomatoes (Apanga et al., 2017; Azumi et al., 2018).

The family is the basic unit of farming and farms are thus mostly constructed around family compounds. The crops cultivated here include, maize, guinea corn, “early” and “late” millet, calabash, beans and vegetables. Others are sweet potatoes, cotton, tobacco and legumes such as Bambara beans and groundnuts. Farming tools included stones and sticks. However, iron tools such spears, arrows and hoes were later introduced into the area as farming and hunting implements. Oral tradition has it that a long time ago, a Mossie wanderer came to settle in the area and got married to a

woman from Pungu. This young man introduced the smelting of iron into the area now known as Punyoro. Even today, Punyoro largely, still monopolises the smelting of iron among the Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo. Also, owing to the length and intensity of the dry season that characterizes the area, the rearing of livestock is prominent among the people. Animals reared include goats, sheep, donkeys, fowls and cattle. Apart from the prestige associated with the ownership of livestock, they are also kept for the payment of dowry and sacrificial purposes (Azurilah, 2020). Exchange and subsistence among the people were integrated. For instance, transactional rules rather than price determined terms of exchange; and exchange was not determined by the rules of supply and demand. Exchange was conducted with the aim of maximizing social and not economic values.

According to the elder therefore, in times of famine or poor harvest in a particular area, family groups travel to their relatives elsewhere to acquire foodstuffs. Consequently, it could be said that there were no regular institutionalised markets for buying and selling before the 1700s. There were neither currency nor bank (Akrofi et al., 2018). He also states that, around the eighteenth century, however, the caravan traders from the south introduced cowries as a medium of exchange in the region. European commodities like knives, rum and powder, as well as kola nut from the forest reached the area through the caravan trade. Ferguson on his tour of the hinterland, specifically mentioned that salt found its way from the region of the Safura on the Niger bend to the Gourounsi country. The widening of the scope of the economy with the introduction of the cowries raised the desire of many to get rich. It was not surprising therefore that when Babatu came to the area, the indigenous people readily captured their colleagues and sold them to him. The beginning of the slave raids in the area rather strangulated economic activities. People no longer moved out

to find food and farming was an uncertain undertaking as crops were likely to be trampled over by Babatu and his men. As one elder mentioned, “while on the farm you had to put your bow and arrow by your side to forestall any sudden attacks”. In the face of no agricultural activities, the caravans fell prey to attacks for their goods. It was in this state of affairs that the British found their way into the Kasena–Nankana territory of Navrongo (Vellenga, 2023).

2.15 The Socio-Cultural Background of the Kasena-Nankana of Navrongo

The view report in Northern territories (1936–1937), the Kasena–Nankana people of Navrongo as unorganized, stems from a total misunderstanding and ignorance of the general way of life of the people. Its states “they may be primitive, judged by certain standards, but they have good brains and excellent material to work with and important to realize that the culture of a people pervades their entire life. This cannot be eliminated in considering the Kasena–Nankana society if culture connotes a complex whole that include, knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs and other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society (Wak et al., 2017).

Azumi et al. (2018), in examining the Kasena people explains that the people’s culture would provide us with the basis for understanding the social relations among the Kasena–Nankana people. One finds among them, certain religious beliefs underlying the basis of their existence and personal development. Their basic conception of religion is the belief in the Supreme God (Banga-We / Wine), who is everywhere but can be worshiped only by the fetishes. The people also believe in ancestral veneration and spirits of nature, which are inhabited in stones, trees, rivers, animals and the earth. Religion therefore permeates everything the individual does, including all his actions (Osei-Tutu & Ampadu, 2017).

He further added that, it is the responsibility of every head of a household to build a monument in recognition of the former heads of the family who are dead, but represent the family in the spirit world. The whole family thus communicates to God through this monument, which represents their ancestors. Chinwuba 2(020), clearly indicates that, the Kasena call the soothsayer *vuru*, while the Nankana call him *baga daana*. This literally means mother's child, but depicts family or clan relations outside the ordinary routine of his daily life. Social and moral values are governed by the dictates of the fetish. All calamities that befall him are ascribed to the spirits of the ancestors who may be displeased in one thing or the other. Recourse to them is then sought by contacting the soothsayer (*vuru/baga daana*) who indicates the remedy. The Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo have a life so bound up with the deification of the earth and ancestors that ensures prosperity. Their only possible base of social relations is through genealogical descent. This gives them a sense of depth, historical belongingness, a feeling of deep-rootedness and a sense of sacred obligation. It is on these bases therefore that those social relations have evolved to segregate the entire society into clans, lineages, households and families. Kuuder et al. (2020) indicates that family, to the Kasena– Nankana includes not only the father, mother and children, but also uncles, aunts, nephews and grandparents. The term for “family” in Kasem is *anubu* and *mmabia* in Nankana.

However, it is sometimes extended not only to signify blood relations, but also relations by marriage. Blood relations, which constitute a family live together in a compound house or *song yuin* Kasem and *ye zuoin* Nankani. Most of the compound houses are usually round and may consist of several circular mud huts with conical – shaped grass roofs connected by mud walls. The society further relates in the clan and

lineage system. The clan is the wider division of the society and is composed of lineages. Each clan is a composition of related members who trace their ancestry to the original founder. He further explains that the Kasena–Nankana clans are exogamous, totemic and patrilineal. Clan members do not marry among themselves. They have a totem which they all revere and inherit along the father’s line. The totem serves as an important binding force that unites members of a particular clan. Sometimes, people realise their relation by finding out if they share the same totem or chullu in Kasena. The people of the Nogsenia clan for example have the squirrel and the crocodile as their totem. Totems are usually acquired when it is alleged that at one time or the other, an ancestor swore against he and his descendants ever having to kill or eat what is regarded as the totem. The squirrel became the totem of the people of Nogsenia because of the ‘help’ it gave to Kambongwana, the father of Butu. The lineage is composed of related families that trace their descent to various sons and grandsons of the founder (Azumi et al., 2018).

2.16 Traditional Marriage Practices of the Kassena during the Pre-colonial era

Marriage is the recognition of a relationship between a man (bridegroom) and a woman (bride) to live together, procreate, build a good family, support and help to each other. Marriage ceremony among the Kasena people bind both the couples and their families including their extended families together. Marriage in the Municipality depends on whether the lady (bride) is an ordinary spinster (Kataogo), a firstborn daughter (Bukokwia), a girl dedicated to a shrine (Gyumbuko), a maid servant (Kanyane), a widow (Kadem), betrothed and eloped (Moro, 2020).

Marriage is an important social institution among the people of Navrongo. The marriage of a young man (nunuom in Kasem) to a young girl (katoguo in Kasem) is

the duty of his family. The stages in the marriage system among Kasena are courtship (chaarim), ratification of marriage (Gongna) and payment of the dowry (kwoga wonnu).

2.17 The Stage of Courtship (Chaarim)

The immediate role of the young man is to make his choice of a partner and then inform his parents. The family head makes enquiries to make sure that there are no clan relations between them. A special person is sent to play the role of a “betweenner” between the two families. He was so significant that Azurilah (2020) states that “in every marriage ceremony amongst the Kassenas there is a man called the Yiginu who is the best man...I am assured that without the Yiginu the wedding is not valid”. Social relations are expressed here, as this special person called ‘yingnu’ in Kasem or Pogochigera in Nankani is normally the son of a woman from the girl’s clan who has married in the man’s clan. This man approaches the family of the girl through a similar ‘special person’. He presents tobacco to the latter to be delivered to the girl’s family. If the gift is accepted, it means that it is agreed for courtship to start between the two. The courtship period may last between six months and one year or more.

During this period, the “betweenner” continues to visit the girl’s house with gifts of guinea fowls, tobacco and cola nuts. There is no limit as to the number of guinea fowls and quantity of tobacco or cola nuts to be presented to the girl’s family. It all depends on the status of the man. The quantity of gifts given to the family of the girl is indicative of how wealthy one is or otherwise. This also gives an idea to one’s in-laws to be, about how capable the person might be to take care of his daughter. One important aspect of the courtship period is the restrictions that bind the young man and the young girl. The two must not engage in any sexual relationship and the young

man does not eat food from the girl's house nor pass a night there. The parents' in-law do not receive any gifts from the man. It must also be noted that during this period, some form of joking relations develops between male companions of the young man and the girl. Indeed, sometimes this relationship becomes so intimate that a stranger within the community may mistake them for lovers. No wonder, out of ignorance, some writers have concluded that, these people are immoral and share their women with their friends (Anzagra et al., 2013).

On the day the girl will leave for her husband's house, her mother prepares for her a number of dishes including, cake (This cake is usually made of millet.) and a variety of stew and soup and "tuo zafi" to eat. The girl also receives from her mother, cooking utensils especially two calabashes and a mat to take away with her to start life in her new home. The girl is then led away by the "betweeners", who on approaching the bridegroom's house announces the marriage. He shouts out the man's name at the top of his voice, while mentioning the name of the clan of the bride. For example, as one may say it in Kasem, yoo yoo yoo! kaba nwogi kandiga oow baa yoo kule'ei (Azurilah, 2020). This literally means kaba has come from Kandiga. In this case, kaba is the bridegroom and Kandiga is the name of the bride's clan. Women of the bridegroom's clan rush out of their houses to meet the bride and continue the announcement with shrill cries to inform everybody. For three nights, the bride is flanked by young girls of the village while drumming and dancing goes on. Local musicians come to sing the bride's praises on each night. Local musicians here do not refer to those who sing secular music, but traditional praise singers who are however professionals in their task. After the third day, the bride can then join the bridegroom in his room for them to begin life as husband and wife.

2.18 Ratification of Marriage (Gongna)

The next important ceremony in connection with the marriage is its ratification. This is the last and most important phase of the marriage process because it symbolizes the closing of the gate, hence, the woman becomes his [the man's] wife forever until death separates them. It also means that the man has completed all rites required of him to formally own the woman and any children that may be born out of that marriage. As a precautionary, most people do not perform this marriage rite until they are sure the woman is productive and willing to stay with the man forever. The normal practice is to allow the woman to deliver a number of children before going ahead to perform this particular rite. It is, however, a taboo to perform this rite while the woman in question is pregnant because it is believed that it will have negative repercussions on her health and the outcome of the pregnancy.

The gwona (closing of the entrance) is done by the brothers with the assistance of the yignu (betweeners). It involves a visit to the family of the bridegroom by the brothers of the bride to perform Anakwo gyei in Kasem literally means my sister is missing. Here the brothers of the bride however fully aware of where their sister is, still go to tell the family of the bridegroom that, their sister is missing. The latter then inform them that their sister is in their custody. This ceremony is normally begun in the evening and lasts the whole night through to dawn. The bridegroom's family slaughter a goat, dog and a number of fowls for their brothers-in-law. The marriage is then said to be complete. When the bride gives birth, the last process of paying the marriage price can be started (Azumi et al., 2018).

2.19 Payment of the Dowry (Kwoga Wonnu)

The payment of bride price takes the form of cola nuts, tobacco and guinea fowls. However, bridegrooms pay two cows (female and male), seven sheep, seven balls of Tobacco, seven hoe blades, a cock, a cover cloth, and some a quantity of salt. These could be paid in parts, but on the death of the bride, full payment of the bride price has to be made before permission could be granted for burial of the corpse (Anzagra et al., 2013). Where the man also fails to pay the bride price, the girl's parents also have the right to withdraw her from the marriage. Otherwise, the bond between them holds until death. Divorce is permitted but it is very rare among the people of Navrongo. Apart from unfaithfulness that might prompt divorce, a marriage without issue also runs the risk of divorce. Nevertheless, in the case of the latter, it is safeguarded by what is termed as the "maid servant marriage". Here, the bride permits the man to marry her sister whom she had personally brought up under her roof. In the case of impotency on the part of the bridegroom, his brother or close relative is also allowed to perform the sexual duties to bring forth children to save the marriage from collapse. When the woman has children out of the marriage, the marriage price is not refundable in the event of divorce. The custom of the Kasena-Nankana also permits polygamy.

However, it is also believed that when the bride commits adultery, it is soon detected by her either falling sick or having difficulties at childbirth (Ahonsi et al., 2019). This is because the custom of the people demands that the bride price can only be paid after the woman had practically proven to be fruitful. That is after she had given birth to her first-born. It is a taboo to bury a woman whose bride price has not been paid, fully. This is because she only becomes a legitimate member of your family after you have fully paid her marriage price. If even the man (bridegroom) was unable to pay

the sheep and the cow, the children would be mandated to pay before they can dowry their own wives. Paying the bride price in full also legitimizes the bridegroom's ownership of the children (Abubakari, 2022).

Like many localities in Ghana, marriage ceremonies among the Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo do not only bind the couple together, but their extended families as well. The two families begin to attend each other's funerals. During the farming season, the bridegroom together with his companions help his parents-in-law on their farms. Sometimes he is called upon to help in the rebuilding of broken-down walls or even new compounds. There also develop joking relations between members of the two families. Between the couples, they do not call each other by their names. While the bridegroom calls his wife "room owner" (digatu in Kasem), she also refers to her husband as "landlord" (songotu in Kasem). The social bond that marriage brings to the society finds an equal expression in funeral performances (Abubakari, 2022).

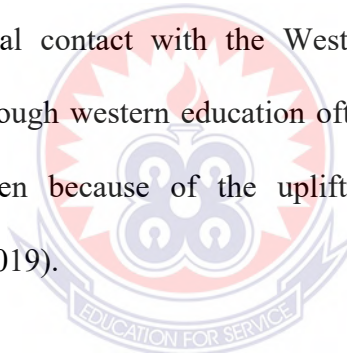
2.20 The Emergent Patterns in Marriage Ceremonies

During the colonial era, Africans were subjected to forced acculturation. This was done through western education. Being educated and civilized meant the adoption of western ideas and values of love, marriage, family and life in general today, foreign values and life-styles are being introduced with greater vigour. Even the wedding has become an individual achievement. In the distant past, a wedding was an event at which two kinship groups formed an alliance. More recently, it has been an event organized and paid for by parents, at which they display their approval and support for their child's marriage (Abubakari, 2022). Cherlin posits that the communal nature of weddings is fast eroding and that marriage is now becoming an event centered on and often controlled by the couple themselves, having less to do with family approval

or having children than in the past. One might assume, then, that weddings would become smaller and that many couples would forgo a public wedding altogether.

He further argued that the enforcement value of marriage is less than it used to be. People marry now less for the social benefits that marriage provides than for the personal achievement it represents. Western civilization and culture began to creep into African socio-cultural milieu, first, with the contact of Europeans with Africa, a consequence of Berlin conference in the quest for imperial pilfering of African resources and, later, consolidated by the unstoppable wave of globalization (Willem, 2017). From Willem's stand point it is evident that two major factors of influence are colonialism and globalization. Western culture and European mode of civilization began to thrive and outgrow African cultural heritage. Traditional African cultural practices paved the way for foreign way of doing things as Africans became fully westernized. Western culture now is regarded as frontline civilization. African ways of doing things became primitive, archaic and regrettably unacceptable in public domain. Not only were certain aspects of the material culture in the colonies lost or destroyed, colonial societies also lost the power and sense of cultural continuity, such that it became practically impossible to recover the ability to strive for cultural progress on their own terms. The effect of western civilization on Wedding ceremonies is indeed a very profound one. In underpinning the sources of change in African cultures, Karimi (2023) states that the significant fact about African cultural history is the convergence upon the indigenous tradition of the two external influences the Arab-Islamic and the European-Christian to which the continent has been exposed for well over a millennium. The values and lifestyles associated with these traditions have been assimilated and to a large extent indigenized on the continent.

In a rather religious fashion reflects that Christianity and Islam as religions have served as harbingers of foreign cultural influence on African cultures (Fauzi, 2021). Over the years, external forces have made an inroad into the traditional system of marriage and wrought important changes which have tended to undermine its traditional stability. With increasing pace of urbanization, diversification of urban occupations, and ease of movement of people from one place to another, the influence of the extended family over the individual member has been attenuated. Other factors that aided this change include western education, going to abroad for further studies, and exposure to various types of mass communication television, video programmes, and satellite dishes. This brought about an increase in the number of educated men and women, and cultural contact with the Western world. The knowledge and information acquired through western education often led the parents to soften their holds over their children because of the upliftment on socio-economic status (Agbontaen-Eghafona, 2019).



2.21 Factors Responsible for Changing Marriage Patterns

Various Categories of factors play a significant role in shaping changes in marriage patterns. They are explained as follows:

- (i) Economic factors: Changes in marriage institution are clearly related to the remarkable development in education, increasing urbanization and involvement of women in economic activities outside household. People have started “going out of the family” for work and women also have joined men in process of finding out jobs and earning money. This has boosted self- respect and self- confidence of women. These developments have affected the institution of marriage. Another factor is affluence materialism. Through technological

improvements the living standards and real purchasing power of individuals have been enhanced. The primary effect of this increased affluence of marriage breakdown is that people can better afford the expenses of divorce which include not only legal fees but also the cost of maintaining a second home and added cost of recreation for the children (Singh & Jaswal, 2022).

(ii) Social factors: In the past, there were joint families in which there was interdependence of family members and there was closely interacting community. In the transition, today's highly urban and affluent society, work patterns have become more differentiated reducing the necessity to interact with the community. This pattern has given rise to individualism (Abegaz, 2022). He further posits that, the society is now characterized by high degree of specialization in terms of employment, education, health care, transportation. Prior to this specialization the family served the economic, educational, recreational, health care, procreative, protection and affection roles for its members.

Gradually, through industrialization these responsibilities have been taken from family and institutionalised outside the home. The institution of marriage has gone a tremendous change as there is a great change in living condition, values, norms and traditions in the patriarchal society girls had no say in the family matters especially in marriage affairs. Earlier they could not interfere or raise any questions even their own marriages were fixed. In the past, divorce was seen as 'Stigma' but now the time has changed. Girls are openly coming forward with the views starting from selection of mate and have full rights for divorce if the marriage is not successful. People have now become more self-centered and

sense of individualization is pulling them away from traditional norms of marriage and forming household without legal marriage (Agbontaen - Eghafona, 2019).

(iii) Psychological factors: In the past, for women the greatest personal achievement and source of reward was to be married, raising children and ensuring an optimal home and family life. No other life content could provide the same sense of personal worth. For men self-fulfillment lay in maintaining good employment, marrying the woman of their dreams and providing financial support to their family. Men and women have clear cut idea of their respective roles. However, increasing urbanization, institutionalization of family roles, technological improvements in home care products and increased affluence reduced the potential of home life to provide stimulation and feelings of worth from satisfactory personal achievements. (Agbontaen-Eghafona, 2019). In addition, Afful & Nantwi, (2016) posits that the ethos of individualism encouraged both men and women to realize their own potentials. The growing economic independence of women led to demands for more egalitarian family norms in the areas of child rearing, decision making, finances and house hold tasks. These changes in family norms and role expectation brought increased friction into homes due to departure of established patterns. Women grapple with the desire to have both career and children so there is conflict in marital relations and disturbed domestic life.

(iv) Technological factors: The arrival of new technology has also been emerging as a new factor for generating changes in the institution of marriage. Earlier there used to be the joint families in which grandparents and other senior members had

control over the juniors but now there are nuclear families in which both the parents are working and children are ignored to a great extent. They do not have any surveillance on them and they become isolated and take support of mass media and others technologies such as computers, mobiles, television etc. They make use of networking sites which make them away from family members but closer to outer world (Mian, 2009).

(v) Legislative factors: The legislative measures taken by the government in the last few years or more has helped to change the nature of institution of marriage as now legal safeguards are provided in marriage which were not part of traditional Ghanaian society. Many of the beliefs, values, ideals and rules of marriage laid down by the traditions lost their original meaning and importance and purpose now. They have made provision for registered marriages and provisions for divorce. Equal rights are conferred on men and women in this regard. (Wejak, 2020). Legislations have also specified the conditions of divorce. In order to loosen the tight grip of the patriarchal values over the joint families' legislations have also been undertaken providing equal opportunities, privileges, rights and facilities even to women.

2.22 Empirical Studies

Several scholars globally both at national and international levels have provided insights into the changing landscape of marriage practices, exploring factors driving these changes and the implications they have on individuals, family and societies. In 2017, Eha carried out a quantitative study “The Love Revolution: Cultural Ideas and Marital Love in Sub-Saharan Africa” to examines the concept of romantic love within marriage in sub-Saharan Africa, analyzing how shifting cultural ideals and gender

dynamics have influenced marital relationships and the meaning of love. Kelley (2023) also explored the transformations in marriage practices globally, focusing on the impact of modernization, globalization, education, and changing gender roles on marital relationships in their study “Marriage in the modernization world: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities”.

At the national level, Abubakari (2022) conducted a quantitative study on marital survival in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The study revealed that the average time to divorce for couples in the Upper East region of Ghana was forty–five years. The best age of marriage for better marital survival is 19 to 25 years. The study also noted that religious and age difference did not influence couple’s decision to divorce. The study sought to determine on the average how long a marriage is likely to last in the Kassena Nankana and Builsa districts of the Upper East Region. It further sought to determine if there was an association between the average length of marriage and covariates such as education, religion, age prior to marriage, tribe, type of marriage and occupation. The average time to divorce for the districts was found to be 45 years, and it varied for individuals of different religious believes, tribes, occupations, educational levels, type of marriage and the age prior to marriage of the individual of all the covariates tested, religion, age prior to marriage and tribe of an individual were observed to have a significant relationship with the average length of marriage. It was realised that the earlier an individual gets into marriage the more time the individual is likely to spend in the marriage.

Osei-Tutu and Ampadu (2017) carried out a similar study” Bride Price and the State of Marriage in North-West Ghana “. Their study sought to examine the role of bride price on the state of marriage among the Dagara of North-West Ghana. The study

revealed that due to the scarcity of the items used in marriage in the study area, getting bride price has become a daunting task for many young men preparing to marry or already in marriage with consequences on the legitimacy and stability of families. Through interviews experiential information on bride price and state of marriage was obtained. The study equally revealed that the role of families, payback norms and incorporation (as part of bride price payment) are clear structures that have positive consequences for the stability of marriage; weakening potentially destabilizing factors such as spousal abuse and the extra-marital sexual activities of men. Interestingly, the type and number of items used for bride price have so much social and cultural significance that formal education and modernity has so far failed to completely change this practice among the people. “Flux and strain” in marriage contraction was another qualitative study conducted by Azumi et al. (2018) designed to examine the changing face of bride wealth in contemporary Ghana and also to examine the current role of bride wealth in marriage and the implications of changes in the practice of bride wealth for unions. The study revealed that bride wealth still occupies a central role in marriage in Ghana. However, social, cultural, and economic changes have led to a breakdown of norms surrounding marriage contraction and the marriage process becoming more expensive than it was in the past.

Azurilah (2020), however, conducted a study on the causes of marital satisfaction and the criteria of choosing partners for marriage by the people of Navrongo in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The study sought to assess the criteria that were mostly considered in choosing a partner for marriage as well as the causes of marital satisfaction as perceived by married spouses among the people of Navrongo. The findings revealed that courtship as a method of choosing a partner was more profound than betrothal in Navrongo. Many people marry through courtship than betrothal.

Factors such as relationship, affection, love and appreciation, character, temperament, in-law issues, marital roles and general evaluation were the parameters used to evaluate couples' level of satisfaction. Another study was conducted by Afful and Afful and Nantwi (2016) on the role of art in customary marriage ceremonies: the case of Krobos of Somanya, Ghana. From the results of the study, it can be concluded that the various art forms exhibited at the marriage ceremonies of the Krobos have contributed a lot in promoting their marriages to the outside world. It can, in this context, be argued that most of the people from other communities and places who throng the scenes of Krobo customary marriage do so to observe and enjoy the distinctiveness of the Krobo marriage rites. Nuworsu et al. (2019) in their study on Marriage and the family Africa: challenges and opportunities, provides a comprehensive analysis of marriage and family dynamics in Africa, discussing issues such as gender roles, divorce, cultural practices, and the impact of globalization on marriage patterns.

Similarly, there are other international articles that seem to have similar study area but made use of quantitative methodology in the study notably: Zucker (2021) did a study on the state of marriage and the family in America today and presented an extensive analysis of the changing landscape of marriage in contemporary America, explored trends such as increasing divorce rates, cohabitation, non-marital childbearing and the evolving meaning and expectations of marriage. Manswab and Abdullahi (2018) also investigated the interplay between marriage markets and intermarriage patterns in the United States, examining how demographic factors, social networks, and economic conditions influence the formation of interethnic and interracial marriages. Blondell (2023) in his article analyzed the deinstitutionalization of marriage in the United States, discussing the cultural, economic, and societal factors that have weakened the

traditional norms that have weakened the traditional norms and expectations surrounding marriage. Willem (2017) also provides a comprehensive overview of marriage and family dynamics, exploring how societal changes, cultural norms, and individual choices impact marriage practices and family structures. The Changing African Family: An Inquiry-Based Approach” by Chatterjee (2022), explores the dynamics of African family structures and marriage practices, focusing on how social, economic and cultural changes have influenced marriage patterns and family relationships.

Therefore, it could be ascertained that a number of scholars have assessed different aspects of marriage globally .The foregoing review particularly in Ghana shows that the studies carried out on marriage , the focus is always on one aspect of the marriage process which is pride price, or mate selection process and how that stabilizes marriage and its survival, quite apart most of these studies where quantitative studies and the few which were qualitative employed only one method of data collection. This therefore creates a gap hence the need for this study.

2.23 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study adopts a cultural evolution theory model. This model is a comprehensive model that does not only stress the existence of the six elements but suggests change in one with change in any of the other factor (Figure 1). Consequently, adaptation is an inherent aspect of this model due to inevitability of the change factor that is unavoidable. The cycle starts with a thought that is placed in a structure. The structure then symbolically uses various structures depending on the knowledge, accessibility and need symbolic interaction and use occur within the sociocultural environment that is vulnerable to change that is inevitable. To meet the sociocultural needs, economic security is sought through economic means and organizations. Finally, technology helps with enhancing the efficiency of all operations within a culture.

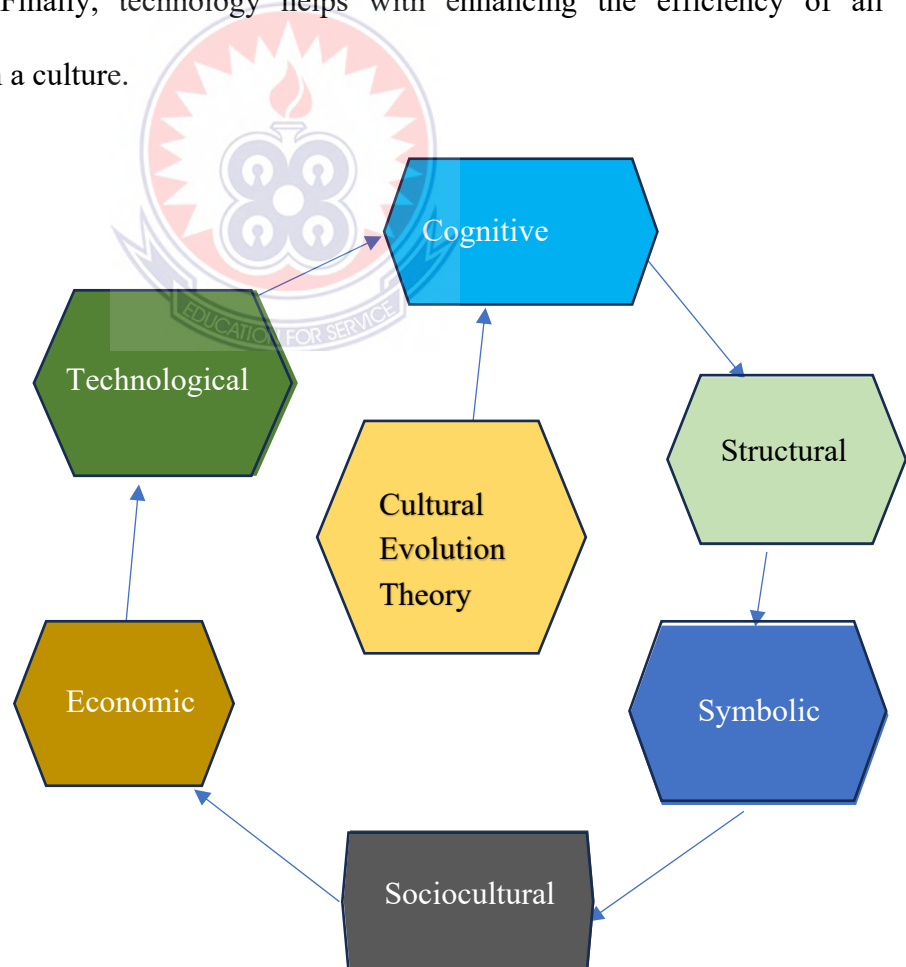


Fig. 1: Cultural Evolution Theory Model

1. Cognitive

Cognitive thinking is function of processing interaction between and among attention, auditory ability, logic and reasoning capabilities, long term memory, visual handling and working memory. This complex process is refined by the cultural patterns that individual experiences. Thinking process comes from ongoing observations and participation in activities surrounding one's environment.

2. Economic

Economic organizations deal with managing to offer financial welfare and security for individuals in a society. Standing of a community within a geographic location determines one's financial security and its access. Banks, credit unions and other financial lending units are integral part of this cultural aspect.

3. Socio-cultural

Sociocultural influences reflect the changes in cultural patterns over time. They draw from financial, geographical, political religious and technological divides in the society. Different sanctions are provided for various groups within the same society. Even in democracies, the rulers are colored by the majority's religion. Minorities are identified to receive special treatments.

4. Structural

Structural aspect of culture refers to the structures around people that bind them with each other through common ways of doing things. Structures exist as social institutions. Some examples of these institutions are economic, educational, political, professional/social and religious organizations. These organizations bind people into function units of society for specific functions that are necessary for survival of people and societies. Banks are examples of economic organizations, schools and

universities are examples of educational institutions. Various types of clubs represent professional or social organizations. Churches, mosques, synagogues and temples are examples of religious organizations. These structures teach citizens in an organized manner on way of doing things in various arenas of social life.

5. Symbolic

Symbolic organizations refer to the dynamics of using symbols to make sense out the common signs around people in a given society. For example, use of rings or beads can represent marital status, time of the year, rank in society etc. For example, use of traditional cloth (smock) by a Kasena bride and use of white gown by a Christian bride.

6. Technological

Technological organizations use technology to enhance efficiency in production to distribution activities in any operation of a society or culture. Advanced technology displaces human capital with equipment capital and requires constant training for people to remain up to speed with the ongoing changes. These advancements call for change in the mindset of the people because they have to be ready to change at short intervals especially in the developed world.

2.25 Summary

In this literature review, the study explored various aspects related to marriage practices, with a specific focus on the Kasena of Navrongo in Ghana. Beginning with an overview of theoretical and conceptual frameworks surrounding social change and marriage, delved into the historical and cultural context of Ghanaian marriage customs, including the significance of customary marriage laws and theories informing mate selection. Through an examination of the determinants of mate

selection and the importance of marriage rites, the study highlighted the multifaceted nature of marriage within Ghanaian culture and the factors driving changes in marriage functions. Additionally, the study provided insights into the historical origins, economic activities, and socio-cultural background of the Kasena people, contextualizing their traditional marriage practices and the stages involved, such as courtship, ratification of marriage, and payment of dowry. Furthermore, we explored the emergence of new patterns in marriage ceremonies and identified key factors contributing to changing marriage patterns within the Kasena community. Through a review of empirical studies, we synthesized existing research findings and identified gaps in the literature, setting the stage for further inquiry into the dynamics and transformations occurring within Ghanaian marriage practices, particularly among the Kasena-Nankana people.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted for the research. It specifically discusses the research design, methods and procedures for the data collection, trustworthiness, ethical consideration and methods of data analysis.

3.1 Research Approach

A qualitative research approach was used in collecting the data. Qualitative writing tends to be rich with quotation, description and narration, as researcher attempt to capture conversation, experiences, perspectives, voices and meanings. This is research with words instead of numbers (Creswell, 2020; Terashita, 2011; Willig, 2008). Terashita (2011) defines qualitative research as: a form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data, to emphasize the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of approach. Creswell (2020) highlighted the following as characteristics of a qualitative research:

It is usually conducted in natural setting. It is an extensive use of descriptive data. Qualitative researchers are likely to describe a phenomenon with words, rather than number. The search for meaning is often evident. It focuses on how people try to make sense of their lives. This approach was adopted because the researcher needed to acquire in-depth knowledge of the study and uncover complexities on the phenomena rather than simplifying things (Sodhi, 2011).

Also, qualitative research usually pursues in-depth investigation of phenomena and uses interviewing and other documentary analysis. As it were, the experiences of the clan heads and member of council of elders can better be understood by interviewing. This approach was adopted because I needed to acquire in-depth knowledge of the participants and uncover complexities on the phenomena rather than simplifying things (Price & Lovell, 2019).

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a plan of action to be carried out in connection with a proposed research work. It provides a guideline for the checking and counter checking of the research work which enables the researcher to keep track of work action and let him to know that he is moving in the right direction (Cárdenas López, 2012). Islamia (2016) defines research design as a set of methods and procedures for collection, measurement and analysis of data; it involves a detail of the processes necessary for gathering information required to solve a research problem. These processes involve the strategy as to how one will proceed from initial identification of research question through to collecting data and evidence and write up. Conceptual framework thus, the kinds of theories or assumptions one will use to analyse data. The question of who or what will be studied, and lastly which tools and procedures will be used to undertake the research.

The research was conducted in the context of exploratory case study. Exploratory case study design is used when there is no pre-determined outcome. According to Sodhi (2011), case studies are appropriate when asking “how,” “why,” “what,” and “who” questions. In the exploratory case study, the questions answered are “how” and “what.” Exploratory case studies are also appropriate when you wish to gain an extensive and in-depth description of a social phenomenon. The exploratory case

study is used to explore presumed causal links that are too complex for a survey or experiment (Wu, 2018). Exploratory case studies are useful when there is a need for a more in-depth understanding of a complex issue, event, or phenomenon. It can be used to develop hypotheses for further study, identify key issues, generate ideas, and gain an understanding of an unfamiliar situation (Terashita, 2011). It is particularly useful in situations where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear. They can be used to explore topics such as the following:

- (i) Exploring an issue or problem from a new perspective;
- (ii) Examining a particular issue within its real-life context;
- (iii) Investigating the interplay between multiple factors that affect a certain phenomenon;
- (iv) Uncovering patterns or trends related to a particular topic;
- (v) Examining the effects of an intervention or policy;
- (vi) Assessing the impact of a certain event;
- (vii) Studying the causes and effects of a certain phenomenon; and
- (viii) Examining relationships between different groups or concepts.

This design was appropriate for the study because it allowed the researcher to gain a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Since changes in marriage practices can be complex and multifaceted, this design enabled the exploration of various factors and their interrelationships. Contextual exploration: The Kasena culture and society have unique characteristics and dynamics that are best captured through an in-depth exploration and this allowed the researcher to investigate the specific cultural, social, and historical factors influencing changes in marriage practices within the Kasena community. Also, flexibility in data collection methods. Researcher was able to employ a variety of techniques such as

interviews and observations to gather rich and diverse data. This flexibility enables researchers to capture multiple perspectives and nuances, ensuring a more robust and holistic understanding of the phenomenon. Willig (2008) comments that there is no absolute truth of interpretation, but rather the value of the account lies in whether or not it is a plausible explanation for the data collected. The aim was to provide meaning for the culture under study and the strength of exploratory design lies in the use of more than one method (J. W. Creswell, 2011). In view of the above it became necessary to adopt this approach in my study.

3.3 Population

According to Handayani et al. (2022), a participant or population is any group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. Thus, participants are any group of individuals that the researcher wants to make his deductions from. The participants for this research were heads of clans and members of council of elders and family heads in Nogsenia who were also the custodians of the land and excluded non-natives. These participants were selected because, were thought or believed to have extensive knowledge and experience regarding the historical marriage practices of the Kasena people. It was believed that they could provide valuable insights into the traditional customs, rituals, and norms associated with marriages in the community. Their perspectives could help the researcher understand the cultural context and the factors that had influenced changes in marriage practices over time. Decision Making authority such as Elders, clan heads, and family heads often hold positions of authority and play a significant role in decision-making processes within the Kasena community. They may have influenced or witnessed changes in marriage practices firsthand. Their participation in the study

can shed light on the factors that have driven these changes and the social dynamics surrounding them.

Inclusion Criteria: The selection of participants for this study on changes in marriage practices among Kasena people was based on the following specific inclusion criteria:

1. **Elders:** Participants belonging to the elder category were included in the study. Elders play a significant role in the community and possess extensive knowledge and experience regarding traditional marriage practices. By including this group, valuable insights into historical customs, rituals, and changes in marriage practices over time can be obtained.
2. **Clan/Family Heads:** Participants categorized as family heads were included in the study, Family heads often play a critical role in decision-making processes and have a direct influence on contemporary marriage practices within the Kasena community. Including family heads helped to capture insights into the current dynamics and emerging trends in marriage practices.

The chosen age criteria was designed to ensure a diverse view across different generations, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of changes in marriage practices among the Kasena to capture both historical and contemporary perspectives on marriage practices within the community.

3.4 The Study Area

The study was conducted in Nogsenia, the traditional community in Navorongo in the Upper East region of Ghana. It represents a relatively “urban traditional area” whose involvement with traditional authority dates back to the seventeenth century. Major decisions concerning the municipality on cultural issues come from Nogsenia.

Traditional area since that is the paramountcy. This area is very important because they are the custodians of the land and influence decision in Navrongo. Traditional communities often have a long-standing history and cultural heritage that shapes their marriage practices. Investigating changes in marriage practices within a traditional community can provide insights into how these practices have evolved over time and how they are influenced by historical factors. Understanding the historical context can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the changes occurring in marriage practices.

Navrongo is the administrative capital of the Kasena-Nankana people. It is located in the far north of Ghana in the Upper East Region, close to the Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso). Navrongo forms a compact block of highland of flat terrain. It is about five hundred kilometers from the National capital, Accra. Chuchuliga bounds the area to the west and to the east is Kandiga. To the north and south are Paga and Naga respectively. It must be noted that, the Kasena and Nankana constitute two different ethnic groups who peacefully co-habit the same geographical area (Navrongo). Cotton (2020) maintains that the Nankana can be found mostly to the south and southeastern part of Navrongo, whilst the Kasena have settled mostly to the north and northwestern parts of the area. Gradual mixing seems to have produced homogeneity since there are no natural demarcations that separate the two ethnic groups. In most cases therefore, you will find the Kasena and the Nankana owing allegiance to the same traditional authority. The pattern of settlement is a dispersed type especially, in the areas outside the Navrongo Township. The area has steadily developed into a dispersed–nucleated settlement and the swish round type compounds have gradually vanished to give way to European style structures, although the round swish built flat top houses can still be found in the outskirts of Navrongo. Like the rest of the North,

the area falls within the broad vegetational zone of the Guinea Savannah woodlands that stretch from the north to the south-eastern corner of Ghana.

The natural vegetation is generally grassland with scattered trees like the baobab, dawadawa, shea tree, and kapok. These trees are drought resistant by their ability to shed their leaves in the dry season and to store water against the drought. Osafo et al. (2021) explain that the climate of the area is marked by a dry and wet season. The dry season lasts from about October to April. Characteristic of this season is the hot, burning sun and the dry, lip cracking and sand carrying harmattan winds. The wet season that lasts for about half of the year, from April to October is usually characterized by violent thunderstorms that often cause great destruction to buildings. Basically, the season is marked by general green ground coverage as plants and grass begin to grow. It is the belief of some elders that the vegetation as described has resulted from the reduction of a grassland due to human habitation. Dankwa et al. (2022) agree with Sakharina and Daud (2020) when they maintained that it is not surprising that Ferguson, in his report on the hinterland stated that the region affords room and food for elephants, hippopotamus, deer, buffalos and that spoors of lions were frequently noticed. It is common even in recent times to see elephants occasionally traversing the area. It is significant to note that the vegetation and climatic conditions control the economic and social lives of the inhabitants.

Preservation and Adaptation: Traditional communities may be grappling with the tension between preserving their cultural heritage and adapting to modern influences. Exploring changes in marriage practices within such a community can shed light on how traditional customs are maintained or modified to accommodate societal changes, globalization, or external pressures. This examination can contribute to

discussions on cultural preservation, identity, and the negotiation of tradition and modernity.

Unique Insights: Traditional communities often offer unique perspectives and experiences that may differ from mainstream or urban populations. By focusing on a traditional community with a chief, you can capture the community's distinctive viewpoints, narratives, and practices related to marriage. These insights can enrich the broader understanding of changes in marriage practices and provide a valuable contrast to studies conducted in different contexts.

Cultural Significance: Traditional communities often have deep-rooted cultural practices, including marriage traditions, that have been passed down through generations. Studying changes in marriage practices in such a community provides valuable insights into the cultural heritage and its evolution over time.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

In all, respondents were involved in the study comprising six clan heads and fourteen elders all selected within the Nogsenia Community. The respondents of the study were from the eight clans; namely Yufue, Jampiabia, Bagwebia, Bawiabia, Yupugnia, Kabagnia, Sebagnabia and Balobia. The ruling Lineage is Jampiabia.

The sample size for this study was determined based on data saturation. The distribution of respondents among the categories of respondents and communities involved in the study was conducted systematically to ensure representation and diversity. Data saturation is the point at which no new information emerges from the interviews and focus group discussions. This meant that data collection continued until the point where no new information was being obtained from the participants. Purposive and convenient /accidental sampling techniques were used to sample the

participants. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on specific characteristics or qualities that align with the research objectives. This sampling method allows researchers to target individuals who can provide valuable insights or represent specific perspectives relevant to the study.

According to Creswell (2020), purposive sampling involves selecting participants who

have the necessary expertise or experience to contribute to the research objectives.

The researcher intentionally seeks out individuals who possess specific knowledge or characteristics that align with the research questions or objectives. Convenient

sampling is another non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on their accessibility and availability. This method involves choosing

individuals who are easily accessible to the researcher and willing to participate in the study, often due to practical convenience. Creswell (2011) describes convenient

sampling as selecting participants based on their proximity or convenience. This approach allows researchers to choose individuals who are readily available or easily

reachable, such as participants from a specific location or individuals within the researcher's immediate network. In both purposive and convenient sampling, the

emphasis is on selecting participants who meet specific criteria or are easily accessible, although for different reasons. Purposive sampling targets individuals with

particular qualities or expertise, while convenient sampling focuses on practical convenience and accessibility.

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

The researcher relied on primary data from participants, by employing the interactionist methods, thus observation protocol and an interview guide. An interview is a research method that involves a direct conversation between the researcher and the participant(s) to gather information and insights. It typically follows a structured or semi-structured format, where the researcher asks questions to elicit responses from the participant. Interviews can provide rich and detailed data by allowing participants to share their experiences, perspectives, and opinions. According to Creswell (2012), interviews are a commonly used data collection method in qualitative research. They enable researchers to obtain in-depth information, explore participants' subjective experiences, and gain a deeper understanding of the research topic. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face, over the phone, or through online platforms, depending on the research context and participant availability. Interviews are primarily done in qualitative research and occur when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers. Often audiotapes are utilized to allow for more consistent transcription. The researcher often transcribes and types the data into a computer file, in order to analyse it after interviewing (Cresswell, 2020).

3.6.1 Observation

Observation is systematically watching and recording participants' behaviors, actions, and interactions in their natural settings. Researchers make observations to gather data on social phenomena, behaviors, or specific events. This method allows for the collection of detailed and contextualized information by directly witnessing the participants' behaviors and the social dynamics in which they occur. Sodhi (2011) describe observation as a method that involves the systematic and structured watching

of participants in their natural environments. Researchers may take field notes, record behaviors, or use audiovisual equipment to capture data during observation. This method is particularly useful in studying social interactions, cultural practices, and contextual factors that shape human behavior. Observation method is described as a method to observe and describe the behavior of a subject and it involves the basic technique of simply watching the phenomena until some hunch or insight is gained. It involves 'seeing' things, recording and analyzing what is seen. Observation can be used to triangulate information obtained through other data collection methods or provide information that can help explain results acquired through other data collection tools or methods (Chen, 2018). Both interviews and observations are valuable methods in qualitative research, providing researchers with unique data sources to explore research questions, gain insights, and generate new knowledge.

3.6.2 Interview

Davidavičienė (2018) describes semi-structured interview as having much of the freewheeling quality of unstructured interviewing but is based on the use of an interview guide which is a written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order. Semi-structured interviewing follows the open-ended approach that is characteristic of qualitative research. In semi-structured interviewing, the interviewer elicits answers fully from the perspective of the study participant and attempts to gain a greater understanding of the context and meaning of those responses through various forms of probing (Mimansha Patel & Nitin Patel, 2019).

3.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in the context of research refers to the extent to which a study's findings, methods, and interpretations are considered reliable, credible, and valid. It

encompasses the overall integrity and trust that readers and researchers can place in the research process and its outcomes. Trustworthiness is the quality of a research study that reflects the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the research design, data collection procedures, and findings. It involves establishing a robust and transparent process that ensures the research is conducted with integrity, rigor, and validity, providing assurance to readers and researchers that the study's outcomes are trustworthy and accurately represent the phenomena under investigation (Mimansha Patel & Nitin Patel, 2019).

Credibility: To establish the credibility of the study, data triangulation was employed by combining observation and interviews as data collection methods. By combining multiple data sources researchers can provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Chen, 2018). The use of multiple data collection methods allows for the cross-verification of findings, enhancing the credibility of the study. This allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

Transferability: Transferability of the findings was addressed through thick description, providing rich and detailed descriptions of the research setting, participants, and data collection processes. Additionally, sampling information was documented, including demographic details and selection criteria, a thorough and detailed account of the research context enables readers to evaluate the similarities and differences between their own contexts and the study setting, enhancing the transferability of the findings to allow readers to assess the relevance and generalizability of the findings to other similar populations or settings (Kilani & Kobziev, 2016).

Dependability: The dependability of this study was ensured through researcher reflexivity. Ongoing self-reflection and documentation of personal biases, assumptions, and decisions made during the research process were undertaken to maintain transparency and reduce potential bias. An audit trail was maintained, recording research decisions, data collection procedures, and analysis processes, including field notes, interview transcripts, coding schemes, and analytical memos.

Confirmability: Confirmability was addressed through member checking, where preliminary findings and interpretations were shared with participants to obtain their feedback and validate the accuracy and authenticity of the findings.

3.8 Data Collection Method

Data was collected by the researcher herself-moving from house to house to conduct the interview at periods that were agreed by the respondents themselves. The interviews were built up around a dialogue between the respondent and interviewer. At the beginning, the purpose of the research was explained and most often the respondents were very eager to talk about their traditions. These responses were recorded with a recorder and at same time the researcher wrote some notes in a field note book to support it in case the recorder failed. The respondents were interrupted as little as possible to put them on the right track if they were diverting from the topic otherwise the researcher waited until the talking had come to a natural end and then the respondent was asked to clarify or elaborate on some of the most relevant experience. The observation uses availability to select wedding ceremonies to be observed.

The key informant interviews draw population from the participating individuals in wedding ceremonies, trying as much as possible to include participants with social

aptitude and affinity for wedding ceremonies. The study used the qualitative method of research, as only this type of research instrument would allow for a detailed and extensive understanding of marriages today, it would also give room to capture the caveats discovered. The researcher decided to add key informant interviews to the observations, so as to cover up for one of the downfalls of the observation method, which is the fact that it is prone to the researcher's bias, thus this allowed for objectivity in the study.

3.9 Data Analysis Method

In line with the qualitative approach to the research, the generated data took the form of thematic analysis to examine their responses. The transcripts were reviewed multiple times to identify patterns and themes in the data. The coded data was put into four themes to allow the researcher group similar responses. To allow effective data analysis, the researcher organized and prepared the data for analysis which involved transcribing the recorded interviews and arranging them according to the sources of information. The researcher also read through all the data to obtain general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning. Coding is the process of organizing the material into segments of text before bringing meaning to information (Bairagi et al., 2019a) The main objectives were turned to themes. These were the four major themes from which the analysis was done according to the research questions.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Ethics are self-regulatory guidelines for making decisions and defining professions. It is the moral conduct of a system of establishing what is right and wrong. Ethical behaviour helps protect individuals, communities and environments, and offers the

potential to increase the sum good in the world (Snyder, 2019). Israel and Hay also identify some principles which most ethical codes have in common: Informed consent; the consent of participants in research must be acquired. Informed consent involves participants voluntarily agreeing to participate in research and substantially understanding what the research involves. Confidentiality; and anonymity; this involves the protection of the identities of the participants in research. Participants' privacy and confidentiality was protected throughout the study. All audio recordings and transcripts were kept confidential and only accessible to the research team. Pseudonyms will be used to protect participants' identities in the data analysis and reporting. More so, information derived from research must not be directly traceable to the participants. The researcher allowed the participants to retain ownership of their voices. However, they were informed that their suggestions would be included in the data in the final report.

This study took cognizance of research ethics and thus made it a point of necessity to contact individuals whose wedding ceremonies were to be observed beforehand, explaining to them, and the objectives of the research and seeking their full approval for their ceremonies to be observed with the pictures that were taken at the wedding ceremonies were duly informed to respect and maintain their anonymity. Moreover, participants were given the option of not participating if they were not okay with any of the research objectives. Risk of Harm: The study did not involve any physical risks to participants. However, discussing sensitive topics such as marriage and family relationships may cause emotional discomfort or distress. The researcher was ready to provide participants with support and referrals for counseling services if needed. These ethical considerations were essential to ensure that the study is conducted in a

manner that was respectful, responsible, and protected the rights and welfare of the participants.

3.11 Positionality

Positionality in research refers to the recognition and acknowledgment of the researcher's own social, cultural, and personal background and how it may influence the research process, data interpretation, and findings. It emphasizes the understanding that researchers bring their own perspectives, biases, and subjectivities to the study, and these factors can shape the research process and outcomes. Positionality is an essential aspect of reflexivity in research, as it emphasizes the researcher's self-awareness and understanding of their own social, cultural, and personal background and how it may shape the research process and outcomes" (Bairagi et al., 2019b). "Recognizing and acknowledging the researcher's positionality is crucial in qualitative research as it acknowledges the subjective influence that the researcher's background and perspective can have on the research process and findings" (Chen, 2018).

3.11.1 Recognizing my Insider Status

In conducting this study on changes in marriage practices among the Kasena, it is important to acknowledge my positionality as a native researcher with understanding of the Kasena culture, despite not currently residing in the study area. Growing up within the Kasena community and being familiar with their customs and traditions, I bring an insider's perspective to this research. However, it is crucial to recognize that my own experiences and subjectivities may shape my interpretations and potential biases. By acknowledging my positionality, I navigated and reflected upon my role

with reflexivity and transparency to ensure an accurate representation of the Kasena community and their evolving marriage practices throughout the research process.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the finding and analysis of data. Data was gathered through interviews and observation. The interviews were described in detail in relation to research questions. The chapter starts with the presentation and analysis of data collected through interviews and observation.

The following research questions guided the study.

1. How were marriages contracted among the Kasena of Nogsenia before independence?
2. What changes in the marriage practices have taken Place among Kasena of Nogsenia?
3. What factors are responsible for the changes in the marriage practices among the Kasena of Nogsenia?
4. How has the changes in the marriage practices Affected the socio-economic system of Kasena people?

The data was collected from 20 respondents, made up of 14 elders and 6 clan heads.

The major findings of the study are as follows:

Table 1. Age Distribution of Respondents

Years	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
80 – 82	14	70%
83 – 85	6	30%
86 and above	--	-----

Source: Field Data (2023).

Table 1, it is clear that majority of the respondents were between the ages 80 and above. This clearly depicts that the cultural values of the people can best be compared and assessed by this category because they are likely to have experienced both old and new cultural practices in the society.

On sex distribution, it was observed during the research that no female was involved in the study. This was so because Nogsenia is a patrilineal society and for that matter, women could not become clan heads or elders. All the respondents affirmed that they perform marriage rites. The rest of the data is presented according to the research questions and the observations.

4.1 How were Marriages Contracted among the Kasena of Nogsenia before Independence?

This research question was set to collect data on how marriages were contracted among the Kasena people. Six themes were identified under this research question: the process of courtship, proposal, bride wealth negotiations, marriage ceremony, Nuptial rites, feast and celebrations.

The Process of Courtship

The process of courtship formed the bases of every Kasena marriage. Families, elders, and community members contributed in facilitating courtship as well as the cultural norms and expectations that guided these practices. All the respondents agreed to the fact that the contraction of marriage process began with selection of a marriage partner, to the stage of courtship, ratification of marriage and payment of bride wealth. Pwawuvi, one of the respondents had this to say when he was questioned:

Kasena marriage is very unique and I cannot forget that process since I am now described by my people as a champion of marriage contraction. A true Kasena marriage started with bwoga and katɔɔɔ beirim (searching for life partner) and when you finally got hold of that partner, the real process started with courtship, then it proceeded to gongna by which time the woman was with the husband, then we now talk of the ŋwea (life) things which is kwoŋa wunnu (payment of bride wealth) (Field Data, 2023).

He went further to explain specific social event where young men and women used to meet and engage in dating process before the process of courtship. These included funerals of elderly people, festivals, markets and visits of unmarried young women to their relatives who were married in one's village. He expressed this in the following words:

During funerals of elderly people, young girls who were either from the bereaved family or sympathizers usually came around in the evenings, and many young men who were looking for partners would engage them in romantic conversations. Young men came from far and near to such funerals because it was an avenue to meet young and beautiful partners. I quite remember I met my first wife when she lost her grandfather and I attended the funeral with one my friends who was an in-law, it was then I had the opportunity of speaking with her when she accompanied other girls to welcome us by bringing water for us to wash our faces as

tradition demanded that when in-laws came to mourn, maidens must provide water in a calabash for them to use to wipe their tears after which you put money in the calabash of the maiden you picked the water from (Field Data, 2023).

This was corroborated by Adiga as follows “we had places we called village squares which were convenient places young people met during market days to play. We usually met where the moon is bright and on market days. The girls would meet to sing and dance which is referred to as:

lenlE, whilst the ladies sang and danced in a circle, they would mention a boy’s name followed by a girl’s name and asked the girls to dance with that particular gentleman. This was in a form of pairing them as lovers, a boy or girl who didn’t like the partner would oppose, but those who liked the pairing would accept and dance in agreement and from there, a relationship was likely to be started (Field Data, 2023).

Participants were asked to enumerate the factors which influenced young men and women in their choice of potential marriage partners for dating and courtship. This question attracted a variety of responses which can be summarized as follows:

Young people in those days considered the ethnic background of their suitors before selecting marriage partners. Majority of the respondents (90%) said that ethnic background was a key factor to by parents. They indicated that, there will be compatibility and peace as well as total support from the family when a partner is of the same ethnicity or tribe. This view was aptly expressed by most of the respondents.

For example, an elder said:

The first thing I asked a lady when I was looking for a partner was to ask where she came from and her tribe because my parents were very particular about that, most at times my mother would say I should stay within my roots and be safe, because certain cultures have their own

problems. My father on his part would sarcastically add that a longer journey is stressful (Field Data, 2023).

This was corroborated by another clan head as follows: *“every tribe have their believes and traditions and it becomes difficult for other people to conform to our believes and that will be a problem for our marriage”* (Field Data, 2023).

This is congruent with Chatterjee’s (2022) research, which discovered that ethnic part of marriage could be attributed to a deep sense of attachment to parents or devotion to the local community, as well as distinctions in the individual involved customs and language. She stated once more that marriages between people of the same ethnicity promote effective and effortless resolution of disputes. Chatterjee (2022) also mentioned ethnic stereotypes towards a particular ethnic group as a factor or reason why some people do not marry from that tribe. One ethnic group, for example, may label other ethnic groups as having or specialized in bad and undesirable attributes such as a proclivity to steal, perform witchcraft, cheat, be evil, and so on. They occasionally use adjectives like “bush” and “uncivilized” to describe them. To summarize, Zucker (2021) proposed that when one ethnic group has negative attitudes towards members of other ethnic group, ethnic consideration in marriage is strengthened. The finding is also consistent with the theory of Homogamy/similarity, which holds that people are drawn to people who have similar sociocultural backgrounds, such as age, race, ethnicity, ethics, socioeconomic status, religion, physical characteristics, proximity (nearby living), and political views. Many academics, notably Nuworsu et al. (2019), believe that social homogamous marriage occurs between two persons who are culturally similar.

The data revealed that parents or family interest was a factor that was considered when selecting a mate for marriage. This was so because many people considered marriage to be a union between two families and not only the man and the woman. In a Kasena traditional community, the potential partner's family background is given great consideration. Adua, who is one of the oldest people in the community had this to say on the involvement of the family in mate selection:

To be frank with you, I like how we performed our marriages when we were young. I remember I met my wife during the Fao festival where I spotted her with some friends, upon my return to the house I had to tell my elder brother who traced to know the village she came from and her family. After ascertaining that, my father asked if I had a strong interest in her so that they could continue with the process after affirmation. I barely met the girl again. My brother and father took over and did the follow up and the entire process (Field Data, 2023).

To Adua, this made him feel loved especially his wife because of the family support during the process. He explained that at a point in time it was only the brother and some of his friends who engaged his girlfriend when they met on occasions. He went further by saying that parents were those who made inquiries into family background of both parties involved in the courtship process, they did due diligence to find out if first, the two of you had no family relationship, secondly, whether they had witchcraft, thieves and other deadly diseases in their family, if all these were fulfilled then it paves the way for further processes to continue. Anepe of the Yufiu clan further explains:

If you know how parents helped certain marriages in this house eerrh, the old ladies in my house are those that made many of our daughter in laws to still be here, they cement the marriage. With our culture, women were not even married to their husbands but the family. In a

real traditional home, on your first visit, it was very difficult for you to identify couple (Field Data, 2023).

When asked of the reasons for that he said, *“Sometimes the love between couples can fade but when the family is involved the two of them have no option than to resolve the issue, because those who would even lead you to dissolve the marriage were not interested”*.

Family interest as asserted by majority of the participants indicated that, parents, elders and community interest was a key factor in selection of a partner. Lack of parental interest sometimes made certain relationships to end. Many parents usually expressed their dislikes and disapproval of a partner in so many ways. These included the places at which a partner was offered to sit when he or she visited, the kind of facial expression and remarks surrounding the conversations. Achoga, one of the elders expressed this in the following words:

Ba ni veiru yibia ni mo baa sangi o dwua” which literally means, “The look on a visitor’s face determines the kind of soup prepared for him”, culturally if a suitor came on a visit, the mother of the girl would usually offer him a seat in her compound whilst she engaged him in a conversation, but within families who were not interested in the relationship, the suitor was asked to sit outside and sometimes this is said with a frowned face or the mother who would tell you he or she was not around. The suitor who was loved was sometimes taken to the top of the local room (Nayuu) to comfortably relax whilst the mother called out the daughter to join him. All these in those days were signs of interest from the parents’ side especially the mother (Field Data, 2023).

Another respondent corroborated this when he said that some suitors may be rejected by the parents of their partners but may be loved by other family members who sometimes gave vital information as to things that would strengthen the relationship.

Most often, it was the siblings who acted in that direction. Ayifiu, one of the participants stated that, parents who happened to be friends could arrange marriages between their children for their children's own interest. He went further to explain that parents who benefitted from people in those days decided to reward good deeds of their friends by either giving their daughters for marriage or encouraging their sons to marry in that family. This he expressed in the following words;

Our parents in the past developed strong friendship bonds which compelled some for the sake of the bond to deliberately connect their children to date. They saw that as a way of maintaining their friendship (Field Data, 2023).

Another respondent corroborated this by explaining, *“Some parents arranged partners as a way of rewards towards their friends. It was a way of paying back good deeds as the saying goes, one good term deserves another”* (Field Data, 2023).

The data also revealed that, the dislikes of parents or family in the relationship sometimes transcended to the community and in those days, it was very common to hear certain hurting statements and verbal abuses from neighbours who equally didn't support the marriage. In the words of Adiga:

It was very likely to hear woman call a lady black sheep, witch, anytime they met her in a gathering. These words are hurtful and no woman would feel happy to be called such but here was the case because they didn't support her presence in that family or community. Others out of pain forfeited such relationships (Field Data, 2023).

Achonga, however, affirms this statement when he noted:

Some partners during the courtship process were able to overcome these challenges. They devised various ways of proving themselves to the family of their partners by working extra hard. Some partners in

those days only relied on family members who they saw to be supportive (Field Data, 2023).

He added that it was very common to find family members supporting different suitors, and everyone wanted to win and this often led to divisions among family members. On how love and emotions were expressed during courtship, the data revealed that, even though there existed strong sexual feelings and romantic love between partners, there was a force from parents from both families which made it very difficult for partners to involve in pre-marital sex. Suitors were only allowed to engage their partners in an open environment and did not even get the opportunity to spend the night together since they were not married. According to a participant, even if the girl visited her suitor and happens to spend the night there, she was only allowed to spend the night in the suitor's mother's room. All these were measures put in place to check sex before marriage.

These assertions supports Azurilah's (2020) study when he posited that the engagement of the family in the marriage process is a prominent component of the Ghanaian marriage process. Manswab and Abdullahi (2018) backs this up by claiming that in most situations, the prospective partner's family and kinship was the sole consideration used to settle the marriage decision. More so, in traditional and collectivist societies, the origin of the family is taken to be important when choosing a partner, and it is the family or parents who can investigate the origin of the future marriage partner's family. These findings also align with Azumi et al. (2018) who indicated that marriage decisions are made when the girl is still in childhood, and marriage connections are solemnized by family elders. The opinion of parents and family elders weighs more than the decision of a girl for whom a partner is being sought. However, these findings contradict Chatterjee (2022) who contended that

potential couples nowadays consider more thoroughly before choosing their spouses and that parents no longer compel their children to choose a relationship as they used to.

The data also revealed that young people in Nogsenia preferred to marry people who were ambitious and industrious. Majority of the respondents indicated that being ambitious and industrious was a factor that younger people looked up for when choosing their marriage partners. It was clear that young people were aware that couple who were industrious and ambitious would raise their economic status. In the view of Kujawoba a clan head, marriage among the Kasena people was not necessarily based on educational background but so far as the person is seen as industrious, he was considered a marriage material. he stated:

Our family was really discouraged and opposed to my sister's marriage to a non- Kasena. However, when the family detected later that the man was very resourceful, would be able to take very good care of her, the family gave their blessings to the marriage (Field Data, 2023).

Another respondent affirmed this by saying:

...when I was of age, my father gave me a piece of land to farm and, a few animals to rear. I remember that day very well when he told me that he would use those things to measure my readiness to settle with a woman. He told me when I get married, we will catch animals from my own farm to pay for the bride wealth (Field Data, 2023).

He further explained that it was very clear to identify an industrious person based on the number of farms and animals the person had. All these responses confirm why Osei-Tutu and Ampadu (2017) stressed the importance of economic status in mate selection in their study. This is also in line with theory of complementarity because in

a marital relationship, partners compliment the efforts of each other. One partner will complement the efforts of the other in terms of work so that they properly take care of the family.

The data further revealed that the social status of would-be couple was a factor that young people considered in selecting their future wives or husbands. Ninety percent (90%) of the respondent indicated that considering one's social status among the Kasena communities was a very important factor during marriage process. Anepe, one of the respondents summarized his views as follows:

...it is because of this that we always say good name is better than riches. In this clan we prefer good reputation and good behaviour to money even though it also counts, a person with positive achievements stands tall to be considered (Field Data, 2023).

This contradicts with the findings of Abubakari (2022), who discovered that female students are more selective in their partners' career choices prior to getting into a relationship with them, while males are convinced that their rising career prospects will push them to establish romantic relationships with their female counterparts.

Proposal

On the issue of how proposal was made after a partner was selected, the data revealed that, love in the past was expressed differently, not necessarily in cash, but mostly in kind. Suitors could gather friends to offer communal services such as farming, and building activities for the parents of the lady they were interested in. Some young men even brought food stuffs for their partners' family and all those were ways by which suitors expressed their love. Gifts were predominantly exchanged among lovers than the exchange of fiscal cash. An elder expressed his views in the following words:

... mostly during the raining seasons, it was very common for suitors to organize their friend to go weed their partners' fathers', not even only that but also during harvesting times. On the part of the girl, she equally helped during sowing and harvesting activities in the raining season at her suitor's parents' house (Field Data, 2023).

Proper enquiries were made during the selection process and that usually was not a difficult task to accomplish since both families were involved from the beginning of the process. When a participant was questioned on this process, he had this to say:

hmmm, I remember I was invited by a friend to be a “betweenner” during their marriage contraction process. For the first few months we visited, the family of his girlfriend never said anything but kept receiving our items (salt, guinea fowls, cola). On the last day of declaring our intentions something happened, hmmm.” On following up to find out what happened, he exclaimed! “they rejected the items because the most significant thing was added that day “na wali taa nɔŋɔ” (head tobacco), they were very mad and did not understand the reason why their things were not rejected earlier. I made them to understand that all the items they received from us were kept and the groom's parents were still contemplating on issues because all those items were meaningless until that specific tobacco was added. The rejection meant that they were not interested in the marriage for reasons best known to the family and that ended our visits to their house. We had to take the tobacco back, but the other items were left there because of the saying “ŋu ba vei pɛ sɔŋɔ yi ko jwora” literally meaning you can't go back with the gifts you sent to a chief's house (Field Data, 2023).

To Kujwaba, a clan head, he strongly believes that rejection of tobacco was always rare because family members in those days did proper inquiries, so hardly did that happen, but it did happen in few cases, he explained:

If the tobacco was received, it brought joy to the groom's family because it was an indication that permission was granted for them to "woo" their wife. Normally, you did not have to delay the process again if the head tobacco was received by the bride's father, in the event that the groom's family delayed, other suitors who were equally coming around could also bring their items as well (Field Data, 2023).

When I further asked why he felt that the bride's parents could still take items from their suitors since they might have accepted the items of the first suitor, he laughed boldly and said:

I have seen many young men run away after I accompanied them to declare their intentions. Because of these situations we Kasena people don't seem to pay attention to bringing ordinary gift whether small or big, until you woo the lady to your house and later seal it with gongna you haven't married yet (Field Data, 2023).

Kujwawoba on his view regarding the roles individuals play during the proposal stage had this to say regarding the "betweeners",

My daughter, choosing a "betweeners" was not for nothing, he played a very important role when the marriage was on rocks, because he must be someone who uncles the wife family, he can't be denied anything by his uncles, in our tradition is a taboo to turn down any offer by such as a person, and he becomes the only person who could resolve problems between the couples when there's tension between the groom and the bride's family (Field Data, 2023).

The responses by the above respondents confirm the view of Kelley (2023) that marriage is a "socially or ritually recognized union or legal contract between spouses that establishes rights and obligations between them, their children, and their in-laws". Kelley posits that marriage is beyond the wife and husband as it identifies the affinal relationship between the two families. With the relationship established, each

family owes the other some kind of responsibilities, which usually commences at the beginning of the marriage process to other activities that may affect any of the families involved in the marriage. This is evident in the case of Ghana, for example, in some cultures, daughters' in-law (a wife) and family may have a role to play when a husband loses a parent and vice versa. This means that marriage is not only between spouses but a family affair; hence it makes the descendants of the marriage affinal kin of the two families that has a unifying role to play and this is very significant to Kasena people.

Achoga, in his response to the same issue had this to say:

...the acceptance of the 'nanwali ta noogo' (head tobacco) indicated that there was peace between the two families and ready to support the marriage, the rejection may have severely implications. It meant that the parties involved were relatives or have bad blood or witchcraft. Ohh ohh ohh, I nearly forgot, if it happened that the witchcraft was coming from the bride's family, they would accept the tobacco but after completing the marital process they would insist that it's not completed, this time round they would demand for the presence of the groom himself because such information could not be given to the yignu (betweeners). They may give out the information to him in coded language because these things were considered spiritual, and might continue to drag an in-law who did not understand the language until he accepted their request" he continued "such things if your parents did their investigations well, the bride's family might collect the tobacco but the groom's family would run away no matter how beautiful the woman was if they didn't belong to such group (witchcraft) (Field Data, 2023).

This response is very appropriate with Azumah et al. (2017) definition of marriage as a social contract and success is viewed in terms of conformity to social demands-

there, authority becomes centered in human beings as represented by the kin groups, community, church as a social institution and society in general.

Marriage Ceremonies

The data revealed that, marriage ceremonies were held after the partners had realized that both families had approved the relationship. Among the Kasena people the process started with wooing to announce the marriage. One of the elders Atawochu explained how the “wooing” process was done he said:

Awww this is the interesting part, after the “head tobacco’s is accepted with the other items, the groom and his friends will plan a special day that suit them, in those days it could coincide on a market day, a funeral celebration in the groom’s house or on special occasion. This was done without the notice of the bride. The friends of the groom would convince the girl to accompany them half way home. In the process they tried to engage her with prolong conversations whilst heading towards the groom house. Immediately they realized that they were closer or half way to the groom’s fathers house they would capture the lady and then immediately they would start shouting and singing romantic songs saying woe woe woe, Kujwawuba ηwoyi wuru o ba ywoo!!” this literally mean Kujwawuba has woe a lady coming from wuru community (Field Data, 2023).

He added that immediately the neighbors of the groom hear this, especially the women they will start to run out, heading towards the groom’s house also shouting and singing meanwhile at that particular time, the suitor is no more near that environment until all the visitors dispersed, the lady will be accompanied into the compound of one of the oldest women in that household and kept into a well-prepared room. From there, everyone both male and female, would enter to greet the newly wedded wife, those who may refer to her as their rival may even go to an extent of teasing her and creating sarcastic jokes whilst all those who refer to her as their

“wife” on the other hand will be rainy praises on her. This was corroborated by Niadawe when he explained that, the reason for making the girl to sleep with an old lady for some weeks was a way of detecting hidden pregnancy if any. It was also a measure used to make sure different blood was not brought into the family.

Atudiawe equally confirmed this by adding:

This day was always a happy moment and before the “wooing” was even done, the groom had already invited the area local artists, to come with their instruments to entertain the bride, they start with drumming and dancing to announce the presence of a visitor (bride), whilst people trooped in and out to greet their new wife. Her rivals would drag her out of the room and engage her to dance if she really wanted her husband, and all these activities were symbolic, he ended”. A follow up question to know how symbolic that meant he had this to say “There was a reason why everyone ran to catch a glimpse of the newly married woman. People within the neighborhood would want to know her for these reasons; no other man would engage her in relationship in case they met somewhere outside their community; also, to help her out when she ran into trouble, then also people would identify her incase she’s involved in bad activities that would tarnish the image of the family or community. These were some of the major reasons why the neighborhood trooped in to catch a glimpse of the new wife (Field Data, 2023).



Musicians drumming at a marriage ceremony

Bride dancing during her marriage ceremony

Figure 2: Traditional Marriage Ceremony

He further explained that her rivals also drag her to dance to assess her strength since the traditional dance requires some amount of energy and also find out whether she is culturally trained or not. The data revealed that, involving the bride to dance was not only for assessing how versed she was with the cultural values, but the women also used that to determine whether she was pregnant or not. Because of the vigorous nature of the Kasena dance, any attempt by a pregnant woman in their early weeks or months may trigger the pregnancy to abort. This, in those days helped to prevent pregnancies brought into marriages for the purpose of doubt of paternity. One of the respondents expressed his views on this issue in the following words:

The women in those days were smart. They would use every means to drag the bride-to-be to dance. They believed the vigorous dance will not allow any hidden pregnancy to stay especially, if you were known to have so many suitors, your fidelity was questioned (Field Data, 2023).

These findings confirm Konlan et al. (2023) who indicated that the patterns of weddings across the world are relative to the socio-cultural landscapes in which they are perpetuated. Hence, each pattern is highly driven by cultural and social undertones which prescribe and proscribe the appropriate ways of wedding. It is however important to know that cultural patterns in different parts of the world are driven by meanings attached to them. Regardless of how an act or pattern is exhibited, what matters is the meaning. This being said, ceremonies are immensely laden with meanings. Each particular act, word, move and action is influenced by many of pre-existent cultural and socially significant meanings.

In the researcher's view, despite the availability of many other lines of action, Kasena people still subscribe to certain patterns even if the individuals involved are not at terms with them. impose on individuals getting married, a set of ritual requirements to fulfill in order to socially be sanctioned and in order to avoid the social backlash of an unsanctioned matrimony. As observed in other aspects of social existence, individuals and groups try as much as possible to satisfy social prerequisites, consciously, or unconsciously. Peoples and groups go the extra mile, to the extent of denying gratifications in order to live up to the standards of their society.

Bride Wealth Negotiations

With regards to what happened after the man had brought the girl to his house, the research revealed that the man would have to complete the marital process by paying the bride price. It was after that was done that the woman became fully yours and you had the customary right to own the children. Awubawoni a very popular elder explains:

That is where you now pay your dues, this was what differentiated real men who valued marriage and tradition. Laughter, he continued 'real

men' completed the process immediately because they didn't want to be disgraced by their in-laws in case of eventualities. Upon completing the first stage you did not even wait for your in laws to come asking you about their daughters' rites. Rather a great man would call them to come and perform their gongna (ratification). Honorable persons immediately informed their in- laws that their daughter was with them, and they may ask that their daughter be brought back. You do the needful by returning her back with gifts to her parents knowing very well that on your way back your wife will follow, if you don't see her follow you back home it indicated that she the bride is not also interested in the marriage and that would have ended it in those days, he explained (Field Data, 2023).

He went further to explain that, if the lady followed the husband back, which was almost always the case, the husband would find a day and ask his in-laws to come for the ratification. Commenting on the same issue Apula had this to say:

Gongna (Ratification) involved a lot, you needed a male uncastrated dog, female goat, three fowls (including a cock) and any other thing you wished to add (which was not compulsory). Mostly men preferred to do this after the lady had given birth to the first born. These items were then killed and prepared, one of the fowls would not be killed. The goat and the fowl were for the mother of the bride and all those the lady refer to as her mothers. He added that some of the meat including that of the dog was normally sent to the bride's maiden house to be shared among her father, fathers' brothers, and their children (Field Data, 2023).

He further explained that this ritual was performed in the night in the house of the groom and spear headed by the "betweenner" who was referred as "Yignu". Ayifiu a clan head, on responding to this process had this to say

With all these things we do in the marriage process, the cock and the dog seal the marriage. After gongna is performed, the lady becomes

the bonified property of her husband and the bride's parents have no right to receive or perform this ritual again on their daughter by another man except death or dissolution of marriage. This also gives the man the legal right to the children if any (Field Data, 2023).

This was corroborated by Ayifiu as follows

Even if the husband dies and the woman slept with another person to give birth, all these children belong to her husband. Sometimes, not necessarily death, but even if the woman happens to cheat and get pregnant, that child still remained with the man who performed the ratification (Field Data, 2023).

He explained that, Kasena people do not use DNA to test for paternity but based it on performing the ratification ritual to fully recognize the man as the legal husband of his wife, and also the rightful owner of the children as well.



Presenting the dog for the "brothers"

The dog prepared for the ratification

Figure 3: Ratification Ceremony

He further explained that after the ratification process, the man now has to complete the last stage of the process by paying the seven sheep's and two cows. He explained:

These can be given in bits, but must not go in equal number, for example I gave three sheep first after I performed my wife, gongna", then later I sent another three and later I sheep and I cow, am yet to pay the last cow because is not good to pay all at once (Field Data, 2023).

When going further to ask him why it is so he exclaimed

If you want your would-be wife to live longer after marriage, you must not perform these things in full, at least since you still love her and have bond with her family you must still leave behind something that will continue to bind the two families, and for these reasons, you mustn't provide all probably until her death to pay the last cow. as am sitting now, even if I die my children have to provide that cow on my behalf if not, they can't give any cow on the head of their wives, is a taboo (Field Data, 2023).

This to Awobawoni this happens to be the end of the Kasena marriage process, however he stated that, some men after wooing the lady don't complete the process and this has implications incase the wife dies, this was what he had to say

The most disgraceful and sorrowful moment is what I will describe as this state, sitting on the path to collect bride wealth is very shameful to the groom's family and very sorrowful to the bride's family, and, I will never allow any of my sons to bring this kind of shame to me (Field Data, 2023).

He further concluded by saying that, all these rituals had to be performed by the roadside before they could bury the lady because her bride price must be paid whilst on earth in her presence, so burying her will mean otherwise.

These findings indicated that the marriage institution among the Kasena people undergo a lot of process before it can be fully contracted. This position of the respondents above is in line with Zucker (2021) and Nuworsu et al. (2019) when they assert that; Traditional Ghanaian marriages are characterized by elaborate ceremonies and rituals. These ceremonies can vary widely from one ethnic group to another, but they often involve rituals like libation pouring, dowry exchanges, and symbolic gestures that showcase respect for ancestors and communal values.

Marriages are viewed as unions not just between individuals but between families. The involvement and approval of both families are crucial, and the extended family provides a support network for the couple throughout their married life. According to Kujwawobong, one major significant reason why it was not advisable to complete the marriage rites at a go is due to the following:

Many people may have had their eyes on the lady and when that happened and she was yet to give birth, she might not give birth again when the cow (her bride price) gave birth before her. Also, it was seen as a closing chapter between the woman's family and that of the man's family and if it happened that along the line there was bad blood between the two families, the lady could lose her life. Lastly since the payment was not always complete it still served as a bond so that the man could not boost or maltreat the lady like those who keep saying I don't owe you again (Field Data, 2023).

He explained further that, salt is something that gives taste to every food and adding it to the bride wealth signifies that the groom's family needed their daughter to add taste to their food just as they cannot do without salt because it makes food tasty. On the other hand, it signifies that the groom is coming to add taste to the bride family rather than pain. Also, salt signifies the sustainability of the marriage as it last longer. These

are the reasons why salt, even though very cheap can't be absent in the items for Kasena marriage rites.

To Achonga, he strongly believes that there are certain families who don't recognize the real bride price paid until some spiritual performance is done. He explained that just like the cows paid on the heads of their mothers, it still meant that the same spiritual sacrifice was done on the bride's mother and must be performed on her daughter as well because it has generational implications. As to whether there are any economic exchanges associated with the Kasena marriage practice Aduni summarizes as follows:

Many of the resources we use in the marriage process are found in our locality and are also paid in bits, so positively grooms can easily make preparations to acquire them, he added 'when I was young, my father told me that as young man who would marry in future, I should put in more efforts in rearing because there is pride in catching from your farm to perform marriage rites, I didn't understand him until my brother intended to marry, and anytime they prepare to visit our in laws, the only thing they bought was the cola nuts, salt but the guinea fowls were from his farm which reduced his financial burden and this made me realize that I can marry at ease if I take his advice. Also, I noticed that many serious young men were in to rearing of guinea fowls, cattle, sheep and all these were the resources used for the payment of the bride wealth (Field Data, 2023).

These responses by Aduni were not different from other respondents' views based on the fact that, traditional marriage practices enhanced socio economic activities among Kasena people. Their ability to marry using resources that is easily found within their environment is economically reasonable for young men. From the researchers view , these assertions are in line with Manswab and Abdullahi (2018) when they assert that; the payment of bride wealth is most often a matter of social and symbolic as well as

economic reciprocity, being part of a long series of exchanges between the two intermarrying families. It consolidates friendly relations between them, provides a material pledge that the woman and her children will be well treated, symbolizes her worth to the community, and provides a level of compensation to her natal family for the loss of her labour and company. Bride wealth payment is therefore involved in customary marriage amongst virtually all Ghanaian ethnic groups and is almost universal amongst Ghanaian marriages.

Nuptial Rites

On nuptial rites, the data revealed that some of the activities in the Kasena marriage practices has some significant reasons behind their performances. In the view of Kwara one of the clan heads:

Announcing of the marriages in the community makes other young men who might have been interested in that bride to stay off, neighbors coming around to greet the newly married woman gave them the opportunity to know her so that when they happen to meet her in bad situations she can be rescued, and also know whether she has any criminal records”. He added “the rivals playing around her was also a source to know whether she’s has temper or not, whether she’s welcoming or has bad mouth, this also helped the family to know if she is sociable and respectful (Field Data, 2023).

To him he strongly believes that the trolling by the rivals that night is always tempting enough to know whether one is patient enough or have temper. He added:

I can remember some years back in this house (pointing to a next house) one of our sons brought a girl for marriage, who was clearly seen to be a city girl, very fashionable, during the wooing process, when the friends came to surround her whilst singing to the compound, she wasn’t comfortable that they were holding her hands here and there. It even became worse when the rivals where singing

and dancing and showing her gestures. She lost her cool and told one of them that she didn't like such things and frowned her face. That made many of the women to leave her site very quickly. So, you see, this alone is a first measure of her attitude.

He concluded by saying that all the rituals were very important and had reasons for their presence in the marriage process. These findings of the study fits in Nurwosu et al. (2019) as he asserts that a people with distinguished culture and language, marriage and weddings are uniquely practiced in line of customs and traditions. The rites and the symbolic interpretations of these rights are highly bound to the cultural orientation. A Kasena marriage is made final not only by the wedding rites and the move of the bride to her husband 's house but also by the payment by the husband of a bride wealth.

Feast and Celebrations

The study revealed during the observation that Kasena people marriages turn to be celebrated more. This was clearly seen during a traditional wedding ceremony when the landlord of the house came out with a fowl in his hands and a calabash with flour water to thank the gods for bringing a new member to the family and prayed that the celebrations ended peacefully. After the drummers performed for some time, the landlord came in with some refreshment. The drummers prepared the fowl and roasted it after which they continued with their drumming, but this time round they use very big calabashes stoked with racks, mental bucks etc.) and this type of dance is call the 'jongo" (danceable calabash music). These observations corroborate with Afful and Nantwi (2016) who found out that Traditional Ghanaian marriages are characterized by elaborate ceremonies and rituals. These ceremonies can vary widely from one ethnic group to another, but they often involve rituals like libation pouring,

dowry exchanges, and symbolic gestures that showcase respect for ancestors and communal values.

4.2 What Changes in the Marriage Practices have taken Place among the Kasena of Nogsenia?

This item was set to collect data on the changes that has occurred in the marriage practice among the Kasena people. Five themes were identified under this research question: Shift in courtship, Changes in bride wealth, Legal marriage registration, Christian and Mohammedan marriages, bridal attire and celebrations, music and dance using spinners and Education and women's rights.

Shift in Courtship

The findings of the study revealed that, most of the respondents indicated there are changes in their marriage practices. Even though the expression of love and emotions during courtship is still relevant, it has become more financially involving. The youth believe in material gifts and money to be a measure for love. These benefits in most cases only got to the partners involved and may be hidden from their parents. This was expressed by a respondent in the following words:

for these young ones, your ability to buy expensive gifts, provide them with money and spend on them is what shows that you love them. If you cannot afford that, they don't seem to believe in you loving them but during our time, your availability to service for the family made you a responsible suitor:

Another respondent corroborated this as follows:

Before they even decided to make their relationship open to the family, they probably had sex severally. They get intimate and even spend nights together and sometimes co-habitat, that is the trend now. No

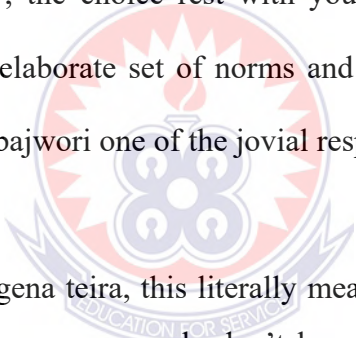
involvement of parents to now even talk of restricting them from such behaviors (Field Data, 2023).

On the part of Allou who is an elder, Kasena marriage practices even though may be similar in some parts of the region, some aspects have changed. In a way that indicated he was lamenting he stated:

There is a girl currently in my son's room, I don't know where she is coming from, neither do I know her parents but anytime I ask my son such questions he will tell me to relax, he doesn't even see it as important for me to get involved in their relationship, can you see that particular part has changed? When I was courting my wife as I told you earlier, it was my uncle who did the background checks immediately I informed him that I had interest in that girl. The girl never slept in my house for once, all that we were doing was for me and my friends to visit her once in a while and it was not even done in secret. Anytime, I visited, her mother will usher us in and then offered us a seat in her compound even though she had her own room, hmmm! "Now come and see, sometimes my son's girl will even spend days here and you wouldn't even know that she is there because he has everything in his room that would not allow her to come out (Field Data, 2023).

He went further to add that, the way they even chose their partners in the past was different, they sought after good character and behavior he laughed and said "*We were considering good name but now you people are following riches and education against good name.*" This response is not different from Abubakari (2022) as he posits that, one significant change in marriage practices is the diminishing role of parents in the selection of marital partners. The school environment, migration and the general contemporary flexible atmosphere as well as increased mobility makes it easier for boys and girls to associate more freely in an atmosphere that promotes conditions for mate selection by themselves. Abubakari concluded that the more

literate one becomes, that is the more school education one acquires, the smaller the chance of the parents interfering in one's selection of a marriage partner. He was, however, careful to say, the concluding statement should not be taken to mean parental involvement in mate selection has ceased even among the very well educated. What is disappearing is the initiative on the part of parents to select spouses for their children and to insist that the latter accept the choice made for them. Azumi et al. (2018) also affirms this when he asserts that; if romantic love is the only legitimate reason for choosing a marriage partner, then people must be free to make their own choices. Parents can no longer arrange marriages for their children, although they can influence such choices directly or indirectly. They go on to argue that in a modern society, the choice rest with young people themselves and each generation of youth has elaborate set of norms and behaviors-dating rituals to help them select a mate. To Abajwori one of the jovial respondents buttressed this when he said:



Birina wora, cheigena teira, this literally means there are advisors but no listeners. many young people don't know the traditions well and even if you wish to guide them, they are not even ready to listen". When I made a follow up to ask why he said so, he replied "arrhhh! Let me tell you something, there was this my nephew who visited me with a lady he was interested in, after the lady was introduced to us, I later did my own checks and realized that they are related and as playmates(kwobia) which meant they have the same lineage and can't get married. Because they were staying in the south, they never listened to me including his father, out of anger I felt disrespected and left them to their fate. One day, whilst they were planning their engagement a totem which they all taboo appeared in their home from nowhere. They brought their pastor to pray over it and drive it out to a far place only to wake up and see it again the next morning. This kept fear in them until they decided to visit home and the elders of the

entire family cautioned them to forget about that relationship because it was going to land them into serious predicaments (Field Data, 2023).

He concluded by saying that there are certain traditions we cannot change about Kasena marriages but with Christianity and modernity the youth believe nothing will happen

“Tradition remains tradition therefore selecting who you will marry is very important because there are some people you cannot marry them even though they are Kasena people and from Nogsenia for that matter”. This response is directly in line with Kelley (2023) who asserted that exogamy is most possible in growing cities where there is pluralistic, anonymous and mobile population. He predicts that endogamy will prove to be less of a criterion in mate selection. This is because education and occupation will eventually result in the blurring of class boundaries, less interest in religious and class boundaries and ethnic differences, hence reducing endogamous marriages. However, some people are still endogenously inclined. It cannot be eradicated completely. Nuworsu et al. (2019) on the other hand contended against exogamous marriage using the African situation as an example. They wrote that in most of Africa, the states are pharisaic, that is they are composed of many different ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. This notwithstanding, Africans feel strongly that they are members of a kinship group. Although these varied forms of solidarity are being modified by urban life and by education, marriages tend strongly to be endogamous. This is particularly true in those individuals and communities that are less rooted to the land, and where people are making their living in more urban and less traditional ways. Bloom and Ottong, however, say that exogamy depends largely on the opportunity it provides. It is more likely to occur in the town or in the city than

in the village. This opportunity, they noted, is more likely where the group identity is weakly cemented.

These findings also affirm the views of Chatterjee (2022) when he asserts that it is possible to discern that there is a general increase in freedom from control by family authority. This indicates that a rural community is no longer an isolated, almost self-contained world, within which each member is dependent on the goodwill of the rest and must secure it by conformity with accepted rules. A major consequence of this situation is that marriage in Africa has become increasingly a matter of personal choice rather than an arrangement between groups in which the elders have a dominant say. It is now rather clear that the authority of parents and guardians is decreasing and often amounts to nothing more than a formal consent.

In the view of Pwawovi one of the elders, he believes that, there are great changes in recent times. One significant change he observed is that people these days don't consider the background of the yignu (betweeners) they just rely on any person who they believe have knowledge in the Kasena tradition to stand in, but he thinks this is a diversion and defeats the significant reason for such a person. He had this to say:

The people who we present as “betweeners” these days has no relation with the bride, you just see anybody who is your friend and just ask him to be a “betweeners” because he knows your wives family wow!, we don't do things like that “ He continued “the person becomes a stranger and have no traditional place in your wife's family, so how can he intervene when things get worse, our fathers were wise by choosing such people and their role shouldn't be underestimated (Field Data, 2023).

The researcher equally observed that, marriage ceremonies which used to be dominated by family members has now turned an event for friends of the couples, this

was clearly seen during the church marriage as a convoy of friends of both the bride and the groom were seen neatly dressed in a particular colour and fabric. The choice of colour scheme is always at the discretion of the couple, their friends and sometimes the event planner. Examining the findings, this can be related to the Cultural Theory Model in Figure 1. Cognitive element which implies processing interaction between and among attention, auditory ability, logic and reasoning capabilities, long term memory, visual handling and working memory within the context of cultural patterns and individual experiences. The trend of not involving parents and family members in partner selection and the marriage process is a clear application of this perspective. Acceptance from each other's family is of less importance in the current trend of marriages. whereas Marriage is less perceived as social institution.

This observation is not different from the findings from Azurilah (2020) study “deinstitutionalization of marriage in America” when he posits that the wedding has become an individual achievement. In the distant past, a wedding was an event at which two kinship groups formed an alliance. It has been an event organized and paid for by parents, at which they display their approval and support for their child's marriage. He asserts that the communal nature of weddings is fast eroding and marriage is now becoming an event centered on and often controlled by the couple themselves and friends, having less to do with family approval (Azurilah, 2020).

Changes in Bride Wealth

Another worrying trend that the study revealed is the monetary transactions in the payment of bride wealth. The incessant demand for money by the elders of some families during some visits of the suitor and even quantifying the items to be paid in

monetary form. For instance, this act of bargaining for more money by the youth and elders was overstretched in one of the marriage observations. In the view of Atudiawe an elder of the Jampanabia clan, he strongly worries about this particular change and this was what he had to say

Yes of course I am a Christian, but I don't support the way we now make our in-laws especially when their southerners to quantify the bride wealth into money, will the money represent the significance or the ritual self? What even baffles me is paying money to represent the dog for ratification because people claim to be Muslims aarhh well! I won't fall for that at all, because all the items signify something (Field Data, 2023).

This response from Atudiawe was not different from other respondents as another noted:

hhmmm you need to see how some of us the bride's family were taken to Mayaga hotel (a quest house in Navrongo) to sit and collect bride price, because the couple needed a nice environment for photos and videos since that place was decorated. This in particular is not good because this ritual must be performed in the groom's father's house but not a hotel, one thing I can never forget is the fact that this young man quantified all the items involve for the bride price as money in envelopes and wrote the items names on them, some of us were not happy as kinsmen. You see my daughter, so far as it was not in my compound I couldn't complain, someone will even tell me those days are gone because many of people are not interested in customs and traditions but enjoyment and modernity, every aspect of this process is symbolic, as for us Kasena people we have a reason why the bride wealth must not be received outside our homes, because we want our ancestors to be witnesses to the marriage. Will they now nose and know that we are in mayaga? so for this enhhh I don't support at all (Field Data, 2023).

He further explained that apart from quantifying the bride wealth in to money, another breach of tradition is the payment of the bride wealth at once, it is against the traditional rule of the Kasena people as explained earlier.

Applying the cultural evolution model Structural perspective to the context of these changes, the observance of certain Cultural traditions is limited since Marriage rituals were performed outside the home premise and did not serve the purpose of performing such traditions at home. However, the findings contradict the Symbolism element of the model because the symbolic significance of the bride wealth was missing due to the fact that it was quantified into money and the Use of symbols to make sense out of life is definitely lost.

These findings confirm the views of Hiekel & Wagner (2020) when they posit that, in northern Ghanaian societies, most of whom are patrilineal, bride price takes the form of cowries or livestock or both as custom demands. However, the exigencies of modernity have made it possible for all such items to be quantified into cash value in some societies. The view that bride price payment has spiritual connotation helps to stabilize marriages among the Kasena people by the unseen supervision of ancestors against infidelity on the part of the woman makes this change un acceptable. This also corroborates the findings of Issaka-Toure (2019) that the inclusion of elements of supernatural beliefs and practices implies that the union will be supported by supernatural sanctions as well as secular ones. This view further validates the works of Park (2020), that in Africa, ancestors can influence the lives of the living. By far, the belief acts as social control of wives regarding their social, moral, psychological and spiritual lives while they remain married. The belief in ancestors as monitors of fidelity in the marriage once the bride price is paid evokes notions of Weber's theory

of traditional social action. That is, individuals and families in Kasena would engage in bridal payment no matter the amount simply because they believe in the eternal yesterday; a custom instituted by their ancestors which still holds relevance.

These views are also in line with Abubakari (2022) as he asserted that , the payment of bride wealth is most often a matter of social and symbolic as well as economic reciprocity, being part of a long series of exchanges between the two intermarrying families. It consolidates friendly relations between them, provides a material pledge that the woman and her children will be well treated, symbolizes her worth to the community, and provides a level of compensation to her natal family for the loss of her labour and company. Bride wealth is often one part of a reciprocal exchange, in which case it is accompanied by the provision of a dowry a payment presented by the bride's family to that of the groom. Bride wealth payment is therefore involved in customary marriage amongst virtually all Ghanaian ethnic groups and is almost universal amongst Ghanaian marriages.

Bridal Attire, Celebrations, Music and Dance

The findings of the study revealed a new phase of marriage performance on the aspect of how the celebrations are done and the attire the couples wear, including modern music systems. One of the respondents who happened to be a local artist and a great traditional dancer was worried about how he no longer experienced night displays in people's homes, he asserted:

I used to enjoy it any time we were told to prepare to sing kaleiga, a popular marriage song. That day the whole neighborhood will move to that house to chat and dance to grace the occasion, but now all we hear is "dance" sound, then people will now be saying "Ajagwe" someone has brought in a wife. What! how I miss seeing the tears of young

ladies as their rivals drag them into the compound to dance ‘jogo’, you people have missed these things oooh (Field Data, 2023).

To him, he sees the changes to be the replacement of traditional music with modern spinners and to him does not serve the purpose. The fact that marriages are no more announced through wooing makes many not to know the bride because there is a lot of privacy among families. He further added sarcastically saying, “*you may even propose to your brother’s wife without knowing because she was only introduced to the nuclear family*”.

These responses above fits in the assertion of Abubakari (2022) when they described Ghana as a land of celebrations with her music and traditional dances, and marriages are celebrated in all ethnic groups nationwide in a likewise manner. Ghanaians are very cheerful people and love to celebrate all the major festivals and events including marriages.

Ajago on his part pointed out elaborate performance of marriage as the major change he sees as fashionable but worrying. When asked why he thinks it fashionable, but worrying, he affirms:

These days marriages have become very expensive for my sons and daughters, the things they do in marriage ceremonies even though looks beautiful, it scares many from marriage because I feel they can’t afford such cost involve. He continues, “many at times in the evening you will hear sounds pim-poom pip- poom in the evening and only to find out that friends are in a convoy going to woe a girl, when you finally get to that house that they are performing the marriage, there is so much food and drinks as well as music. Most at times, all the friends of the couple will be seen in common expensive dresses, with decorations all over, don’t you think that is money these people use for all these things? and can bring financial lost to the couple and also

scare other young ones who may not have such money to do same from marrying because they will want to match up with their friends. So, to me I am very worried about this change (Field Data, 2023).

He further explains that many young men and women who are matured enough to marry but when you ask them when they are thinking of doing the needful, they will tell you they are not ready, still preparing all because they want to meet the changing trend. The study found out in all the weddings observations that; the major emergent trends were found in the aesthetic aspects of marriage ceremonies. Professional and thematic decoration of wedding avenues is a trend subscribed to and gradually gaining prominence. Rather than just leave the wedding venue to be bare, decorations and props are set up to enhance the beauty of the venue. Some of the items for the payment of the bride price are designed with traditional mats and calabashes in attempt to recreate a cultural and traditional atmosphere. Weddings were full of photo taking, refreshment quest at quest houses, rather than family house and finally crowned with wedding dinners.

Quite apart, the researcher observed that artistic aspects of wedding ceremonies, the professional and thematic decorations of wedding venues is a trend subscribed to and gradually gaining prominence. Some wedding quest may even put on dresses that matches such colours and depicts it as the colours of the couples. Also, marriage ceremonies are totally turned to places of showing how wealthy a person is and this was showcase in the form of dresses worn by the couple and their families, the type of food and drinks provided in the ceremonies. These observations are applicable with the Economic and Technological elements of the evolutionary model. Managing to offer financial welfare and security for individuals in a society; standing of individual in a community within a geographic location and financial access, and role

of lending units was a clear feature of the wedding ceremonies as stated in the observation above. The use of technology to enhance efficiency in production to distribution activities was also clearly depicted during the observation. The element of Sociocultural influence of the evolution model was also applicable during the wedding observation when vows were exchanged in front of the pastor. The presence of Friends and relatives as well as the concept of groom's men and brides' maids dressed in similar attires for the occasion can all be assimilated as foreign traditions.

The observations from the study also corroborates with views of Nuworsu et al. (2019) and Kelley (2023) when they assert that Couples often incorporate ideas and practices from other cultures, leading to blends of traditions and a departure from strict adherence to old customs. The attire worn during Ghanaian marriage ceremonies has evolved over time. While traditional clothing such as kente and adinkra patterns are still popular, there's also a growing trend of incorporating modern and western-inspired fashion elements into the bridal and groom's attire. Again, modern couples seek to infuse their personalities into marriage ceremonies. They often personalize various aspects, such as the décor, music, and even the order of events, making the ceremonies more reflective of their individual tastes and preferences. The use of technology and social media has changed how information about marriages are shared and disseminated. Couples use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to invite guests, share updates, and document the events in real time.

Legal Marriage Registration, Christian and Mohammedans Marriage

Another emergent change revealed by the study during the observation is the combinations of activities of Christian marriage with that of the traditional marriage practices, the findings of the study indicates that it is seen in Kasena marriages lately

the role of pastors or religious leaders in the traditional marriage ceremony. Originally these ceremonies were strictly a family affair, but today the pastors are seen to play very key roles from sitting at very special places to praying over items for the marriage rituals. One of the elders kukuyireye noted:

The pastors now control these activities, they will call you to come for a marriage ceremony then when elders prepare to start the rituals someone will whisper to you that they are waiting for the pastor to come and bless the items and say opening prayer before we can start, ‘laughs’, then even sprinkle holy water ,I don’t seems to understand these things at all, mixing of cultures ,what is wrong with us performing our tradition, what is wrong with it he ended” (Field Data, 2023).

The cultural evolution theory model is applicable to these findings as the Cognitive element influence people's perceptions of and reactions to legal and policy changes related to marriage. When governments enact laws recognizing new forms of marriage, cognitive elements play a role in how individuals understand and accept these changes, contributing to their adoption within society. This clearly reflects the views of the respondents on the fact that people prefer their marriages to be superseded by the pastors.

This response fits in Manswab and Abdullahi’s (2018) assertion that Religion plays a significant role in the Ghanaian society, and religious practices have become more integrated into marriage ceremonies. Many couples now prefer to have their marriages or weddings officiated by religious leaders, adding a spiritual dimension to the traditional customs.

The study discovers during the observations that, among the Kasena people, religious, civil (ordinance) and traditional marriages exist alongside each other and are done

one after the other. It also however found out that there was no cemented order on what forms of marriage, should precede the other, especially regarding the civil/ ordinance marriages. The Religious marriage ceremonies however most often require the couple to have completed all traditional rites before being performed. This was clearly seen in the wedding observation where the bride was only sent to the groom's house after the wedding reception was closed to perform the wooing or the traditional announcement of the marriage. This emergent pattern in the view of some of the respondents has great implications for this society as pastors are not custodians of traditions, thus traditional marriages is no more viewed as a holy and real marriage but religious marriage are now given primacy of place and also elders and family members are not left alone to supersede these activities except there is involvement of religious members.

All these findings from the respondents affirm the fact that, many Kasena people are aware of some changes in their marriage practices and succinctly fits in the description of African culture by Azumi et al. (2018) when he posits that African cultural traditions began to decline and were quickly overtaken by Western and European culture and civilization. Indigenous practices peculiar to the African culture, began to give way to the foreign mode of doing things as in truth Africans became Westernized or better still Europeanized. Today, while speaking of front-line or civilization, it has to be with regards to Western civilization, as African culture and practices became tagged as primitive, fetish and archaic and totally unacceptable in the public realm.



Couple Exchanging their Vows
Friends

Group Picture with Couple and

Figure 4: Christian Wedding Ceremony

Education and Women's Rights

The data revealed that education of women has increased their awareness on many issues relating to their age to marriage and control by parents as to their choice of partners. This view was aptly expressed by majority of the respondents. For example, a clan head opined:

These days many girls do not even sit and wait for you to accept any suitor who comes to seek for their hand in marriage, they keep saying they're not ready and must complete their tertiary education before, marriage is no longer something the girls are eager about (Field Data, 2023).

This response is in line with the views of Zucker (2021) as he stated contemporary Ghana as elsewhere in Africa, one of the most important factors causing delay in marriages of both male and female is education. Education is seen as one of the agents of the socialization of individual members of society to acquire the necessary skills required to function in the economy.

Another respondent had this to say;

As for the women, even if you are talking about someone you wished she got married to, they won't even mind you. I had a friend who was a well-respected guy and responsible, who had interest in my younger

sister but she boldly told me that she does not love him and for that reason she would not consider his proposal (Field Data, 2023).

These findings contradict that of Blondell (2023), Nwoko (2020) and Singh and Jaswal (2022), who indicated that marriage decisions are made when the girl is still in childhood, and marriage connections are solemnized by family elders. The opinion of parents and family elders weighs more than the decision of a girl for whom a partner is being sought. Girls are either subordinate or have little say in choosing an intimate relationship. Their function is passive, consisting solely of accepting the decisions of parents and family elders and that women are more likely than men to consider family input when choosing a mate. However, confirms Abubakari (2022) who contended that potential couples nowadays consider more thoroughly before choosing their spouses and that parents no longer compel their children to choose a relationship as they used to. To Atudiawe one of the respondents:

Many women are still roaming and when you ask them some will tell you that they want to be economically empowered so that no man can bully them, so you see, it means that until they get work to do, they're not thinking of marrying which wasn't the case in the olden days (Field Data, 2023).

The above responses reflect the element of Cognitive perspective in the model. figure 1. Cognitive processes also play a role in changing perceptions of gender roles within marriage. As individuals challenge traditional gender stereotypes and expectations, cognitive shifts in how people perceive gender roles have led to more equitable and flexible partnerships within marriages.

This corroborates with the view of Kelley (2023) when he asserts that, With the increasing recognition of gender equality and women's rights, traditional gender roles within marriage are being challenged. Traditionally defined gender roles are evolving,

leading to changes in the way certain rituals and customs are carried out. There is a greater emphasis on equality and shared responsibilities between the husband and the wife. Women's empowerment and economic independence have led to shifts in power dynamics and decision-making within marriages, affecting traditional functions. Afful and Nantwi's (2016) study further confirm this when they note that; Modernization and globalization have led to shifting gender roles in Ghana. Women are increasingly pursuing education and careers, contributing to their economic independence. This has altered traditional expectations regarding the timing and nature of marriage. It has empowered Ghanaian women to be more selective in their choice of spouses, often prioritizing compatibility and shared goals over traditional roles within marriage.

The Findings of the study indicates that, as compared to the pre-colonial era where girls were being married very early, a large number of them are now in school. As school attendance is normally incompatible with marriage, the result is a higher age of marriage for both sexes. In other words, the longer the time spent in school, the longer the delay and therefore the higher the age of marriage (Nave, 2017). Traditionally defined gender roles are evolving, leading to changes in the way certain rituals and customs are carried out. There is a greater emphasis on equality and shared responsibilities between the husband and the wife. Women's empowerment and economic independence have led to shifts in power dynamics and decision-making within marriages, affecting traditional functions (Zucker, 2021).

4.3 What Factors are Responsible for the Changes in the Marriage Practices among the Kasena of Nogsenia?

This item was set to find out the factors which are responsible for changes in the marriage practices. Six themes were identified under this research question: Modernization and Globalization, Education and Women's Empowerment, Shift towards Individualism, Economic Factors, Influence of Western Culture, and Demographic Changes.

Most of the respondents agreed that there are changes in the marriage practices, some believe that socially the changes add color to the occasion, for example the beautiful decoration and dresses, different kinds of foods and music but have varied views as to what factors influence these changes. The research discovered that certain religious organizations had sanctions imposed on those members of society who are likewise members of their religious institutions and choose to get married in the customary (traditional) way, these kinds of sanctions which were brought to the force by Christianity serve as compelling forces that generates an enchantment towards a hybridization, solidifying the notion that the African child is indeed a citizen of two worlds.

Influence of Western Culture

To Adua, an elder of the yipugnia clan he attributes the changes to the influence of foreign culture, this he noted:

As for what we are experiencing now it didn't start at once, it started with religion which made people to be more concentrated in church believes and thought our traditions were occultic, and then our children also travelled and when they came back they also brought different cultures, and now we are here with phones and internet, so many distractions (Field Data, 2023).

He further explained that because of the factors he mentioned, many of the younger generation do not pay attention to these traditions. To Kwara on this issue he believes the changes are just recent and will tag it on the 21st century. He asserted:

Even though religion came long time ago, it is recently am seeing so many tinny changes, at least I got married not quite long but I followed all these procedures even though I am yet to complete them, but I just realized that the youth of today are in their own spirit, so to me is recently that the changes are so glaring. (Field Data, 2023).

These strong assertions are in line with Zucker (2021) as he posits that urbanization has brought several changes. People are now exposed to diverse ideas, lifestyles, new social and cultural dynamics, and alternative family models, which have led to several changes of traditional marriage functions:

Another respondent averred:

Christianity is now influencing our marriages so much that, nowadays if someone is married without the wedding there is no marriage, everyone wants to be taken to church and be introduced to the pastor or the priest and the church members, this is what is happening now. In my church it is compulsory to have a church wedding, ever since Christianity came here it has been. Let me tell I have seen both times, old and new currently someone will marry by performing all the customary rites but the church will not recognize that you are married because you are not married in the church, in certain churches, you cannot take part in certain important ministries in the church. For example, in the catholic church where I fellowship, you can't be a communicant and can't be part of parish counsel just because your marriage is not blessed in the church what! So, you see if you want to be recognized in the church you have to bless your marriage even though they pretend to still ask you to fulfill all the customary rites, why this double wahala (Field Data, 2023).

He further explains that religion to him is the key factor for the changes because people want to satisfy both religions so they don't follow everything to the latter. These responses fit well into the cultural evolution model. These changes in the marriage practices are of Sociocultural influences that reflect the changes in cultural patterns over time. They draw from financial, geographical, political religious and technological divides in the society. The responses indicate various cultural shifts, including changes in religious beliefs as people prefer their marriages to be blessed in the church rather than traditional marriage.

These responses also confirm Manswab and Abdullahi's (2018) view that Christianity and Islam have functioned as a means of solidifying external and foreign cultural practices on African societies. Religion plays a significant role in the Ghanaian society, and religious practices have become more integrated into marriage ceremonies. Many couples now prefer to have their marriages or weddings officiated by religious leaders, adding a spiritual dimension to the traditional customs.

In a rather religious fashion, Osei-Tutu and Ampadu (2017), reflects that Christianity and Islam as religions have served as harbingers of foreign cultural influence on African cultures. Over the years, external forces have made an inroad into the traditional system of marriage and wrought important changes which have tended to undermine its traditional stability. Other factors that aided this change include western education, going to abroad for further studies, and exposure to various types of mass communication – television, video programs, and satellite dishes. This brought about an increase in the number of educated and women, and cultural contact with the Western world. The knowledge and information acquired through western education often led the parents to soften their holds over their children because of the

upliftment on socio-economic status. The study discovers that in religious marriage ceremonies however most often require the couple to have completed all traditional rites before being performed.

In line with the views above, it succinctly fits into one of the assumptions of the cultural evolutionary theory which proposes that, cultural knowledge and practices are transmitted between individuals and generations through social learning mechanisms such as imitation, teaching, and language. The theory acknowledges that cultural traits, including marriage practices, are learned and passed down within a community or society.

Economic Factors

Majority of the respondents attributed the changes in the marriage practices to urbanization and changes in employment patterns. One Kwarase, an elder from Yipugnia, asserts that he will attribute these changes to urbanization and technology this he clearly indicates in one of his statements:

Work, sometimes take people out of home to new environment and when that happens, they learn new behavior patterns, some may even end up marrying from different tribes. Some even get married before the family is informed, so you see how will the family now come to say they want to do investigations before marriage” in the view of seiwe, “ many people have raised their financial status and are classified as rich and have acquired status for that reason believes that their marriage should be performed according to modern standard because they can afford to do their luxurious weddings , people add so many items like beer and other assorted drinks which shouldn’t have been part of a traditional kasena marriage practice (Field Data, 2023).

Another respondent highlighted:

These days young people choose their partners base on their economic status and class, this is more particular with my sisters all the look in a man is with a good financial standing man, to pay their bride price, perform a big marriage ceremony (Field Data, 2023).

These responses perfectly fit in the works of Nuworsu et al. (2019) when they posit that economic factors impacting marriage practices in Ghana is economic uncertainty. Fluctuations in job prospects and income instability can influence individuals' decisions regarding when and whom to marry. A study by highlights that economic insecurity can lead individuals to delay marriage, as they seek to achieve a level of financial stability before committing to marital life. Economic uncertainty can also affect partner selection, as individuals may prioritize economic compatibility when choosing a spouse. Kelley (2023) further confirms this when he posits that economic considerations often influence the process of partner selection, his study revealed that individuals particularly men, seek partners who possess economic resources such as wealth, education and occupational status. This preference is driven by expectation that a partner with favorable economic attributes can contribute to the financial stability and well-being of the marital unit.

Majority of the respondents also asserted that, many young men these days don't marry early because of the financial demands for the type of wedding they want to have been demanding all in the name of meeting modern trends. These are in line with Afful and Nantwi (2016) view that Ghanaian marriage ceremonies are elaborate events that involve significant financial obligations for both families, they financial aspect of marriage is reflected in various customs, such as the payment of bride price or dowry by the groom's family to the bride's family. The bride price serves as a

symbol of respect, gratitude and acknowledgment of the bride's family for raising and nurturing the bride. It also serves as a demonstration of the groom's ability to provide for his future wife.

The findings above confirm the cultural evolution theory assumption that, cultural traits, including marriage practices, can serve as adaptive responses to social, economic, or environmental conditions. Cultural practices are seen as mechanisms for addressing challenges, fulfilling social needs, and maximizing individual and group fitness within a given context.

Modernization and Globalization

The study also establish that modernization is a contributory factor to these changes in Kasena marriage practices. Modernization and globalization have ushered in a wave of socio-economic and cultural changes in the Kasena culture, significantly impacting marriage practices. These transformative forces have introduced new perspectives, values, and opportunities that have reshaped the institution of marriage among the people of Nogsenia.

In the view of one of the elders:

Many of us the younger generation now date on Facebook, there are even social handles for dating, so how do I study someone on phone I quiet remember my friend who lives abroad married his wife without meeting her, am the person who stood in for him, did everything on his behalf, there are some of the things I tell him that they must be done by his own family but he tells me to forget because he and the girl have agreed to marry so families don't matter, you see if this haven't changed I don't think this marriage would have been contracted because my friend believes everything must be in monetary

form to his wife's family which is not traditionally accepted (Field Data, 2023).

He further adds that, many of these young people these days date on phone, have their secret visits behind their families and no background checks is done and before the families realize pregnancy is announced and nothing else can be done in most cases. These findings are in line with by Osei-Tutu and Ampadu (2017) when they asserted that; the introduction of modern dating practices and technologies, such as online dating apps, has transformed courtship and mate selection in Ghana. Individuals now have access to a broader pool of potential partners beyond their immediate communities, leading to more diverse marriages. Their study highlights the influence of globalization on dating patterns, indicating that exposure to global media and popular culture has shaped young Ghanaians' preferences and expectations in relationships.

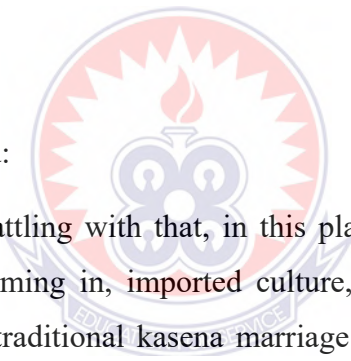
Niatuni a clan head had this to say

Hmm you need to see how some of us the bride's family were taken to Mayaga hotel (a quest house in Navrongo) to sit to collect bride price, because the couple needed a nice environment for photos and videos. That in particular was not good because this ritual must be performed in the groom's father's house but here we were in a hotel, one thing I can never forget was even the fact that this young man quantified all the items involved for the payment of the bride price into money put in envelopes and wrote the items names on them, some of us were not happy as kinsmen. But you see my daughter, so far as it was not in my compound, I couldn't complain someone will even tell me those days are gone because many of people were not interested in customs and traditions but enjoyment and modernity (Field Data, 2023).

This response clearly confirms the view of Afful and Nantwi (2016) when they posit that; The replacement of bride price with monetary transactions risks eroding cultural identity and traditional values. It disconnects younger generations from the customs and rituals associated with traditional marriage practices. The loss of cultural heritage can result in a sense of disconnection and cultural identity crisis.

Manswab and Abdullahi (2018) affirm their views by saying that; The replacement of bride price with monetary transactions is criticized for commercializing marriage. This shift can turn the marital relationship into a transactional arrangement, where the focus is on financial gain rather than the emotional and cultural aspects of marriage. The emphasis on monetary exchange can undermine the sacred and communal nature of traditional marriage.

Another respondent noted:



In fact, we are battling with that, in this place, it looks like a lot of adulteration is coming in, imported culture, they are all coming in. Having a purely traditional kasena marriage is no longer feasible. In fact, the movies our young ones watch hves greater influence on them and they want to incorporate this into our cultures, let me even mention that the men are even better when it comes to the social media lifestyle. The ladies are those who don't even value the traditional marriage practices because such can't be put on the internet for everyone to see. And now we are always experiencing the effects for ourselves, everyday bum bum in their rooms because money has finish and marriage have problems aaah aaah hmmm (Field Data, 2023).

This from the respondent fits that of Abubakari (2022) when he asserted that, Globalization has brought with it western cultural values and ideals. Western values and ideals such as individualism, personal fulfilments, and gender equality have influenced Ghanaian attitudes towards marriage and impacted traditional notions of

marriage as a social institution. Western media, including television shows, and movies, often present alternative relationship models, contributing to the diversification of marriage functions.

Another respondent noted:

We use not to travel anywhere for marriage ceremonies but now we are either travelling to celebrate or to mourn, all because of cross cultural marriages, I remember when I even married my wife from the neighboring town, they were making fun of me saying that my legs are long, now look at my younger brother we now travel on bus to visit his laws, and they also do same (Field Data, 2023).

This response is not different from what others said and fits in the views of Azurilah (2020) when he asserts that Globalization has facilitated increased interfaith and cross-cultural marriages in Ghana. The influx of foreign nationals, as well as Ghanaians living abroad, has created opportunities for diverse unions. These marriages often require negotiation and adaptation to accommodate different cultural and religious backgrounds.

These findings discussed above are consonance with Manswab and Abdullahi (2018) as they assert that Globalization has led to the fusion of different cultural elements in marriages. Couples often incorporate ideas and practices from other cultures, leading to blends of traditions and a departure from strict adherence to old customs. The attire worn during Ghanaian marriage ceremonies has evolved over time. While traditional clothing such as kente and adinkra patterns are still popular, there's also a growing trend of incorporating modern and western-inspired fashion elements into the bridal and groom's attire. Again, modern couples seek to infuse their personalities into marriage ceremonies. They often personalize various aspects, such as the décor,

music, and even the order of events, making the ceremonies more reflective of their individual tastes and preferences. The use of technology and social media has changed how information about marriages are shared and disseminated. Couples use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to invite guests, share updates, and document the events in real time.

These findings of the study agree with the assumption of the cultural evolution theory that, cultural traits exhibit variation within a population. Different individuals or groups may have different practices or beliefs related to marriage. Cultural Evolutionary Theory also posits that variation in cultural traits can undergo selection, where certain traits are more likely to be adopted, imitated, or retained based on their perceived fitness or benefits.

Demographic Changes

On the part as to whether respondents believe there are other external factors that might have also influenced these changes, Adua had this to say:

You see my sister, Urbanization led to some of these changes in family structures, the existence of extended families is no more common, and marriage decisions no longer involve considerations from the larger family unit. Emphasis on individual choice and compatibility in marriage decisions are now private affairs because of people have travelled to other places and have decided to adapt their lifestyles, but a typical Kasena believes in family bond (Field Data, 2023).

To Another respondent:

Urbanization have made people to relocate to different geographical setting for employment and other economic opportunities and his can affect marriage practices as people may delay marriage to pursue education and careers or make marriage decisions based on their economic stability. This also exposed them to more diverse range of

cultural influences and ideas and has led to changes in their attitudes toward traditional marriage practices, including shifts toward more individualistic and choice-based marriages (Field Data, 2023).

Adua on his view had this to say:

Urban areas typically have better access to educational institutions. As a result, many of our youth travelled out for further studies and adopt certain behaviors and this has influenced the age at which people marry and the criteria they use to select a spouse (Field Data, 2023).

These strong assertions are in line with Nuworsu et al.'s (2019) position that external forces have made an inroad into the traditional system of marriage and brought important changes which have tended to undermine its traditional stability. Western Civilizations and education, brought by the British colonialist ushered in a drastic change in African marriage norms.

Another respondent noted:

One of my nieces travelled abroad and all of a sudden we saw pictures of him and his wife who are all resident there, this one ,where will you see them to force them to perform marriage rites ,and I even by now they might have children, with this even if later they come and that is if they will come here, what can say if you happen to find out any negative thing about his partner, virtually nothing (Field Data, 2023).

Majority of the respondents equally pointed this as a reason for these changes. This validates Azumi et al. (2018) findings when he asserts that; Population growth and migration have impacted traditional marriage practices, particularly in rural areas. With younger generations moving away for economic opportunities, there may be fewer individuals available to uphold and perpetuate traditional customs. This can lead to modifications or adaptations in marriage rituals. This is further confirmed by Chatterjee (2022), when he asserted that urbanization has altered the social and

economic landscape, affecting marriage practices. The increase in urban populations has led to the emergence of more diverse mate selection options, with individuals meeting potential partners in urban settings through education and employment.

A Shift in Individual Interest towards Partner Selection

The study revealed that one of the factors resulting to these changes in the marriage practices is due to a shift in individual interest towards partner selection. One of the respondents Anuga has this to say:

People these days keep their things to themselves and don't involve the extended family, you will just be there one day and find a strange face only for you to ask then they will now mention her husband's name, this wouldn't have been the case in our days because it would have been announced for the neighborhood to hear (Field Data, 2023).

This finding perfectly fits in Azumi et al. (2018) that there is a general increase in freedom from control by family authority. This indicates that a rural community is no longer an isolated, almost self-contained world, within which each member is dependent on the goodwill of the rest and must secure it by conformity with accepted rules. A major consequence of this situation is that marriage in Africa has become increasingly a matter of personal choice rather than an arrangement between groups in which the elders have a dominant say. It is now rather clear that the authority of parents and guardians is decreasing and often amounts to nothing more than a formal.

Another respondent had this to say:

Am even here with my son but I don't know his girlfriend. But am aware he is in a relationship. Anytime you want to have such conversation with him he keeps giving excuses because in his head he feels it is his private issue (Field Data, 2023).

He further expresses bitterness by saying that a traditional Kasena marriage involved the parents of both side and they even had influence as to the choice of partners, however due to globalization, urbanization and modernity, parents and family members no longer have selection power or approval. These responses reveal that, so much of culturally oriented practices native to Kasena marriages have been changed and faded and are no longer part of the marriage process.

Western cultures often emphasize individualism and personal autonomy, which are cognitive constructs that influence how individuals perceive their roles and expectations within marriage and this reflect the cognitive element of the evolution model in figure 1. People are encouraged to think independently and make choices that align with their own desires and aspirations, impacting how marriages are formed and maintained. This value system has influenced marriage practices by encouraging individuals to seek partners who align with their personal goals, values, and desires, rather than conforming to traditional societal expectations.

These findings confirm the position of Osei-Tutu and Ampadu (2017) that, in the past first marriages were arranged by parents without consultation with the young people, but however at present there appears to be a gradual change from the old position of parental control over the choices of spouses to a new position where those directly concerned give some latitude in making their own selection. Many prospective couples now plan almost everything about their intended union before they tell their parents. Abubakari (2022) also notes that these changes are closely linked to gradual emphasis of society today on individualism what Durkheim calls the shift from Mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity and Ferdinand Tonnies describe as the movement from Gemmellschaft to Gesellschaft. In choosing a bride for example,

what originally obtained was a bride being chosen for the groom, nowadays, he is left to make his own choice.

4.4 How has the Changes in Marriage Practices affected the Socio-Economic Activities Systems of the Kasena?

Two themes were identified under this research question: Positive and Negative Socio-Economic Changes. This item was set to find out how the changes in marriage practices affected the socioeconomic activities / systems.

Negative Socio-Economic Changes

Majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that some of these changes have both negative and positive effects on the socio-economic status. For example, in view of Abasi he agrees that the current trend of marriages among Kasena has both negative and positive effects, these he states as his reasons:

Before a young man will decide to marry, he might have saved a lot because it has, he believes it must be within what they call “standard”, upon probing to know what he meant by standard he said “you know it, wedding gowns, decorations here and there, preparations of different kinds of food, cars to take the bride around, renting of canopies and chairs, hiring of grounds for the celebration, music and many more. All these as you know involves a lot of money and everyone now want to belong here, so they take years to plan and some indulge in dubious ways to get money so that they can do these things on their wedding day (Field Data, 2023).

This response confirms Chatterjee (2022) views when he posits that, foreign wedding practices are being incorporated and are taking center stage in contemporary weddings. The implication of this for traditional customs and rituals is that they are being replaced or being redefined. In fact, most traditional practices and wedding

rituals have lost their value and those that still persist are not accorded full importance. Hence, the modern wedding practices present a picture of dying patterns as well as emergent patterns. This presents a very huge concern for the African Society.

Afful and Nantwi (2016) further confirm this as they posit that Changing marriage practices in Ghana can impose significant economic pressures and financial burdens on families. The increased emphasis on elaborate wedding ceremonies, bride price, and other marriage-related expenses can create financial strain, leading to debt accumulation and reduced financial stability. These financial burdens can hinder the ability of couples to establish a solid foundation for their marriage and may contribute to ongoing financial stress throughout the marital journey.

In the view of Pewe from Jampabia clan, he believes the current trend of not involving families in mate selection, and in some instances, the marriage process itself is leading to the many unstable marriages today. He is of the opinion that, love alone is not enough to sustain marriage if family bond is absent.

He noted:

During our time it was our parents and family members who made our marriages stable, they made sure certain right decisions were made before settling in marriage. But lately, you people don't need us, you now deal with love and even want it to be a private issue (Field Data, 2023).

The above response confirms Manswab and Abdullahi (2018) view that, in the past first marriages were arranged by parents without consultation with the young people, but however at present there appears to be a gradual change from the old position of parental control over the choices of spouses to a new position where those directly

concerned give some latitude in making their own selection. Many prospective couples now plan almost everything about their intended union before the youth tells his parents to approach the girl 's parents on his behalf. Nevertheless, the parental veto is far from dead and it is no exaggeration to say that the final words still lie with the parents. This can further be supported by Afful and Nantwi (2016) when they assert that Changes in marriage practices have been associated with an increase in divorce rates and marital instability in Ghana. The shift towards individual autonomy and emphasis on personal fulfillment may contribute to a higher willingness to dissolve marriages when expectations are not met.

With regard to the above we see clearly that there is an apparent shift towards individualism regarding the choice of marriage partner and approval by parents as the previously played. In the view of one elder, the change he sees has to do with using money to quantify bride wealth has a negative social implication on our culture.

He opined:

All the items used in the contraction of marriage has its meaning and nothing can replace these, for example the cock that would have been presented and the dog to seal the marriage the money can it serve that purpose ?, the guinea fowls that will be shared to all the women in the extended family to cook for all household in that compound to share in the joy of the bride parents and pray for children to come in abundance into their new home can the money perform that spiritual function?. These are the changes that are actually worrying me, collecting money simply means their paying for my daughter and that is a complete damage to my daughter's destiny (Field Data, 2023).

About 90% of the respondents pointed out that it has become very common these days to find people who are related married which have a lot of cultural implications.

He asserts that:

kalo zwe breaking of the calabash”, this is a ritual we perform for couples who happened to be related yet got married un knowingly. performing this ritual on such couple will mean that any kind of relation that initially existed among them is cancelled and it transcends to their generations and this a bad omen to the extended family. But as I said earlier, we are now living with such issues especially children born out of such relationships, where do they belong because their parents are siblings (Field Data, 2023).

These findings corroborate what Osei-Tutu and Ampadu (2017) that exogamy is most possible in growing cities where there is pluralistic, anonymous and mobile population. He predicts that endogamy will prove to be less of a criterion in mate selection. This is because education and occupation will eventually result in the blurring of class boundaries, less interest in religious and class boundaries and ethnic differences, hence reducing endogamous marriages. However, some people are still endogamous inclined. It cannot be eradicated completely.

Positive Socio-Economic Factors

Majority of the respondents stated that the changes in the marriage practices brought in new positive developments. when he was asked on the positive side he said:

Business opportunities ooh, my daughter many opportunities are opened for many people when they hear there is going to be a wedding, talk of caterers, those who deal with chairs and canopies rentals, those in the hospitality industry and both local and foreign artist and entertainment, all people will have something to do. So, you see that it is beneficial (Field Data, 2023).

To him this current trend even though is financially stressful to some people, it provides income for a lot of people when people are able to afford that. When asked whether he sees anything positive in the changes he laughed very loudly and then calmly, he said:

Even if I don't admire anything of this your world the fact that Christianity has brought reduction in the shameful spiritual bride wealth that demanded for a "black sheep", All of us now claim to belong to churches and for that reason even if they have that intention are afraid to disclose it because from day one the process of the marriage began with the pastor and might expose them as church members, aaah this change enh am very happy about it (Field Data, 2023).

Another respondent had this to say;

These days, our children move out for work and they come back with wives, that is a good thing, they bring people from different cultures to add to our family so I don't see this to be bad at all (Field Data, 2023).

This response is not different from the position of Nuworsu et al. (2019) when they assert that changing marriage practices in Ghana have widened the scope of marital options and increased partner selection opportunities. With increased urbanization, education, and exposure to different cultures, Ghanaians now have a broader pool of potential partners to choose from.

On the part of Adua, the youth now have the opportunity of making their own choices and take responsibility of their own marital decisions.

This is what he has to say; *"These days, no one has the right to choose a partner for anybody, you decide the person you want to settle with so far as you think you are many the right choice* (Field Data, 2023).

This response from Adua was not different from many of the other respondents, and these corroborates with the ideas of Azumi et al. (2018) when they posit that, changing marriage practices in Ghana have also contributed to the promotion of individual autonomy and personal fulfillment within marriages. There is an increasing recognition of the importance of personal happiness, emotional well-being, and individual aspirations in marital relationships. Couples are now encouraged to communicate openly, negotiate roles and responsibilities, and prioritize mutual respect and emotional support, leading to healthier and more satisfying marriages.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Suggestions are also offered for further studies.

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 Research objectives

The objectives for the study were to:

- (i) explore the marriage practices among the Kasena before independence.
- (ii) analyse the changes that have taken place in the marriage practices among the kasena.
- (iii) assess the factors responsible for the changes in the marriage practices among the Kasena.
- (iv) examine the effects of these changes on the social and economic systems among the Kasena.

5.1.2 Research procedure

The study was to explore the changes in traditional marriage practices among the Kasena in the Nogsenia Traditional Area of the Upper East Region. The study was guided by the interpretivist philosophical position, which assumes that reality is socially constructed and subjective. The study adopted a qualitative research approach, using an exploratory case study design. The study's population consisted of elders and clan heads from the Nogsenia Traditional Area of the Kasena-Nankana Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The sample consisted of 20 respondents selected based on data saturation.

5.1.3 Major Findings

The major findings of the study include the following:

- (i) One, marriages among the Kasena people were traditionally performed through culturally significant processes, involving the payment of bride wealth, negotiations between families, and adherence to traditional values and customs.
- (ii) Two, the findings revealed several changes in marriage practices among the Kasena people. These changes include a shift towards more individual choice in partner selection, the rise of courtship and dating, rise in cohabitation, the prevalence of endogamy and a decline in the importance of extended family involvement in the marriage processes. The findings further revealed a concerning trend in which a section of the indigenous population has been gradually losing knowledge of their traditional marriage practices. Many of these practices are being forgotten or modified.
- (iii) Three, factors responsible for these changes in marriage practices include increased exposure to western culture or influences, urbanization, migration, formal education, religion, and economic opportunities have all played a significant role in altering the traditional marriage practices.
- (iv) Four, the effects of these changes on the socio-economic systems of the Kasena Nankana Municipality are multifaceted. There has been a shift in gender roles, with women gaining more autonomy and opportunities outside of traditional expectations. These changes have also led to the erosion of some traditional practices, impacting the cultural identity, and cohesion of the community.

5.2 Conclusions

Certainly, drawing from the perspectives of the cultural evolution model, encompassing cognitive, sociocultural, economic, technological, symbolic, and structural factors, it is evident that the study on changes in marriage practices aligns seamlessly with this comprehensive framework. The cognitive aspect illuminates the evolving mindset of individuals, emphasizing factors like decision-making, individualism, and changing perceptions of gender roles, which play a vital role in shaping marriage choices.

Sociocultural elements emphasize the impact of societal norms, values, and social learning on marriage practices. Economic factors, pivotal in urban settings, influence decisions through employment opportunities, financial stability, and educational attainment. Technological advances facilitate new avenues for meeting partners, altering communication patterns, and expanding access to diverse marital influences.

Symbolic and structural dimensions shed light on the symbolic meanings attached to marriage, reflecting cultural shifts, while structural changes underscore alterations in family dynamics, transitioning from extended to nuclear families due to urbanization. Integrating these facets, the study underscores the multifaceted nature of cultural evolution, portraying how intricate interplays between cognitive, sociocultural, economic, technological, symbolic, and structural elements collectively mold the diverse tapestry of modern marriage practices, validating the model's comprehensive approach to understanding societal transformations over time.

The research established that these evolutions in the traditional marriage practices are as a result of factors such as urbanization, migration, formal education, religion, and

changing social values or acculturation and analyzed the impact on socio-economic systems of the Kasena Nankana Municipality. The changes have both positive and negative impacts on both individual lives and the broader socio-economic systems within the Kasena Nankana Municipality. The positive aspects include the promotion of gender equality, human rights particularly for women, and education. The negative aspects include the gradual loss or neutralization of traditionally significant and symbolic components of marriage practices.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (i) Awareness should be created or promoted by Traditional leaders among the Kasena people about the swift changes or alterations in their marriage practices that social changes have brought. The purpose of this awareness creation is to establish consciousness so that the significance of performing certain marriage rituals that ensures sustainability of marriages are not lost irrespective of the penetrative power of societal change factors. This it is believed will help reduce the current trend of marital breakdowns or divorce cases among the Kasena people so as to ensure and sustain strong family and societal bonds.
- (ii) There is the need for chiefs who are the Traditional Authorities to initiate more dialogue and collaboration among traditional leaders, family heads and religious groups to ensure that certain traditional marriage practices are not compromised. Conscious efforts should be made to preserve these practices through documentations and any other appropriate means to ensure that these significant traditional marriage practices and rituals are kept and successfully

passed onto forth coming generations, such that, the cultural heritage is not lost.

(iii) Traditional authorities, that is, Heads of clans and members of council of elders and family heads (strengthened community networks) should provide the needed support, encouragement and education to help new couples navigate the changing landscape of marriage practices (continuation of traditional marriage) by fostering dialogue, effective communication and understanding while embracing modernization and accommodating individual preferences and choices but consciously preserving cultural traditions.

(iv) Collaboration with local cultural organizations or institutions to create educational programmes that promote the understanding and appreciation of traditional marriage practices among the younger generation and also ensure the transmission of traditional marriage practices among the younger generations and those to come.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

- (i) Investigate the cultural and social implications of changing marriage practices among the Kasena people or other ethnic groups within the Kasena Nankana Municipality.
- (ii) Exploration of changing marriage practices impact on gender dynamics, economic systems, and social relationships within the Kasena Nankana Municipality.
- (iii) A study could be conducted on the long-term effects of the changes in marriage practices on the socio-economic well-being of the Kasena people.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

Topic: changes in marriage practices among Kasena people in the Nogsenia traditional area

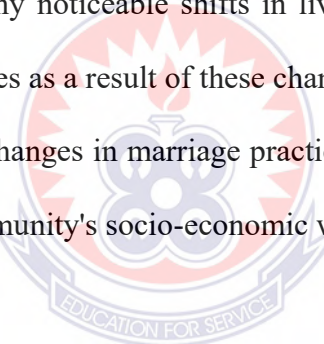
Tool: Interview Guide

Target: clan heads, elders and family heads

STATEMENT OF CONSENT: My name is an M.Phil. student from the Department of Social Studies Education, University of Education, Winneba. As part of the requirements for the award of my M.Phil. Degree. I am researching into the topic” changes in marriage practices among Kasena people in the Nogsenia traditional area”. This research is solely for academic purposes and will contribute to knowledge in this area of study. I will therefore be grateful if you could participate in this research. I assure you of your confidentiality and you are also free to skip some questions that may be posed to you or exit the interview entirely if you deem it necessary. The interview will take appropriately 60 minutes. Are you willing to participate in this research? Yes or No.

A. Bio-Data		
1	Respondent Code:	Name of Clan: Status:
2	Age of Respondent: 80 – 82 83 – 85 86 – above	

B. Research Questions
Research Question 1: How were marriages contracted among the Kasena people before independence?
3. How were marriages traditionally performed in the Kasena community? What was the cultural or symbolic significance of marriage in the Kasena community?
4. Can you describe the rituals, ceremonies, or customs associated with traditional Kasena marriages? Were there any significance or traditional beliefs or values associated with these rituals, ceremonies, or customs in marriage?
5. What were the roles and responsibilities of the families and individuals involved in traditional Kasena marriages?
6. Were there any specific gender roles or expectations in relation to marriage?
7. How did traditional marriage practices influence the socio-economic activities of the Kasena community?
8. Were there any economic exchanges or contributions associated with marriages in the past?
Research Question 2: What changes in the marriage practices have taken place among the Kasena people of Nogsenia?
9. Have you observed any changes in Kasena marriage practices compared to the past?
10. Can you describe the specific changes that have occurred?
11. When did you start noticing these changes? Was there a particular time period or event that triggered them?
Research Question 3: What factors are responsible for the changes in the marriage practices among the Kasena people of Nogsenia?

	12. What factors do you believe are responsible for the observed changes in Kasena marriage practices?
	13. How did external factors, such as globalization, urbanization, or modernization, influence these changes?
	14. Ask if there are any internal factors within the Kasena community that have contributed to the changes?
Research Question 4: How has the changes in the marriage practices affected the socio-economic systems of the Kasena people?	
15. 16. 17.	<p>How have these changes in marriage practices affected the socio-economic activities of the Kasena community?</p> <p>Have there been any noticeable shifts in livelihoods, economic exchanges, or agricultural practices as a result of these changes?</p> <p>Do you think the changes in marriage practices have had a positive or negative impact on the community's socio-economic well-being?</p> 
Recommendations	
18. 19.	<p>How do you think the preservation or adaptation of marriage practices would impact the community's socio-economic activities?</p> <p>What do you think the future holds for Kasena marriage practices? Are there any additional insights, experiences, or anecdotes related to the topic you would want to share?</p>

END OF INTERVIEW, THANK YOU