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**CONTINUITIES AND DISCONTINUITIES
IN GENDER IDEOLOGIES AND
RELATIONS: GHANAIAN MIGRANTS IN
LONDON**

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**Thesis submitted for the degree of Dphil
School of Global Studies
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August 2010

STATEMENT

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:

CONTINUITIES OR DISCONTINUITIES IN GENDER IDEOLOGIES AND
RELATIONS: GHANAIAN MIGRANTS IN LONDONSUMMARY

This thesis examines the interrelationship between migration and gender, exploring the migration trajectory of Ghanaians in London from their motivation to migrate, their settlement patterns and their transnational activities. The study specifically investigates two main questions: firstly, if and how patriarchal gendered ideologies and relations are influenced by the new migration space and how gender interacts with other social differences (e.g. class, nationality, education, legal status) to reconfigure gendered patterns of behaviour in the country of destination? Secondly, how do gender ideologies and practices influence the maintenance of transnational links with migrants' home country and vice versa? The study adopts a multi-sited ethnographic approach to gain an insight into the experiences of migrants. It demonstrates that paid employment, contextual factors and social differentials simultaneously reinforce and transform patriarchal gender relations in different social spaces.

The thesis argues that the international division of labour, institutional challenges and socio-economic factors in the new social space of London provide different dilemmas for migrants. These opportunities and constraints lead to contestations and renegotiations which require that migrants reconcile earning with caring. This in turn leads to changes in the relative power and status of women and men in the host country. This study distinguishes the factors leading to gains and losses; shows that Ghanaian migrants are gendered actors; and contributes to disaggregating the persistence or transformations in patriarchal gender relations. The man's position as the breadwinner is often significantly challenged undermining his patriarchal authority in the household. Ghanaian women on the other hand have often been able to gain new access to resources, make life choices and participate in decision making in the households thereby being empowered across space and time. The study contributes to current understanding of empowerment processes by focusing on the role of men in this process, maintaining that socio-cultural and economic factors impact the lives and activities of male and female migrants differentially, reconfiguring patriarchal hierarchies and levelling power relations and decision making processes to more egalitarian patterns.

It also argues that the formation of transnational families as a result of 'split marriages' and children being sent back to the origin country for fostering leads to different gendered outcomes for migrant and non-migrant women, men and children. The study shows that responsibility for production, reproduction and socialisation is divided across national borders, with the performance of financial, emotional and practical support, decision making patterns and power relations negotiated in the transnational social space. The study contributes to deepening understanding of the critical nature of the interplay of the private and public spheres in gender dynamics and its interrelationship with migration, and also demonstrates that childcare has a significant impact on the caring and earning roles of parents, the organisation of households and enhancement of gender equality.

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Glossary of Acronyms

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BHPS	British Household Panel Survey
CMS	Centre for Migration Studies
DCE	Distinct contribution expenditure type
DRC	The Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty
DSS	Department of Social Security
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EEA	European Economic Area
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme
EU	European Union
EUROSTAT	European Commission Statistics
FCE	Female Contribution Expenditure Type
FIS	Family Information Services
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HCE	Hidden Contribution Expenditure Type
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JCE	Joint Contribution Expenditure Type
LEL	Lower Earnings Limit
MCE	Male Contribution Expenditure Type
MIB	Migration Information Bureau
NCDS	National Child Development Study
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NEET	Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NLC	National Liberation Council
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NVQ	National Vocational Qualifications
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAMSCAD	Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment

PNP	Peoples National Party
PSI	Policy Studies Institute
ROPAA	Representation of the People's Amendment Act
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programme
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFTC	Working Families' Tax Credit
WILDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa

Chapter One: Introduction

Gender permeates all human life; however only in the 1980s did scholars call for the revisioning of the foundations of migration studies to include gender as a core constituent. Changes to gender asymmetries vary situationally in the migration context (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Menjivar 1999; Pessar 2003, Parrado and Flippen 2005). The increasing numbers of female migrants require studies that recognise the role of both women and men in migration trajectories. Ndiaye and Simonen (2006: iii) emphasise that “female migration may potentially be an element of gender equality and an element for modifying gender roles”. Though the research imbalance is being addressed, a more nuanced focus on both men and women, in relation to other structures of social hierarchy in diverse social contexts is necessary (Pessar 1999). While there has been considerable research in Asia and Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa has been under researched though it continues to contribute to labour flows from the periphery (developing countries) to the centre (developed world). This thesis investigates Ghanaian migration to London, aiming to contribute to current understanding and theorisation regarding the crucial intersections of gender and migration.

The thesis explores from a gendered constitutive standpoint the experiences of Ghanaian women and men, most of whom migrated to London in the 1980s and are currently settled there. It draws on ethnographic material, applying triangulated data methods: participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and informal conversations. Through these it elicits the experiences, interpretations, and meanings of the actions of both Ghanaian women and men relating to their migration, settlement and transnational experiences. It focuses on the power relations, negotiations and decision making processes that ensue in these interactions. The thesis considers two related key questions. The first asks if, and how gender ideologies and relations are impacted by the spaces of migration and their interrelationship with other social differences (e.g. class, nationality, legal status) to reconfigure gendered patterns of behaviour in the country of destination? Secondly, it asks how transnational practices reinforce or contest patriarchal gender structures or vice versa.

When migrants move to a different social space and time, the economic, social, and political systems they experience, coupled with factors such as class, race/ethnicity, nationality and legal status, challenge and reconceptualise gender ideologies and relations. Research findings show that many Ghanaian women have been able to renegotiate patriarchal arrangements; dominant cultural ideals and gender ideologies such as 'head of household' and gender divisions of labour are severely challenged. They gain control of their income by their involvement in the labour market and make strategic life choices. By articulating their concerns women also transform the domestic division of labour so that their husbands also perform their share of household chores. The precarious nature of the labour market marginalizes the men, who are compelled to do what they consider to be 'women's work' and earn comparable wages. The 'practices of egalitarianism' that the receiving society encourages combine to undermine male authority. Because the women possess a better 'fallback position' and also as a result of their 'perceived contributions,' through a blend of shared and conflicting interests (Sen 1990), both change their gender orientations and transform inequalities of the patriarchal gender order. It is unclear whether such transformations are permanent, or linked to the specific socio-economic and cultural context of London.

The study suggests that as a result of the incorporation of women's income into household financial arrangements, decision-making patterns change after migration leading to more egalitarian relationships. In the process, both men and women adjust their gender ideologies, influencing their attitudes and behaviour, thereby promoting empowerment. There are some losses in the labour market for women because the social differentials of race, legal status, class, and nationality militate against their circumstances. Nevertheless, they are able to make gains within power relations in the household by exhibiting a 'sense of agency,' and increased self-esteem. The situation is also ambivalent for the men: some gain more quality time with their family, benefit from the woman's decision-making skills and suffer less stress as women contribute financially to the household. The study further shows that women themselves can take charge of the empowerment process.

The split-households formed as a result of socio-economic circumstances in the sending and receiving countries leads to each of these activities; consumption, production, reproduction and socialisation functions being shared between partners across national borders. For instance, a number of men left behind in urban southern Ghana take responsibility, transforming the gender division of labour in the absence of their partners. Migrant families have adopted a transnational strategy, sending their children back to Ghana to be fostered, and this separation impacts intergenerational and lineage relations. Transnational activities to maintain the transnational families through fosterage seem gendered by 'role separation.' For example, women concentrate on communicating regularly and promoting the emotional well-being of their children across transnational social fields, while men mostly ensure financial provision.

This study has wide-ranging implications in the field of migration studies, providing evidence for gendered changes, processes and structures in the spatial experiences of migrants. It matches samples, conducts a simultaneous comparative study of women and men, and engages with the origin country concurrently instead of relying on retrospective recollections from migrants, adding insights for further analytical inquiry using similar methodology. The study findings enhance the understanding of the relational aspects of hierarchical gender structures by recording the areas of losses and gains associated with patriarchy and the migration process. This study examines how the role of men's behavioural changes contribute to the facilitation of empowerment. I demonstrate renegotiations of decision-making and changes in attitudes, essential for promoting egalitarianism in one-on-one relationships. The social and economic implications of split transnational households show the significance of these dynamic processes across space and time, deepening the understanding of the gender and transnationalism debate. I further demonstrate the *raison d'être* for transnational practices and their implications for intergenerational and gender relations in the fostering of the second generation. The remainder of this chapter considers some of the key concepts and theoretical debates underlying the thesis, and a review of relevant literature.

1.1 Gender

Gender is used to describe all the socially-given attributes, roles and activities inherent in being a woman or a man. It determines how a woman or man is viewed, expected to think, and behave as a result of society's organisation. It refers to socially constructed differences between the sexes and to the social relationship between women and men which consists of the responsibilities, behavioural guidelines, norms and values, preferences, fears, activities and expectations that culture assigns differently to men and women. Gender is a "structure and part of an interactive process" (Beaujot 2000:50). Gender is not the same as sex (Oakley 1985; Kabeer 1994; March et al. 1999).

Gender affects migratory behaviour; conversely, migration influences gender relations and roles. Feminists and other scholars maintain that any study on gender "cannot start from the viewpoint that the problem is women, but rather men and women, and more specifically the socially constructed relations between them" (Whitehead 1979). This is because women and men are characterized in relation to one another. Orloff (1996:52) explains that gender relations encompass the "mutually constitutive structures and practices" which lead to gender differences and inequalities, creating hierarchies with women and men in their everyday interactions constituting different power structures in different cultures. Gender relations have been found to lead to widespread exploitation and domination of women by men in different social, economic and political contexts. McDowell and Sharp (1997) emphasise that in theorising gender relations, the attributes of femininity and masculinity should be interrogated as they are composed in specific situations and time; and what it implies to be a woman or man is "context dependent, relational, complex and variable" (1997:6). The systems of differentials are also interlocking and integrated. As rightly postulated by Beneria and Roldan (1987) and Hawkesworth (1997), gender cross-cuts with class, ethnicity, age, nationality and sexuality, showing a continuous variability of human characteristics. The totality of the dynamics has to be captured, without reducing it into just man/woman.

1.1.1 Social relations and symbolic dimensions of gender

Gender is conceptualized as both a social relation and a symbolic construction (Moore 1988:13). In the symbolic dimension, gender may refer to ‘symbolic oppositions’ (Connell 2000a:26) and can assign “dualistic gender metaphors to various perceived dichotomies” (Harding, 1986:17) such as through gender stereotyping. Moore notes that variations in sexual ideologies and stereotypes pertain in different societies; and several symbolic representations of the differences between women and men are also widely held in common (1988:15-16). These cultural constructs may be reinforced by their linkage with social activities of both sexes, but are not necessarily intrinsic to their biological makeup. Based on the expectations and values associated with being a woman or a man in different cultures, gender relations could be analysed from the perspective of these symbolic categories or constructs.

Similarly, gender is embedded in all social relations (Whitehead 1979, Ridgeway and Correll 2004, Andersen 2005). Jackson and Scott (2002:1) point out that gender emphasises the social ordering of women and men, and therefore is “embedded in both social institutions and social practices... and sustained at the level of everyday interactions”. Kabeer adds that gender relations constitute variable social relations interconnected with the division of resources, responsibilities and claims in different cultures which “reproduce systemic differences in the positioning of women and men” (1994: 280).

Moore (1988) states that cross-cultural homogeneity of symbolic associations may not always be valid. The symbolic categories prevent comparative analysis of actual tasks performed by women and men. Though homogeneity may distinguish roles in different cultures based on biological reproduction and nature, they invariably induce universal theorisations (Edholm et al. 1978). Significantly, Moore argues that the two approaches to the study of gender relations are not “mutually exclusive” (Ibid. 30). This study agrees with Ortner and Whitehead (1981) and Collier and Rosaldo (1981) that a valid approach is to investigate what people do in terms of the formal structure of social relations, and to explore cultural perceptions and the symbolic understandings which underpin these processes. Significantly, Mahler and Pessar note that “in our readings of contemporary

scholarship we see many instances in which gendered kinship ideologies, relations and practices appear to assume a role in migration processes, although these often go unexamined” (2006:35). In this study therefore, Ghanaian female and male migrants and non-migrants are investigated through their understanding of their roles and ‘rights’ in relation to these symbolic associations and gender ideologies, and in terms of their social and economic relations.

1.2 The Household

The household is defined as a basic unit of society with a group of persons forming units of production, though not always in harmony (Moore 1988, Chant and McIlwaine 1995). They may also share consumption or “eat from a common pot” (Mackintosh 2000:131). They may comprise persons related by blood or marriage, as well as friends and/or colleagues (Chant 1997). The closeness and sharing central to most households differentiates gender relations from other social relations, though members may or may not be co-residential. Variations in the household’s composition, characteristics and structure in different societies mainly depend on the social relations which constitute them. Each household consists of a head, which may not always be a male and dependents (Delphy and Leonard 1992: 111). Housework is also based on sex and marital status, with female dependants having primary responsibility for domestic work. In patriarchal households, the head of the household is obliged to maintain the family and provide for their basic needs. The degree to which men perform these tasks differs between societies, obscuring the intricate nature of household organisation. Households are the main site for organising gender relations because the sexual division of labour and gender hierarchies and differences are reproduced and maintained and located there (Brush 1999; Hardill et al. 1999). Feminists argue that the household is the ‘central site of women’s oppression’, locating women’s inferior status and subordination in the household (Delphy and Leonard 1992) because of their unpaid domestic work. In addition, many societies construct women as nearer to nature due to their reproductive roles. To understand the relationship between women and men in the migration process requires an appreciation of the organisation of the household. This study focuses on intra-household gender relations. Other sites of relevance to this thesis would be

the community, labour market and the state, since they are interrelated sectors where gender and other social differences are mutually constituted.

Any examination of the household should consider intra- and extra-household relations. In situations of labour migration, an investigation into the sexual division of labour should incorporate internal and external factors. Conceptualising intra-household relations is a complex undertaking given that post-modern feminists have emphasised that theorisation should be based on their cultural and historical specificity (Chant 1997). Moore (1998) argues that despite evidence of variability in households, they are conceptualised by naturalist assumptions. Kabeer (1997) maintains that while some scholars recognize conflicts in household relations others do not. Neo-classical economists conceptualise households as a single economic unit. The New Household Economics, led by Becker (1981) theorise that inequalities in the division of labour and domestic work arise through individual choices according to joint welfare-maximising principles. They do not address feminist questions regarding gender socialization, inequality, asymmetric power relations and the subordination of women (Beneria 2003). Feminist critics have observed that intra-household relations are obscured because of the assumption that households are a unified set-up (Hartmann 1981) headed by the male head of household who controls and allocates resources. The popular notion of the 'nuclear' family based on a 'family wage,' with a male breadwinner, dependent wife and children does not reflect the actual economic circumstances of most households (Moore 1988). However, due to their universal application these ideologies become justified as reflecting appropriate behaviour based on cultural assumptions. Feminist scholars have challenged this assumption, noting that households are characterised by exchange and not necessarily by pooling and sharing (Doss 2001). Power relations and different forms of authority within the household lead to contestations and negotiations of roles and responsibilities (Whitehead 1984; Wolf 1990; Kabeer 1994; Chant 1997; Manuh 1998). These assertions make it essential that households are empirically analysed to determine the 'web of rights and relationships' that pertain in each historical circumstance.

Feminist scholars including Bergmann (1995) criticised these theories, such as the unitary models or New Home Economics theories, as too simple. Denying that there is absolute consensus in the household whereby family members have equal say in decision making, they proposed alternative bargaining approaches, including noncooperative, cooperative, collective or a variation (see Sen 1990, Haddad et al. 1997, Agarwal 1997, Quisumbing and Maluccio 2003 for review). These describe the social reality of the family and provide a framework to analyse intra-household relations and illustrate how gender inequalities are negotiated and contested. In contrast to the harmonious household theories, Sen (1990) introduced the concept of ‘cooperative conflicts’, which underpins this study (1990: 135-137). He shows that intra-household factors may influence bargaining power, which is not evenly distributed but indicates the relative strength of their *breakdown* or their *fallback* positions. He identifies three factors determining the individual’s bargaining power. In the *breakdown well-being response*; a person whose well-being would be worsened by a breakdown will be incapable of gaining a favorable outcome from the bargaining process. The *perceived interest response* also contends that where a person attributes less value to his/her own well-being relative to other members of the household then his or her bargaining power would be weaker. Thirdly, if a person’s *perceived contribution* is considered proportionately more generous to the general wealth of the household, then he/she stands in a better bargaining position. This implies that those who make greater contribution benefit from greater bargaining power. Sen’s argument has been critiqued by scholars such as Kabeer who note that cultural norms and gender ideologies mediate economic processes, and therefore undermine women’s bargaining power despite their incomes, making the “operation of power within the household ...elusive” (1994, 1997:300). Agarwal (1997) also argues that cooperative-conflicts do not reveal the ‘full complexity’ of the bargaining process and how factors such as norms, gender orientation and ideology of appropriate behaviour and social perceptions impinge on the bargaining process.

The utility of bargaining approaches is also constrained because the “explanation is limited to the description of these relations,” in the cooperation and conflicts (Kaspar 2005:14). The dynamics and development of the bargaining processes, and how the breakdown

positions are formed and change are not provided (Ibid.). The linkages “between extra-household and intra-household bargaining power” are also not accounted for (Agarwal 1997:1). This study attempts to address these limitations. It does this by looking at the broader social context, exploring the labour market and ideological norms such as the gender division of labour, working mothers with husbands involved in housework, male breadwinner, head of household and identifying the changes in the relations. For instance, though women are involved in full time work, in some cases men still dominate financial decision-making and other areas of decision-making such as number of children to be had because of the assumption that it is the responsibility of the husband. The assumption therefore that such decisions are the husband’s role influences the discussions and bargaining processes around financial decision-making and reproductive decisions. In some instances also, though the woman is the main breadwinner, because of the assumption that the man is the household head she defers all financial decision-making to the man. The assumption of household head therefore mediates the bargaining process as she may give in during discussions and negotiations because of this assumption. The study identifies the interrelationship between households and the wider economic structures in which they are located. While the household approach emphasises conjugal relations it nonetheless recognises their location in a larger socio-political context. It specifically explores power dynamics and integrates household and market-related bargaining. The thesis acknowledges the limitation, however, that while using a household approach allowed for prioritizing conjugal relations, it did not allow a comprehensive analysis of other important cultural norms such as the extended family system. This study also agrees that bargaining processes could involve covert contestations, which provide individuals with considerable bargaining power that may not be recognised by the investigator (Agarwal 1997:7). Nonetheless, Sen’s model enables analytical investigation in capturing the complexity of gender relations, and in considering power as a dimension in the decision making process which is quite implausible under the unitary model.

The male breadwinner ideology is of particular relevance to this study because it is used to justify the gendering of the private and public spheres and is therefore essential for exploring gender relations and the social and economic life of migrants. While scholars

such as Delphy and Leonard (1992) declare that the ideology is still relevant, others like Holter (2007) predict its eventual demise. The dynamic social processes in the domestic division of labour and breadwinner ideologies have been captured by Hakim (2003) in a typology. She categorises families using three models. The *egalitarian* model is associated with more equal gender divisions of labour, - where the spouses have equally absorbing professions and share housework equally. The second model is *compromise*, where there is less pressure on the wife's job than the husband's so she takes up a greater part of the housework and caring for children. Finally, the *separate roles* model is associated with the 'traditional' ideology where the wife is a homemaker and the man is the breadwinner and does no housework. This study explores the decision-making processes in relation to the sexual division of labour in households employing Hakim's (2003) model. This model is useful as it provides different dimensions of the domestic division of labour and breadwinner ideology which helps explain the variations in the combination of earning and caring roles adopted by Ghanaian migrants in this study. Additionally, it allows the examination of the balance between work and family life to determine the patterning of the sexual division of labour, gender inequalities and changes that might be occurring in the provider role.

This study analyses paid and unpaid work, whose interactions are complex in the migrant social space, with implications for the social relations between women and men. Moore explains that the characterization of work has undervalued women's 'unwaged work' (1988:113). The lack of recognition of their work is reinforced by gender ideologies and ethnocentrism. Insofar as work is defined as 'paid work' performed outside the home, the domestic tasks that women perform are not regarded as work, and this is an aspect of the sexual division of labour. Figart and Mutari argue that the "full-time, year-round employment... (involving a) full-time worker, presumably male, (who) faces limited demands from unpaid work and family life," the 'family wage system' and 'women as mothers' are predicated on ideological norms with gendered assumptions (1998:462). Feminists suggest that such gender ideologies affect women's involvement in wage labour, and that the 'women as a reserve army theory' also implies that women depend on men and therefore are paid lower wages, with the understanding that their husband's wages will

support them even if they lose their jobs. Ideology then adapts by transforming women's role from 'women as mothers' to 'working mothers,' a 'sexual definition of inferiority' to enable them to stay in paid employment, and the sexual division of labour and society remains stable (Eisenstein 1999:210, Moore 1988:25,113).

1.3 Gender Inequalities/ Patriarchy

Women's subordination and male dominance remains a central issue in gender and social relations. The reason for the pervasiveness of these inequalities in time and space (developed/developing; socialist/capitalist societies) has been conceptualized by scholars. Marxist-feminists blame the 'the woman question' on economic structures and oppression through class (Beneria and Roldan 1987). They (Marxist-feminists) further analyse reproduction and production in terms of class conflict, where power relations result from relations with the economic means of production, and reproduction is subsumed under the capitalist division of labour (Eisenstein 1999). The oppression of women is therefore conditioned by the relations of economic production that is termed capitalism. The radical feminists however argue that "women's subordination is based on male control of women's sexuality, procreative capacity, and ideology" (Beneria and Roldan 1987:9). Patriarchy thus determines women's oppression, not the mode of production or capitalism. Lithur restates the radical feminist position that "the root of women's oppression is the patriarchal system" (2004:65). Patriarchy is characterized as a "sexual system of power in which the male role is superior in possession of power and economic privilege" (Eisenstein 1999:202). It is the structure of gendered power (Connell 2000b) reinforced by the sexual division of labour and evidenced by male domination.

Whereas one school of thought attributes women's subordination to economic structures, the other derives it from patriarchy. Socialist feminists, alternatively, have noted the co-existence of social relations of reproduction and relations of production; or 'patriarchy' and capitalism; or 'domestic'/'public' divisions. They argue that the separation of 'class origins' from 'patriarchal roots' is inappropriate. They argue that the productive and reproductive roles of the household "influence and affect each other" (Moore 1988:48)

therefore the issue of women's unpaid labour within the household should be analysed concurrently.

Beneria and Roldan (1987:9) and Eisenstein (1999:203) have similarly explained that the two divisions are 'mutually reinforcing' and 'interdependent'; the latter terms it 'capitalist patriarchy'. Research must address both the gender system and the economic position. For instance, Eisenstein explains that material circumstances and ideologies are dialectically related and somewhat similar, because power is derived from both class and sex. Together they characterise the subordination of women at different levels of society. Beneria and Roldan argue that the socialist feminist approach makes women's subordination central to both sets of relations while emphasising the inadequacies of each to answer 'the woman question'. They add that patriarchy is sustainable irrespective of the mode of production since the disintegration of capitalist institutions may not mean the collapse of patriarchy. They point out some limitations of this approach. Firstly, the ahistorical nature of patriarchy assumes that it applies to all societies without any variations. Secondly, real life situations are "integrated as a whole" therefore analysing the interconnections between any mode of production and patriarchy is problematic (1987:9-10).

I subscribe to the views of the socialist feminists that whereas capitalism and patriarchy have been theoretically separated by other scholars, in practice it is difficult to separate them. My view is shared by Delphy and Leonard: "in real life there are no time or space discontinuities between patriarchy and capitalism" (1992:65). The study emphasises the complex and historically variable relationship between production and reproduction. It follows Barrett who borrows from both traditions by investigating gender relations "as and where they may be distinct from or connected with, the processes of production and reproduction by historical materialism" (1980:9, cited from Beneria and Roldan 1987). The ideological aspects of gender relations will be assessed, as well as concepts and methods for understanding gender relations from the economic point of view. Additionally, reproductive labour (mothering) is not naturally 'given' universally; both genders are affected by reproduction and production differently. I note this fact because the processes

of changing gender relationships are contradictory and the study is based on their historical and cultural specificity.

Kandiyoti (1988) proposes different types of patriarchy which will inform this study. Though she chooses two ‘ideal-typical’ societies, a) sub Saharan Africa and b) the Middle East, South East Asia and East Asia for her comparison, she explains that they constitute a continuum. The constraints of patriarchy compel women to engage in recomposing gender relations through what she calls *patriarchal bargains*. These bargains reflect variations, depending on other unequal differentials such as ethnicity, class, religion and caste and ultimately inform gender ideologies in their particular socio-economic, political and cultural contexts. These patriarchal bargains are alterable, and therefore contested and renegotiated producing change over time and place in gender relations. Women in the African context for instance resist male domination and attempts by men to deprive them of their economic sustenance and the autonomy they already possess. “The insecurities of African polygyny for women” (Kandiyoti 1988: 277-278) lead to conflicts and negotiations in the household, with women and men pursuing their independent economic activities but often sharing ‘complementarity in consumption’ (Kabeer 1994: 131). Because husbands are unable to fulfill their breadwinning responsibilities, women negotiate to maintain their economic autonomy.

In the Middle East and Asian context, Kandiyoti shows that the situation differs, and she terms this *classic patriarchy*. Women enter marriage fully dispossessed and the “patrilineage totally appropriates both women’s labour and progeny and renders their work and contributions to production invisible” (1988: 279). The study examines patriarchal bargains in household arrangements by exploring the negotiations and the gendered inequalities prevalent in particular socioeconomic, cultural and geographical locations. It further explores strategies and coping mechanisms adopted by Ghanaian women and men in the patriarchal bargain, which Kandiyoti indicates as a continuum ranging from less to extreme patriarchy. How do the economic activities of Ghanaian women in their origin country impact their bargaining and negotiation position and influence patriarchal

structures? What are the implications of women's earning power in the migration context for renegotiating the patriarchal bargain?

1.4 Gender and Migration

The gender factor in migration is associated with the impetus for women and men to move, and with the migration process itself, involving the conditions migrants find on their arrival in the country of destination, their transnational activities and their return. Every facet of the migration experience affects both men and women. Therefore it is important that gender should be used as an analytical tool to understand it. Sweetman argues that "household or family resources and decision making structures, culture, and gender segregated markets" impinge on migration, making it a social and economic phenomenon (1998:2). Morokvasic (1983) pointed out that migration theories until the 1980s had been gender blind. These theories emphasised rationalisation and globalisation, the neoclassical approach being a case in point (Phizacklea 2004). The push-pull model, derived from neo-liberal economic theory, assumed that individuals migrated for economic reasons as a survival strategy for themselves and their families, implying that the *homo migrans* is a male, who is the decision maker and breadwinner. Phizacklea (1998) confirms that old migration theories or network approaches do not explain the gendered aspects of migration. Past paradigms for explaining migration are no longer conceptually appropriate, as a large proportion of migration now constitutes women; and a *feminization of migration* has occurred (Castles and Miller 1998). Women support the families they have left in the home countries (Parrenas 2001); they are asylum seekers (Koser 1997); some migrate for family reunification and others independently for work (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000). Apart from the above, sometimes a partner migrates leaving the other behind, and it would be inappropriate to concentrate only on those who migrate. Therefore a gender perspective should ideally lead to simultaneous study of women and men who migrate and those who remain behind to ascertain the varied experiences they undergo. A gendered analysis affirms that humankind relies on both 'production' and 'reproduction', by bringing to bear the various roles played by both male and female.

1.4.1 Bringing women in

Though Ravenstein noted that “females are more migratory than males” (1885: 199 cited in Boyle and Halfacree 1999), it has taken many years for the role of females to be acknowledged in migration research. The trailblazers in ‘gendering migration’ in the 1980s were Phizacklea (1983) and Morokvasic (1984), who examined the position of women as migrant workers and structural changes in the international division of labour. Pessar explained the initial ‘gender blind’ approach by stating that the term ‘migrant’ carried a ‘masculine connotation’ (1986:273). Migration research therefore mainly focused on men, and assumed that if women migrated at all they were following their male counterparts (Oishi 2002; Thapan 2005). Mahler and Pessar (2006) and Curan et al. (2006) suggest that even currently gender is still marginalised. However, there has been some useful research on gender and migration, including that of Chant (1992), which reiterated the importance of gender relations in the migration experience of developing countries; Boyle and Halfacree (1999), which discusses the subject matter from the developed countries’ perspective; Willis and Yeoh (2000), who analyse various forms of migration involving women and men at the household, local and global arenas; and Ehrenreich and Hochschild (2002) who explore the effects of global capitalism on women migrants. These studies, do not adequately disaggregate the gains and losses in the migration trajectory for migrants and non-migrants, and still do not view gender analysis as “a constitutive element of migrations” (Mahler and Pessar 2006:27). This study attempts to fill the gap for better comprehension of the gender-migration nexus. Drawing from Hondagneu-Sotelo (1999), Kofman et al. (2000), and Phizacklea (2004), the recognition of women in migration literature has proceeded in stages. In the late 1970s, initial studies acknowledged that women played active roles in the migration process. Researchers attempted to fill in the gaps that resulted from decades of research based predominantly on male migrants.

However, these scholars also treated gender as a mere variable rather than a central theoretical concept. Further studies tried to showcase women within migratory streams, and Boyle and Halfacree (1999) noted that they aimed to ‘paint women back into the picture’ but were limited by the use of ‘male’ criteria to show inequality. They emphasised women and did not discuss gender. Consequently, Gabaccia complained that most of the research

explored immigrant women separately from men without successfully integrating them (1992: xv). Hondagneu-Sotelo and Cranford (1999) called this “adding women and stirring”. The approach did not allow for the whole migration process to be properly contextualised. Curan et al. (2006) indicate that after the period of extolling women, another stage emerged where the household economy became the critical site for examining the relationship between migration and women. These studies initially critiqued the equilibrium/neoclassical and historical-structural theories of migration for among other things, treating women as a homogenous unit; ignoring social influences which affected migration flows; and emphasising productive but marginalising reproductive activities (Chant and Radcliffe 1992). The shift to theorising on intermediary institutions like the family/household and social networks was therefore of particular importance. In the ‘new economics of migration theory’ the household was considered as a single decision-making unit. Gubhaju and Jong (2005) explain that migration decisions were seen in the context of the family’s well-being. The household strategy approach identified the household as a major institution mediating between the individual and the larger environmental context. It noted that the household strategy aims at minimizing risks (such as loss of income and unemployment, natural disasters) and possibly maximizing income for the wellbeing of the household unit (Massey 1990). In relation to migration, Boyd explained that

migration of individual members or the entire household unit represents a strategy at the household level to achieve a fit between resources such as land or capital, the consumption needs of its members and the alternatives for generating monetary and nonmonetary income (1989: 645).

The unified household model was however criticised by Kabeer (2000) and Phizacklea (2004: 124), who suggested shifting to analytical frameworks which recognised that households are “deeply implicated in gendered ideologies and practices”. This implication should not be presupposed, they advised, as households experience conflicts and gendered power relations. The household strategy approach has been expanded from being based on a mainly cooperative unit, with households identified as divided along gender lines and various members pursuing different interests in determining who will migrate and who will not. Intra-household resources, ideological factors, hierarchical power relations, have been incorporated as part of the decision making structures (Chant and Radcliffe 1992, Tacoli 1999). Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) points out that households may fail to act as a unified

entity, as a 'calculated reaction' in the common interest of the household. She also highlights the relevance of wider social and political relations to the household, and underscores these factors in considering the household strategy approach to migration.

1.4.2 Movement from women to gender in migration Studies

In the mid-1990s a shift occurred to the study of gender as a perspective for comprehending social networks, remittances and investment decisions. The way that migration processes and outcomes affect gender and social change was also portrayed. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Cranford established that “feminist immigration scholarship would best be served by shifting the focus from women to gender” (1990:106). They argued that gender should be viewed as historically and socially constructed. Grasmuck and Pessar (1991) and Curan et al. (2006) provide examples of such research, which cover households, migrant relationships with the state, and links with both sending and receiving countries. They also note the hierarchies of authority and power and the conflicts inherent in the migration phenomenon. The approach recognises that gender permeates practices, relations, identities, institutions, and notes that while migration shapes gender relations, gender relations also impinge on migration. It is important in this approach to acknowledge the significance of other social differentials like race, ethnicity, class and nationality. Researching migration and gender should enable a disaggregation of these differentials, because the migrant ‘other’ is racialised as well as categorised by class; as Chow et al. (1996) have noted, race, class and gender are interconnected. Gender relations are context specific; if we consider spatial mobility as an additional factor, we need to study how it pertains in the UK so far as Ghanaian migrants are concerned, since there is a gap in knowledge.

1.4.3 Empowerment

Hakim (2003) has explained that theory should help to make sense of the world and also understand change processes. Responding to the complex nature of gender relations and migration, this study adopts a pluralistic approach, employing diverse frameworks rather than advocating for one overarching theoretical framework. Arango remarks that migration is “too diverse to be explained by any single theory” and suggests that theory building should be based on potential to guide analysis of empirical data (2004:15). Portes

corroborated this approach, arguing that “attempting a grand theory of immigration anytime soon...would be futile” (1997:810). This study therefore relies on gender sensitive theoretical frameworks to analyse the lived experiences of Ghanaian women and men

The empowerment literature provides a focal point for determining the flow of the differential effects of migration, whether they lead to egalitarianism or reinforce the patriarchal gender order. Some scholars such as Foner (2002) and Pessar (2003) reveal that migration leads to women’s personal autonomy, control over income and increased involvement in decision-making, with men sometimes performing household chores. Other research has contradicted this: Kibria (1993); Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) and Espiritu (1997) have found that the evidence is not conclusive. They argue that certain differentials such as legal status, class, race and the context of reception affect the migrant’s position. There is a need to differentiate contexts to prove whether in any situation it leads to empowerment or not. Ghanaians in London are therefore investigated exploring the degree to which migration is empowering leading to egalitarianism or whether the patriarchal order is reinforced. The empowerment debate has traditionally considered women and girls, with little attention to attitudes and behaviour of men (Silberschmidt 2009). Mahler and Pessar (2006) have commented on the neglect of men in gender analysis in migration studies as if they do not matter. This thesis reframes the empowerment debate, focusing on both women and men to investigate the process of empowerment and to ascertain how migration affects women and men relationally and situationally.

There is a lack of agreement on the definition and meaning of empowerment (Beetham and Demetriades 2007; Moser 2007; Kabeer 2001). Most definitions agree that women’s empowerment involves certain elements: engaging resources, self confidence, making strategic choices, and changing power relations, leading to decision making beneficial to women and their families. Wilkie et al. define empowerment as “the general ability to raise issues with a spouse when one is dissatisfied...” (1998:580). This definition restricts empowerment to a marriage relationship and does not mention other useful resources for gaining power and addressing societal inequalities. Erman et al. also define empowerment as;

women starting to realize their own worth and contributing in their family, which has the potential to make women demand power and take action towards changing the structured gender inequality in society(2002: 396).

This definition takes cognisance of self awareness, which drives the empowerment process, and refers to taking action to change the status quo. Cornwall and Edwards explain that empowerment is “a complex process of negotiation, rather than a linear sequence of inputs and outcomes” (2010:8). In this study, empowerment will be understood to mean the process whereby individuals gain self-awareness and probe and evaluate their circumstances, and act by making strategic choices, unfeasible in the past, to realise their full potential in society by resisting the patriarchal social order (Kabeer 2005).

The diversity of these definitions has contributed to the formulation of varied frameworks for measuring the concept. In exploring empowerment Kabeer (2005) argues that power should be seen in terms of the ability to make choices, resulting in change. She describes three dimensions to empowerment that are ‘indivisible’, that are all essential for its attainment (Kabeer 1999:452). The three dimensions involve *agency*, where those who have been denied power gain the competence to make strategic choices. The sense of agency developed thereby needs to be initiated from within to challenge negative ideological and cultural practices which could mask the inequalities inherent in power relations. Subsequently, individuals should have the means to legitimately use *resources* independently to exercise their agency and respond to opportunities to *achieve* their full potential and outcomes.

Different dimensions of power have been explored by various scholars, including Lukes (1974). Rowlands (1997) applies Lukes concept of power and distinguishes these forms of power to provide the rationale for expressions of empowerment in her framework. ‘*Power over*’ provides a controlling mandate to whoever wields it, mainly men over other men and over women. Women could act in acquiescence, oppose by weakening its impact or manipulate it. In contrast, ‘*power with*’ provides a synergy where groups work together to achieve objectives. ‘*Power from within*’ provides a spiritual dimension and is innate, promoting self-respect and self-esteem in an individual while holding others in similar regard. Finally, ‘*power to*’ does not exert control and is constructive, creating positive new

outcomes. Kelly (1992), quoted by Rowlands (1997) argues that she believes ‘power to’ best supports empowerment and enables women to contest and confront the domineering ‘power over’. Rowlands identifies the core values of empowerment as ability to negotiate, to communicate, to defend rights, a sense of ‘self’ in a relationship, self-confidence and dignity. She adds that empowerment should be seen both from a relational position and also from the intangible ‘internalised oppression’ which “creates barriers to women’s exercise of power” and perpetuates gender inequalities. Empowerment is therefore “bringing people who are outside the decision making process into it” (1997:13). However, this also involves the self realization of one’s capabilities and the right to make decisions without impediments, by means of ‘power to’ and ‘power from within’. Rowlands’ concept of empowerment is useful to this work as it enhances the explanation of power relations and the decision making process between partners.

Most scholars acknowledge the role of external factors in empowerment. Kabeer (1999) suggests that measures of empowerment should take note of context, and Rowlands (1997:120) identifies external factors as either inhibiting (such as machismo, cultural expectations of women, and male control over income) or encouraging (women’s rights, perceptions of inequalities as wrong, ‘travel’, and peer support), shaping the core values of empowerment. Rowland’s concept of empowerment is again useful because my study also explores the relevance of encouraging and inhibiting factors in shaping empowerment in the migration context. Others also acknowledge the role of men: as Kabeer notes “the problems faced by women and men may be two sides of the same coin...men and boys have to factor in any equation to address these problems” (2003:5). This study supports these arguments by focusing on the role of men, in addition to that of women in the empowerment process, as well as the contextual and external factors inherent in the environment, in the analysis of empowerment, because they are critical to achieving all three dimensions of personal, relational and collective empowerment. It investigates the context of migrants whose new social space presents them with different socio-economic and political circumstances, and explores the strategies they adopt and ways they renegotiate gender relations to achieve empowerment. I further emphasise the need for a

multidimensional orientation to empowerment. I have drawn on the works of the above researchers to explore the empowerment process in both origin and destination countries.

1.4.4 Allocative Systems

While most sociological research confirms that intra-household relations involve unequal power relations, the transformatory effects of women's earning power on their bargaining position and decision-making is still in contention (Kabeer 1997). In addition to the non-economic measures of power and decision making, the study also investigates the management of household finances and its effects on the pattern of decision making and resource allocation. Vogler and Pahl (1994) argue that research on the intra-household economy shows a significant relationship between control over household finance and power within the household. Previous studies on money management in the household have mostly shown that economic resources alone may not necessarily lead to women's power over the control of money and decision making (Pahl 1980, 1989; Vogler 2005; Burgoyne et al. 2006, Kenney 2006). Others have studied partners with a cross-national comparative approach (Heimdal and Houseknecht 2003; Yodanis and Lauer 2007). None to the best of my knowledge has looked at money management in relation to migrants. Kabeer (2000) suggests that gender ideologies mediate power and control in households irrespective of the relative income levels of spouses. Earlier research has been criticized for not adequately addressing the relationship between money, power and inequality (Vogler 1998). This study attempts to fill the gap in relation to migrants, by using an empowerment model which recognizes power dimensions as well as gender ideologies and contextual factors as relevant to money management in the household.

This study draws on Pahl's (1989) typology of household allocative systems to examine women's and men's contributions, expenditure patterns, power relations and decision making processes. This typology has been applied by scholars to research from Europe (Clarke 2002, Lewis 2001) and the US (Kenney 2006), in relation to money management, the division of unpaid and paid work and the male breadwinner model. The present study expands its application to research among Ghanaians. Additionally, the typology provides "a broader understanding of power in the household" (Vogler 1998: 688) and therefore is

relevant for this study. Pahl's money management system has five components, each depending on whether spouses have separate or joint responsibility for managing household money. With his *female whole wage system*, wives manage all household finances after husbands hand over their pay check to them, less their personal spending money. In the *male whole wage system* husbands have sole responsibility for managing household finances and unemployed wives may sometimes be provided personal spending money. In the *housekeeping allowance system*, responsibility for household expenditure is shared, with the husband providing a fixed sum for housekeeping expenses to the wife and controls the rest of the money for other expenditure. Where the wife is unemployed she may not get any personal spending money apart from the housekeeping allowance. The unemployed man may similarly not have any spending money. When both partners have access and responsibility for the management and expenditure of all the money in a common kitty, it is termed the *Pooling system*. This has been subdivided into male/female and joint pool depending on which partner manages the pool. Finally, the *independent management system* where each partner has his /her independent income and each is responsible for specific items of expenditure in the household¹. The study therefore investigates money management in Ghanaian households and determines the allocative system they use. It further discusses the implications for gender inequalities and power relations, based on which partner has 'strategic control' of household income.

1.5 Gender and Transnationalism

Transnationalism has become a popular concept in migration discourse and its emergence in the 1990s has been attributed to Glick Schiller et al. (1992) and Basch et al. (1994). The classical definition by Basch et al. is as "the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded relations that link together societies of origin and settlement" (1994: 7). In this thesis "transnationalism" is used as a guiding concept to explore the linkages between sending and receiving countries and ways that gender relations have been transformed in the transnational social fields. Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004:1006) define the transnational social field as "a set of multiple interlocking networks of social

¹ Pahl's typology is only being used as a heuristic device and is not used to label my participants as they may not necessarily describe their practices similarly.

relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are unequally exchanged, organized, and transformed”. Transnational social fields consist of interactions linked across nation states, illustrated by the behaviour and organisation of the people involved in expressing their cultural values, sharing of ideas and exchanges, and occasioned through and in the connections embedded in the socio-economic and political systems of the geographical entities. Guarnizo and Smith argue that “transnational practices do not take place in an imaginary ‘third space’ abstractly located ‘in between’ national territories”; instead these practices are embedded in social relations which link individuals together across space and time and are historically determined (1998:9). Migrants lead “dual lives” (Usher 2006, Portes 2009) and keep close links between the countries of origin and destination. Portes (2003) has stated that the implications of transnationalism and its varied manifestations in different countries have not been fully explained or understood. While this study acknowledges the distinction between ‘transnationalism from above’ and ‘transnationalism from below’ (Smith and Guarnizo 1998), the general focus of analysis is on the latter.

While the reality of transnational relations has implications for gender relations, research on transnationalism including much of the pioneering literature (Glick Schiller et al. 1992 and Basch et al. 1994) does not touch on the dimensions of gender. Various scholars (Mahler 2003, Mahler and Pessar 2006) have drawn attention to this fact. Gardner and Grillo (2002) and Baldassar (2007) add that transnational practices related to the household and family have been under-researched. Pessar and Mahler (2003) and Piper (2005) suggest that transnational studies would remain incomplete without bringing gender into it, because it is a central organizing principle of migrant life.

While some scholars initially tried to correct this situation they tended to equate gender to women and therefore their research concentrated on women migrants (Parrenas 2001, Viruell-Fuentes 2006) to the neglect of men, who are also essential for understanding gender relations. Parrenas, in a comparative study of migrant Filipina workers and their ‘dislocations’ in Rome and Los Angeles, justifies the absence of men in her study and points out that it could still advance “gendered migration research” (2001:30). Viruell-

Fuentes (2006) also researches into the affective and symbolic experiences of Mexican first and second generation migrants in the United States but excludes the experiences of men, though gender is a relational concept. Other scholars have however shown the different experiences of men and women in migration (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Mahler 1995). Orozco et al. (2005:40) state that “in a comparative context, Ghanaian engagement in their home country surpasses their Latin American and Asian counterparts.” Nonetheless, most studies on Ghanaian migration apart from a few (see Donkor 2005; Manuh 1998, 2003) have paid little attention to gendered dimensions, despite the implications of gender relations for enhancing understanding of transnationalism and the social and economic life of migrants and societies.

This study critiques the notion that embeddedness in the transnational social field is a liberatory experience and questions the “totalising emancipatory characteristic of transnationalism” (Guarnizo and Smith 1998, Guarnizo et al. 2003). Beck has noted that not everybody benefits from transnational socioscapes and networks and that the liberatory argument provides a “misleading impression” (2002:31). This contradictory situation is investigated for its effects on “existing hierarchies of power” (George 2005:36) and for ascertaining who benefits from transnationalism and under what conditions. The idealized expectations and shared imaginations of both migrants/non-migrants for transnationalism in the ‘time-space compression’ are not met due to ‘dislocations’- socio-economic, legal and political situations migrants encounter in the receiving country. Levitt and Jaworsky therefore call for future work to examine positive and negative outcomes and their interrelationships and impact (2007: 144). Pessar and Mahler (2003) emphasise that the “social imaginary or mind work” of migrants and non-migrants is still not well documented in transnational studies.

Of increasing significance, are the creations of social interactions across nation states as a result of globalisation, the consequent migration by women and men, and the number of marriages which have been split as a result. The traditional meaning of the family as a physical unit who live in the same geographical place is therefore challenged by transnationalism. Scholars such as Chamberlain and Leydesdorff (2004) and Baldassar et

al. (2007) have sought to fill the gap in research on transnational families. Bryceson and Vuorela state that such families while separated retain a ‘feeling of collective welfare and unity’ akin to ‘familyhood’ (2002:3). Parrenas (2005:6) suggests that transnational families pose “a challenge to the maintenance of the ideology of separate spheres”. The social unit created where either partner remains behind has not been adequately studied. Strategies adopted to cope within and beyond the borders require further in-depth investigation.

While some work has been done on transnational care-giving, there is still need for additional work on children who are sent back to the home country after experiencing their initial emotional attachments in the host country, and the implications for kin of fostering and the gendered division of labour. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997) demonstrate the difficulties migrants face and the geographical and emotional constraints involved in leaving their children behind. Haller and Landolt (2005) observe that there are institutional barriers and dislocations in host country labour markets in the ‘global cities’ for migrants. Transnational studies have concentrated on adults (Mahler 1999; Pessar and Mahler 2003), with limited investigation of young adults and children who participate in transnational social fields. While Parrenas (2002, 2005a, 2005b) concentrates on children left behind, Fass (2005) focuses on children who are sent to the host country either voluntarily or reluctantly. Others like Ackers and Stalford (2004) consider their legal standing and citizenship in the receiving country. There has been significant research on the second generation, trying to determine their paths of incorporation into the host community (Portes and Rumbaut 2001, Farley and Alba 2002, Waldinger and Feliciano 2004).

The above represents general trends in the literature on children in migration. These authors leave a gap as they do not discuss children who are sent back home as an essential constituent in migration processes. This thesis sets out to fill the void by providing insight into how ‘dislocations’ influence children being sent back home; the implications for parents, kin and children; and the extent to which children are social actors and able to exercise their agency. This study chooses to examine children sent back because they have been largely unexplored. Additionally, specific manifestations of gender struggles in London showed the significance of this category of children to renegotiations and

contestations in gender ideologies and relations in migrant households. Orellana et al. (2001) note that researchers who disregard children's involvement in family migration processes overlook a central building block in transnationalism. Serra has stated that existing explanations for why adults participate in "fostering arrangements are either incomplete or unclear" (2009:158). Sorenson (2005) also calls for further research on transnational childhood. Based on the limitations and gaps in previous research, and the complexities and uncertainties of issues which have yet to be conceptually and empirically uncovered and understood, the study of Parrenas (2001) provides a framework for explaining different aspects of transnational lives.

1.5.1 Dislocations

To address the question of transnationalism in Ghanaian migration, I situate my discussion in the literature on the globalisation of the market economy (Sassen-Koob 1981; Sassen 1998, 2000, 2008) and the international relations of productive and reproductive labour (Parrenas 2001). Beck has argued that increasingly social processes are 'indifferent to national boundaries', and the 'time-space compression' and 'interconnectedness' of nation states exemplify globalisation (2000:80). According to Sassen (1988, 2008) and Parrenas (2001), the creation of the international division of productive and reproductive labour in the global economy has led to the demand for low wage service workers (women and men) from the periphery to work in the core postindustrial countries. Parrenas (2000) identifies a 'singular market economy' which influences productive activities globally and therefore challenges the conception of local economies. Sassen-Koob importantly argues that the major international labour flows "originated in the periphery and went to satisfy the labour needs in the centre" (1981:68) in the international division of labour. Economic, social and political conditions at the national level additionally create 'cores' locally, leading to internal migration flows from rural to urban labour markets. These local socioeconomic conditions may become interlinked with global processes leading to international migration (Massey 1990). Sassen argues further that the global labour markets comprise "top-level managerial and professional talent" and at the bottom of the economic system "an amalgamation of mostly informal flows" of low waged labour. Most developing countries like Ghana in the last three decades of the post-colonial state have "embarked on

expansionary schemes and policies that produced severe distortions in the economy and a corresponding crisis in state and society” (Hutchful 2002). The migration of the Ghanaian population to post-industrialised countries due to high unemployment, poverty and increased debt burdens to ‘global cities’ including London was as a result of globalising factors. As Sassen notes, such problems of the developing world are a “systemic feature inducing the formation of global circuits.” She emphasises the demand often for women from the global south for low-wage work. I argue that these low-paid workers also comprise men and ignoring them in the analysis undermines the balance of gender relations and an objective analysis of globalisation and migration dynamics. This thesis therefore incorporates a discussion of migration from the standpoint of both men and women at the bottom of the economic system, who mainly constitute the lower echelons of the global labour markets, and its transnational dimensions. It investigates how gender ideologies and relations influence their everyday practices and their engagement in transnational activities.

The commodification of the international division of labour propels Ghanaian migrant women and men into the core, as a constituent part of the international division of labour in the global market economy. In this theorisation, the demand for low wage labour therefore draws not only women in ‘reproductive activities’ as contextualized by Parrenas (2000), but both Ghanaian women and men to low wage, flexible work, especially in the service sectors in the developed world. To make a conceptual case, I argue that migration is shaped by or transforms reproductive labour in both countries of origin and destination, therefore whether migrants are employed as domestic servants or not, they are compelled by the international division of labour which places constraints on their mobility and status to either leave their families at home or sometimes send their children back to the ‘periphery’ in order to participate and benefit from the international division of labour. The evidence from my study supports the fact that though migration has engendered the feminization of migrant labour, the market economy does not only demand the low wage labour of third world women (Sassen-Koob 1984), but that of third world men who also migrate to seek opportunities in the advanced countries. Ghanaian migrants fit Sassen’s theoretical framework of individuals meeting the increasing demand for low wage employment in the

global labour markets at the bottom of the economic system (Sassen 2008); in this case, in London.

Globalisation has provided the platform for migrants' daily activities in both origin and host countries; and they negotiate their slow incorporation in the host country by reference to their home country. The social relations of gender are shown through these institutions to organise, transform and differentiate migration patterns for women and men. In conceptualising transnationalism, I draw on the work of Parrenas (2001), whose research on Migrant Filipina domestic workers identified dislocations which are used as my frame of reference. According to Parrenas "the experience of migration is embodied in dislocations" and migrants negotiate its effects in their everyday lives (ibid: 3). The study acknowledges that Ghanaian migrants encounter similar 'contexts of reception' as other migrants who are low-wage workers in the economic centres of global capitalism (Portes 1997, Portes and Rambaut 1996). 'Dislocations' are the consequence of the location of the migrant subject and illustrate their varied experiences in the social processes of migration. While dislocations occur as a result of the 'structural location' of the migrant (low paid, well educated and participants of the secondary tier of the transnational workforce in global restructuring), they also occupy multiple positions in relation to intersecting differentials such as class, nation, gender and race. The dislocations include: 1) partial citizenship vis-à-vis the nation state, 2) formations of transnational households (sharing the pain of separation), 3) contradictory class mobility, and 4) encountering social exclusion and feelings of non-belonging. The study's investigations of Ghanaian migrants are guided by the 'dislocations' (Parrenas 2001:3) that Ghanaian migrants find themselves embedded in as a result of external influences, and gauge how these affect gender relations and vice versa.

1.5.2 Segmented Assimilation

Evidence is still scanty regarding the basis of children being sent back home, and the gendered dimensions of this phenomenon have been understudied. Noting the 'dislocations' that have been highlighted, how do migrant parents ensure that they are able to participate in the gendered division of labour, pass on their cultural values to their children, achieve

their economic aspirations, enable the children to acculturate and also ensure upward mobility for them? This thesis demonstrates how migrants respond to the dislocations in the global city, exploring the basis for children being sent back home and also the gendered implications for transnational families. Despite cogent arguments for the classical assimilation theory, this thesis shares the view of Portes et al. (2005) and Fass (2005) that a full incorporation into the host culture or a uniform ‘decline of ethnic distinction and its corollary cultural and social differences’ (Alba and Nee 2003: 10), is quite improbable irrespective of the time frame, due to incessant global transformations, diverse sources of new migrations and varied contexts of reception.

According to Gans, acculturation “follows from the need or opportunity to adapt to new situations” (2007: 154). The study will be guided by segmented assimilation theory drawing from ‘generational consonance and dissonance’ typology (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001), which will be used to assess the acculturation gaps between migrant parents and their children. It examines “consonant acculturation” where migrant parents and children easily acculturate into the mainstream and gain upward mobility; and “dissonant acculturation” where relations between parents and their children lead to parent-child conflicts and migrant children reject mobility expectations. It also analyses “selective acculturation” which involves parents selecting elements of their culture that would allow children to succeed. It is anticipated that by exploring transnational fosterage across geographical distances, broader insights into gender and transnationalism will be gained.

1.6 Thesis Outline

This thesis analyses the significance of gender ideologies and relations on migration in the context of changing configurations caused by spatial mobility. It investigates the effects of social, economic and symbolic activities on the lives of females and males and analyses how these become reconstructed and represented across space and time. It contributes to a broader understanding of migration and gender by investigating migration from a gender constitutive perspective because there is a dearth of such studies. Despite much research on women or men and migration, there is a gap in relational studies on both men and women.

Another premise of this study is that while there is consensus that migration and gender influence each other, the direction of this influence is unclear (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999). This study therefore distinguishes the factors leading to real gains, and contributes to disaggregating in significant ways persistence or transformations of patriarchal gender ideologies. McDowell and Sharp (1997:3) maintain that

the spaces in which social practices occur affect the nature of those practices...the spaces themselves in turn are constructed and given meaning through the social practices that define men and women as different and unequal.

Based on the above premise I investigate gender relations through interrogating the process of shifts in the gendered division of labour and participation in decision making to identify how 'spatiality' affects or is affected by hierarchical gender relations.

The two main questions the thesis addresses are:

1. How are gendered ideologies and relations influenced by the new migration space and how does gender interconnect with other differential institutions to reconfigure gendered patterns of behaviour in the country of destination?

The approach adopted for exploring this question is first to discuss how gender ideologies and relations are expressed in urban southern Ghana, that is, pre-migration. This provides the baseline data for an in-depth analysis of gender relations in the diaspora. The thesis focuses on how already held gender ideologies and relations, such as (male dominance, division of labour; 'breadwinner' status, independent incomes), are impacted by integration into London. I examine how gender interconnects with other institutions like class, ethnicity, nationality and legal status to shape the ramifications of gender relations for Ghanaian women and men in the different social spaces and settlement. The study investigates how gender relations have been reinforced or transformed since migration. It considers the contestations and renegotiations that go on in their households and their settlement communities, to gain insight into their everyday experiences and the motivations for their daily activities. The new social space provides different dilemmas based on new socio-economic and institutional challenges they face in London. I explore their opportunities/constraints to find out if there have been any changes in their status through employment and whether they think their lives have been constrained or facilitated by

certain factors in the host country. The international division of labour has relegated most of them to lower income jobs. How are they able to reconcile this with the gender division of labour? Are men able to maintain their breadwinning roles and dominance in the household? Do the dislocations they face lead to gendered outcomes? What are the generational implications? How does the welfare state impinge on women and men differently? Does this influence the reconstruction of the patriarchal gender order and underpin gender relations?

2. How do gender ideologies and practices influence the maintenance of transnational links with their home country and vice versa?

Conclusions are drawn by examining how Ghanaian male and female migrants/non migrants engage in transnational activities and the extent to which these activities are informed and influenced by gender(ed) ideologies of the country of origin and the country of destination. The thesis examines the composition of migrant families: are immediate family members in the country of destination or origin? Who is at the other side of the transnational social space, is it a partner or children? What factors influence members of the immediate family to stay across the transnational social space? I investigate whether these factors have been instigated by gendered considerations and also what effects transnational activities have had on the patriarchal gender order. For instance, who is responsible for families' production, reproduction, socialisation or consumption across the national spaces? What effect does this have on intergenerational relations? The role of the non-migrant is equally essential, and I demonstrate their performance of gender roles, responsibilities and decision-making patterns, independence and power relationships.

The thesis comprises 9 chapters, chapter 2 outlines the research context with an overview of the Ghanaian socio-economic context, as well as that of the United Kingdom. It reviews and critiques academic literature on international migration in Ghana to provide a basis for the justification of a gendered approach to migration in Ghana. Chapter 3 deals with the methodology and research design used for the collection of data, outlining and appraising the strategies - interviews, participant observation, and focus groups discussions - used for

the study. It argues that ethnography is the most appropriate approach and discusses critical ethical issues.

Chapter 4 discusses gender in Ghana. I look specifically at the patriarchal system; ideologies and gender relations in the context of the productive and reproductive spheres, noting its dimensions and manifestations prior to migration. I interpret these activities from the urban settings to ground the post-migration empirical data. The chapter reveals the nature of bargaining and negotiation in the household and demonstrates that gender inequalities persist in the gender division of labour. It identifies the household allocative system and concludes that decision-making patterns and power relations are influenced by financial contributions as well as gender ideologies.

Chapter 5 looks at the links between migration, gender and the UK labour market. I demonstrate that crosscutting issues of nationality, welfare state, ethnicity, class, age, and legal status are coupled with globalising forces to impinge on the position of migrants in receiving countries. Men are disproportionately affected, undermining their performance as breadwinner in Ghanaian households. I illustrate the degree to which women and men retain and control their independent incomes and contribute to household expenditures and its significance for power relations and gender equality. Some men exhibit what I term the ‘paradoxical transnational masculinity’ as a result of the threat to their masculine identity, which is visualised as the ideal ‘hegemonic masculinity’ practised in Ghana which they cannot attain in the new social space. Consequently they resist any transformations in their masculine identity in London and reinforce gender inequalities. Chapter 6 looks at transformations in patriarchal gender ideologies and their impact in the households of Ghanaian female and male migrants in London. It investigates if and whether gender ideologies and relations are impacted by certain ‘dislocations’ and structural factors in the host country. It further critiques the unitary model of household decision making, and demonstrates areas of cooperation and conflict in gender dynamics within the context of changing configurations occasioned by spatial mobility. The discussions establish that there are shifts in the gendered division of labour, with men participating considerably in house work and childcare.

Chapter 7 describes the formation and maintenance of split transnational households, which are instigated by globalising forces and institutional factors in the origin and host countries. This leads to further ‘dislocations’ (Parrenas 2001), making migrants unable to remit to their families regularly, apply for family reunion or return home. I demonstrate the economic and social impact this has on both migrants and non-migrants in the transnational social field. In some cases patriarchal gender structures are reinforced as those left behind have limited resources but take on the dual roles and responsibilities of the woman and man, reconstructing the ideology of separate spheres. I reveal that while some left-behind women gain independence and autonomy, some lose out when power relations are recreated. Some left-behind men challenge the gender division of labour as they take to performing female roles. The migrant men in the global North gain status and power, and in conjunction with their kin in the origin country subordinate women. Since transnational ties are not necessarily an option and their expectations for migration are not achieved, families do not therefore find transnational practices as ‘emancipatory’. Chapter 8 calls into question the notion of a nuclear family living in a geographical place and explores the ideology of separate spheres across the transnational social space. It demonstrates the negotiations and bases for transnational fosterage and describes the temporal and spatial arrangements of such families. The analysis confirms that gender ideologies and “dissonant acculturation” inform the transnational option. I interrogate the maintenance of such transnational families, who are geographically distant from each other, in the care provision for the children sent back home. The chapter discusses impacts of separation on the gender division of labour and parent-child relations, and illustrates the contradictions as patriarchal gender structures are simultaneously reinforced and transformed across the social space.

The concluding Chapter 9 assesses and reviews the development of gender ideologies and relations spanning the period Ghanaian migrants have migrated, 1970s/1980s, to the present. Through a synthesis of the material it clarifies and interprets how gender relations manifest in time and space, influencing the access to and control of resources, underscoring the impact on gender division of labour, status and power and its implications for migration, gender and transnationalism. It provides theoretical insights gleaned from the research and proposes a future research agenda.

Chapter Two: Setting the Context

A major feature of current global processes is the flow of migrant labour from developing countries to satisfy the labour needs of advanced capitalist countries (Sassen 1998, 2001). Among these migrant flows are both skilled and unskilled migrants who leave the Sub-Saharan African region to go to the industrialised countries in search of better opportunities. The Ghanaian case exemplifies these migratory flows. International migration is a crucial avenue through which individuals can succeed in life by acquiring intellectual skills for personal advancement. It is also a survival strategy through which families can gain economic resources in the 'core' to supplement their dwindling family incomes. Global cities like London provide a destination for these migration streams. Accounts of the conditions that Ghanaian migrants face in the host countries have centred on their economic prospects, transnational activities or impediments to potential social mobility (Owusu 2000; Henry and Mohan 2003; Mazzucato 2008, 2009). The effects of their migration experiences on gender relations and vice versa and its influence on the lives of Ghanaian migrants have been little researched.

This chapter presents a brief historical overview of contemporary politics, social and economic parameters in Ghana to clarify the motivations shaping Ghanaian migration to the North. In order to fully appreciate migrant gendered circumstances in the host country, London, it is essential to understand the conditions underscoring their movement from Ghana. The chapter then discusses the size and characteristics of the Ghanaian migrant population. It reviews and critiques research on international migration in Ghana arguing for the investigation of Ghanaian migration from a gender perspective to remedy the dearth of existing material.

The research context of Britain, specifically London, is crucial to the study. The chapter describes the new social context of London and the relationship between the labour market, the gender division of labour, earning and caring, and gender relations in the host country, to reveal its wider geographical and historical context. It examines relevant elements of the welfare state and broader legislative factors in mediating the patriarchal gender order. The

research context supports the analysis and interpretation, and the understanding of immigrant adaptation and its consequences for settlement, employment and transnational activities between the host and origin country. Therefore the chapter highlights the larger economic, social and politico-historical contexts of Ghana and London as baseline data for subsequent empirical analysis.

2.1: Political history, economic development and migration in Ghana

Migrant experiences are grounded in the major historical and contemporary transformations in Ghana. Adepoku (2005) notes that the size, type, and direction of international migration are tied to multifaceted historical and political events as well as economic structures. Migration existed in the Sub Saharan Africa region prior to independence, due to factors including: population pressures, poverty, unemployment, ethnic conflicts, labour migration for cocoa production, environmental degradation, and poor economic conditions (Adepoku 1998, 2005). This section draws from studies by various scholars (Smith 2007; Anarfi et al. 1999, 2003; and Twum-Baah et al. 1995) on the politico-historical and economic developments impacting on international migration in Ghana.

From Independence to Post – independence era: military coup d'état, democracy to 1972

After independence in 1957, the first president, Kwame Nkrumah, set out to achieve economic independence for Ghana by investing in infrastructural development and industrialisation. Ghana in this period was a predominantly migrant-receiving country. Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966, by the National Liberation Council (NLC). In 1969, the NLC government handed over to an elected government headed by Busia. The government passed the Aliens Compliance Order to address macro-economic complications and open up employment; those who could not fulfill the order were expelled (Brydon 1985). Adepoku (2005) noted that Ghana's economy stagnated as cocoa prices dropped leading to revenue loss. Concurrently, the Nigerian oil boom provided employment opportunities, and Ghanaians - both professionals and non-professionals - migrated to Nigeria seeking work. During this period Ghanaians started emigrating in quite large numbers and women started to migrate independently.

The military return, the Economic Recovery Programme to 2000

Due to economic difficulties, there were two military coups in succession, firstly forming the National Redemption Council, and then subsequently Flt. Lt. Rawlings came to power. He handed over to an elected government, the Peoples National Party (PNP) headed by Dr. Limann in September 1979. From 1972 onward, there was sustained deterioration in the economy (Brydon 1985, Hutchful 2002). During this period Ghanaians were compelled by economic inertia to continue to migrate in numbers. Both men and women were involved (Brydon 1992; Peil 1995), and Adepoju (2005) maintains that by 1982 of the 2.5 million West African immigrants in Nigeria, Ghanaians constituted a significant proportion.

Flt. Lt. Rawlings returned to power through another coup on 31st December, 1981. Factors including a severe drought, declining cocoa and mineral exports, and the underperformance of the economy, combined in 1983 to bring the regime to near-collapse. Unfortunately, Nigeria expelled over one million Ghanaians, compounding the situation. The government turned to the World Bank and IMF which prescribed the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) to reverse the economic decline. The impact of this programme is still in contention (Konadu-Agyemang and Takyi 2001). By 1999, 20.3% of the workforce was unemployed. The emigration volumes continued to increase. Those already in the diaspora with improved standards of living helped their relatives financially (Smith 2007) fuelling the desire of others to join the migration 'wagon'. The returnees from Nigeria found the situation tough; the unskilled returned to Nigeria (Brydon 1985), while professionals using their accumulated funds moved further to other parts of Africa and beyond. Oheneba-Sakyi (1999) reported an increase and diversification of Ghanaian migration to Europe, North America and the Gulf from the late 1980s, by both skilled and unskilled migrants (see also Mazzucato 2006).

The HIPC initiative to the contemporary era

When the NPP government took over power they opted for the Highly Indebted Poor Country initiative (HIPC) to meet substantial budget deficits (Amoako-Tuffour 2001). The HIPC initiative is believed to have led to savings, directed at education, human resource development, health, potable water and sanitation. The National Democratic Congress

(NDC) assumed power in January 2009, and a year into their rule their economic agenda is still in the early stages of formulation. It remains yet to see the impact of their actions (or inactions) on migration in Ghana.

This phase is one of intensification and diasporisation of Ghanaians, though the mass movements have continued from the 1990s till now. There is a second generation growing up and settling down in the host countries, who still regard Ghana as their homeland. Van Hear (1998) corroborates this, classifying Ghana as one of the ten countries that have produced a “new diaspora”. Migration is regarded as a survival and advancement strategy for both individuals and families to enable them to acquire better living standards. According to Manuh (1999a) migrants include all educational levels and all ethnic groups in Ghana. Women also constitute a significant proportion, migrating either as spouses or autonomous migrants.

Brain drain has become an issue of serious concern to Ghana; the UN (2006) confirms that Ghana has lost 33-35% of its highly educated to OECD countries. Quartey (2009) warns that since the population growth rate (2.2%) is increasing faster than the yearly increase in the labour market, the pressure for young people to migrate may yet continue. 49% are now unemployed. On the other hand, studies by Quartey and Blankson (2004) and Addison (2005) suggest that remittances have improved household welfare becoming an important source of income for consumption in Ghana. They suggest that attention should be shifted to remittances as a developmental tool. Using Bank of Ghana data, Addison shows that remittances have increased “from US\$400 in 1990 to US\$900 million in 2002 ...with 2003 estimated at US\$1.4 billion” (2005: 125). In 2008 migrant remittances increased to US\$1.8 billion exceeding Overseas Development Assistance (Quartey 2009). Addison argues that remittances have a positive effect on investment and the reduction of poverty in developing countries, including Ghana, and therefore policy issues need to be addressed to “maximize their impact on savings, investment, poverty reduction and income distribution.” (2005:134). Mazzucato et al. (2005) using data from the Ghana living standards survey (GLSS 4) and the Ghana Transnational Network (TransNet) programme examined domestic and foreign remittances at the micro level as well as the dynamics of remittances

at the household level. Based on the GLSS 4 they identified the characteristics of senders as mainly children (38%) and siblings (23%) of household heads. In addition they found that spouses of household heads remit the highest sums, with males constituting 58% of total remitters. At least 41% of Ghanaian households received a remittance annually, though this was mainly distributed to the Ashanti, Eastern, Central, Greater Accra and Brong-Ahafo regions. Overseas remittances were mainly to recipients in urban areas in the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions. Their findings showed that foreign remittances constitute the highest value of remittances received, but a disproportionate amount of 57% of remittances go to the richest “quintile of the population, with only 5% benefitting the poorest quintile” (Mazzucato et al. 2005:146). They surmise however that there may be multiplier effects which need further research because though remittances are sent to urban areas they are re-distributed to other locations in Ghana. Remittances represent “about 10% of household incomes in Ghana” (Quarthey 2009:45). Remittances are used for varied purposes including for church community advancement, for funeral celebrations, marriages, other ceremonies, educational expenditure, health bills, household expenditure, building projects, household development, community development projects and small and medium businesses (Black et al. 2003, Asiedu 2005, Mazzucato et al. 2005, and Quarthey 2009). These studies conclude that remittances contribute substantially to the Ghanaian economy. This thesis looks at the negotiations and impacts of this phenomenon on gender relations among Ghanaian migrants.

2.2 The Ghanaian migrant population

Estimates of Ghanaians abroad are imprecise, as they have not been systematically documented (Peil 1995; DRC 2006). Some migrants left Ghana through informal channels and are difficult to document (Anarfi et al. 2003, Quarthey 2009). The inconsistencies in the data on Ghanaian migration have also been attributed to variations in the conferment of citizenship by different countries, and different definitions used for immigrants and emigrants as well as the diverse data collection mechanisms (Twum-Baah 2005). Scholars have therefore presented different figures for the number of Ghanaians abroad. Orozco et al. (2005: 47) estimated one million Ghanaians living abroad, a third in the USA, another third in the UK and the rest spread over other European countries. Black et al. (2004)

quoting EUROSTAT figures for that year number the Ghanaian migrant population at nearly two million, distributed mainly in Nigeria, US, UK, Canada, Germany, Italy and Netherlands. Van der Wiel (2005:8) estimates about 3 million Ghanaian migrants in the diaspora. Mazzucato (2008) reports 18,700 Ghanaian migrants in the Netherlands in 2004 but confirms that the large number of illegals could make this figure higher. Twum-Baah explains that most international migration into and out of Ghana has in the past been predominantly among neighbouring countries in the Sub-region such as La Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, and Burkina Faso due mainly to historical and cultural ties. Nigeria is also of significance due to the common colonial ties which has led to a shared language and other socio-economic and political structures. United Kingdom was also a favoured destination due to political and historical ties. However, recent developments in the globalised world have led to the diversification of destinations to other European countries, America and Southern Africa (2005). He has estimated the number of Ghanaians currently living in Europe to be 310, 977 though he cautions that some have never lived in Ghana so cannot be termed as emigrants. In North America he has estimated a total of 150,572 Ghanaian emigrants. Based on his analysis which showed that two-thirds of Ghanaian emigrants are resident in the African continent he estimates 1,000,000 for this population. He therefore concludes that in total Ghanaian migrants should be about 1.5million; constituting 500,000 outside Africa and 1million in other countries in Africa mostly in the West African sub-region. He is of the view that the 3 million figure estimated by the European Union stated above needs further justification. For the two major destinations of Ghanaian migrants, that is, the USA and UK he found "one-third of Ghanaian emigrants to be highly skilled and qualified" (2005:73). Van Hear (1998) has also observed that as many as 2,000 Ghanaians had been deported from 58 countries, indicating the spread of Ghanaians world wide. Peil (1995:346) describes Ghanaians as widely dispersed, in such "diverse places as the Virgin Islands and Papua New Guinea".

Determining the gender distribution of Ghanaian migrants is equally difficult. It is estimated that in Ghana women and men emigrate in equal numbers. Donkor (2005) and Adepoju (2000) argue that women feature independently in migration to fulfil their family and own economic desires. Twum-Baah (1995) observes that since the majority of

Ghanaian women are in trading they are motivated to migrate to raise money to expand their businesses. He however maintains that the share of female migrants is below 40% (Twum-Baah 2005). According to Bump (2006) the gender distribution of Ghanaian migrants in the USA in 2000 was 56% male and 44% female.

2.2.1 Ghanaian migrants in London

According to Herbert et al. (2008) people from 79 countries live in London and Ghanaians are significantly represented in this ‘super diversity’ (Vertovec 2006). Akyeampong notes that “London remains the hub of the Ghanaian diaspora” (2000a:210). According to Van Hear et al. (2004) most Ghanaians live in Greater London, concentrated in the boroughs of Southwark, Lambeth, Newham, Hackney, Haringey, Lewisham, Croydon and Brent. Smaller numbers live in Birmingham and Manchester.

Spence (2005)² estimates that Ghanaians are among the first twenty migrant sending countries in London, with a population of 46,513 (2001 Census). This constitutes 83.8% of Ghanaians in England and Wales, showing that the majority reside in London. There are more women than men: 53.3% of the total. Their employment rate is 72.2% (25, 760); about 80% are in full time employment, 19.7% are in part-time employment. Ghanaian migrants are disproportionately represented in low-paid jobs, 68.3% in administrative and secretarial occupations, skilled trades, personal service occupations, sales and customer services, plant and machine operatives and elementary occupations. In the key areas of health and social work, noted for significant migrant involvement, Ghanaians rank third (21%). There are others in higher occupations such as managers and senior officials (8.7%) and professional occupations (9.5%). The education levels are quite limited, with only 33% having acquired higher education, including first or higher degrees, NVQ levels 4 and 5, and other professional qualifications (2001 Census).

Though these figures show more women than men, most literature on Ghanaian migration is silent on women because it has been erroneously conceived that men outnumber women (cf Peil 1995). Some scholars have noted the lack of research and the difficulty in

² The statistics for this section is drawn mainly from Spence (2005) who used the Labour Force Surveys 2002/3 and the 2001 Census. Other data were derived from Greater London Authority 2001 Census commissioned tables.

ascertaining the true numbers of the illegal migrant population in UK (Black et al. 2005; McDowell et al. 2009), so these figures could be under-represented. Ghanaians have established national and hometown associations abroad, and have imported Ghanaian institutions including chieftaincy, birth and funeral celebrations to their host countries. They have also established links across their host countries and through internet connectivity, the GhanaWeb.com (Akyeampong 2000a; Henry and Mohan 2003; Manuh 2005; Asiedu 2005; Mazzucato 2006). Available evidence of the increasing numbers of female migrants urges studies that recognise the role of both women and men in the migration trajectories. Such studies should recognise the implications of gender dimensions on the social and economic life of migrants and societies.

2.3: Situating gender in migration research in Ghana

A recent compendium on gender and the family in Ghana (Ardayfio-Schandorf 2004: xii), offers a “comprehensive update of the state-of-the-art of the growing body of knowledge on gender and the family in Ghana” but, revealingly, the chapter on migration features a synopsis of four articles with only one on international migration. This shows the near absence of studies on gender and migration. According to Brydon (1992) the earliest studies on migration in Ghana have basically been on the migration of men (Rouche 1956; Hill 1963; Hart 1971, 1973, 1974 cited in Brydon 1992). Most studies saw migration as a male-dominated phenomenon (Amo 1964, Nabila 1985, de Graft Johnson, 1974).

Since then studies have been conducted on various aspects of international migration. They have concentrated on the determinants and characteristics of Ghanaian migrants (Treveh 1997; Anarfi et al. 2003; Twum-Baah 2005); the sources and impacts of remittances (USAID 2005; Quartey and Blankson 2004; Mazzucato et al. 2004; Kabki et al. 2004; Higazi 2005); the consequences of brain drain (Buchan and Dovlo 2004); the challenges, strategies and benefits of return migration (Black et al. 2003; Asiedu 2005; Ammassari 2004; Sabates-Wheeler et al. 2007; Black and Ammassari 2001); the impact of institutions and organisations on hometown development, and engaging the diaspora in national development (Zan 2004; Van Hear et al. 2004; Henry and Mohan 2003; de Haas 2006). Others have looked at religion as a resource for development (Haar 2005; Adogame and

Weisskoppel 2005); and the implications of transnational activities for social and economic development (Smith and Mazzucato 2003; Mazzucato 2000, 2005, 2006; Arhinful 2001). Although gender equality is a development question in a patriarchal society such as Ghana, and migration is likely to transform gender relations and roles and possibly enhance socio-economic development, gender analysis is missing in most of the above works.

In an edited volume on international migration in Ghana by Manuh (2005) dedicated to migration and development, despite acknowledging that migration impacts on virtually all aspects of social and economic development, cultural life and politics, none of the chapters concentrates on gender issues. Smith (2007) examines the transnational linkages between urban dwellers in Accra and Ghanaian migrants in the Netherlands, focusing on understanding how transnational relationships shape migrants, urban actors and local economies in the origin country. Despite the relevance of gender in negotiating relationships, and the fact that gender is embedded in his themes such as education, funerals, and health care, gender analysis remained marginal to this study. It could have provided more comprehensive insight into how gender influences the transnational social space and vice versa.

Authors such as Anarfi (1990) and Brydon (1992) provide a general overview of migration focused exclusively on the female experience. Twum-Baah et al. (1995) edited a migration research study published in two volumes, with the first concentrating on internal and the second on international migration. The study was largely quantitative and looked mainly at women, without analysing the different experiences of women and men at all stages of the migration process. It abandoned men, an approach which has been variously criticized (Gabaccia 1992; Boyle and Halfacree 1999). A qualitative dimension would have complemented and highlighted why migrants behave the way they do, provide valuable insights into their vulnerabilities and opportunities, and foreground their everyday life experiences in their own voices. A recent study by Senah and Alhassan (2007) looked at the extent of feminization of migration in Ghana, leaving out the relational dimensions of the gender process. Peil (1995) incorporates some perspectives on women and men, but does not show how migrants negotiate gender relationships.

Another comprehensive work on migration in Ghana (Arthur 2008) reinstates women in the narrative. Though he acknowledges that Ghanaian immigrant women have gained upward mobility and are forging egalitarian relationships, he does not explore deeply enough the relational dimensions. He recognises the study's limitations when he asks for more rigorous research on

how international migration impacts women's ... relations with men, child rearing, labour force participation.... and ... delineate the effects of international migration on how Ghanaian immigrant women in the west manage their households and intra-family relationships" (Ibid: 197).

Few studies have integrated a gendered dimension, though an important exception is the work of Manuh (1999b; 2003). Her works, examining Ghanaians in Canada incorporate gender and look at its implications among Ghanaian women and men migrants. For instance they examine contestations among Ghanaian migrants about issues of cultural practices and incomes.

Ampofo et al. argue that "African women's and men's lives ... are fluid and change over time; in addition their lives are affected by globalization...location..." (2008:331). The aim of this study therefore is to deepen gender analysis by investigating the subject matter from a different cultural and historical milieu. The dearth of material relating to gender as an analytical tool for the understanding of women as well as men's migration in Ghana necessitates this study, which helps to fill the gap by looking at a specific understudied Ghanaian context and find out how gender relations influence the migration phenomenon and vice versa. Not much scholarly attention has been paid to studies based on a gender perspective of migration in Ghana. Since migration affects origin and destination countries, an evaluation is needed of the motivating conditions in the home country. Unfavourable labour market conditions, economic factors and gender relations in the origin country shape migration (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2005). The next section therefore discusses the dynamics between women and men in the labour market in Ghana.

2.4: Labour market in Ghana

Awumbila (2001) has noted that different activities are performed by women and men in the Ghanaian labour market. Women are mostly found in jobs that provide low income. Their economic pursuits remain limited to occupations labeled ‘female’ (Ofei-Aboagye 1999; Brydon 1992), impacting on patriarchal traditions and influencing power relations, autonomy, decision making and resource allocations. The labour market in Ghana can generally be said to be composed of the ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ sectors, but the meaning and scope of these two broad segments remain elusive (Baah 2006). The formal sector in this thesis implies institutions in the public sector, state enterprises, the ‘private formal sector’ with employees and paid apprentices in large- and medium-scale enterprises, Non-profit institutions, diplomatic missions and co-operatives (Ghana Statistical Service 2000). They are institutions whose “activities and employment conditions ... fall within the official institutional and regulatory framework” (Baah 2006:13).

Activities that fall outside the above scope belong to the informal sector. They include own-account or family agricultural activity and self-employment in non-agricultural activities (traders, repairers, porters) in urban and rural sectors of the economy. Their activities are legal but may be based on traditional arrangements and not conform to international or national labour laws and regulations, having no social protection, sick or holiday leave and neither wage nor salary as in the formal capitalist sector (Baah 2006). According to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2008) seven out of every ten males and females, aged 15-64 are economically active. Amu (2005) and Heintz (2005) note that women in Ghana play roles in both the private and public spheres, and their labour force participation is generally high. The female labour force participation rate of 87% is almost equal to the male rate of 89.6% (2000 Census). Most of the working population is in agriculture (55.8%), trading (15.2%) and manufacturing (10.9%) (GSS 2008: v).

2.4.1 Formal sector

Though most women engage in economic activity in Ghana, their participation in the formal labour market is relatively low (DeRose 2002); 25.0% of men are in wage employment contrasted to 8.2% of females (GSS 2008). Most of the 8.2% work in the

lower levels of the formal sector: as clerks, typists, secretaries and other elementary occupations in the working classes. Only 3.3% of females are legislators, managers, professionals and technicians. Awumbila has noted that “gender inequalities continue to limit women’s capabilities and constrain their ability to participate fully in and contribute to the economy” (2001:33). Men are more often employed in the formal sector and advance up the occupational ladder. The formal sector is generally more lucrative than the informal sector so men tend to contribute more in the household. The labour market therefore reinforces gender inequalities through women’s dependency on men.

GSS (2008) describes the private sector as the largest employer with 66.7% of employees, while the public sector employs 28.5%. Wage-based, permanent, full-time employment is the main type of work in the formal labour market. Women who work in the formal sector are mostly full-time workers due to the lack of part-time positions. Wildaf (2006) comments that women’s reproductive roles restrict their level of participation in the labour market and this invariably affect their earnings. Most women therefore rely on relatives or house helps for childcare. A minority, who can afford, send their children to crèches. Employers do not arrange flexible hours to enable employees to combine formal jobs with housework and childcare. Women are entitled to 12 weeks’ maternity leave (Labour Act 651 of 2003, section 57(1)), in addition to any annual leave entitlement after the period of confinement. This is inadequate and Ghanaian women are currently demanding legislation “to extend and enforce paid maternity leave of four months after childbirth and flexible working hours for nursing to all women in Ghana” (Abantu for Development 2004: 16). Meanwhile, men are not entitled to paternal leave.

The data show a gender gap in education, with 2.7 million females having never attended school, as against 1.4 million males (GSS 2008: 10-11). Various patriarchal factors militate against girls’ educational attainment. For instance, because it is expected that men will eventually become breadwinners, they are educated to ensure that they can play this role as adults. There is no equivalent emphasis on girls’ education because it is assumed that without formal education girls can still easily trade to supplement the man’s income (Dolphyne 2000, Tanye 2008). Other patriarchal factors affecting girls’ educational attainment are the dowry system, male privilege and women’s multiple roles. In 2002, the

ratio of male to female enrolment in Ghanaian public universities was 70-30% (Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research 2003). Therefore more men eventually benefit from formal employment opportunities and climb to the highest levels of the occupational ladder.

2.4.2 Informal sector

GSS (2008:vi) confirms that 21.6% of females and only 8.4% of males work as traders. The women mostly engage in petty trading in foodstuffs, provisions and processed food. Clark maintains that trading is both “predominantly and stereotypically female in Southern Ghana” (1999:719). It is the main income source for many urban households (King and Oppong 2000). Women also dominate the informal sector as family workers and in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, comprising (32.3%) as against (17.7%) for men. This gap has been attributed to gendered education differences (Canagarajah and Thomas 1997). Wildaf (2006) mentions that women in manufacturing are mainly involved in small-scale food processing, textiles and garment sectors. Their advancement is constrained by skills, education and credit. Other jobs they perform include domestic services, dressmaking and hairdressing, which require little education; the income is minimal and therefore they operate on the margins of society. In the informal sector they are not unionised or organised and therefore are unable to benefit from provisions in labour laws such as maternity leave, paid leave and pensions. Ankomah (1996) and the ILO (2005) maintain that the one-operator enterprises owned by women are rife with financial insecurity; and, they lack access to credit. DeRose (2002) argues that inadequate incomes force women to continue depending on men. While entering the informal sector has improved the economic circumstances of some women these are in the minority (Ankomah 1996). The jobs they do are constrained by the ideology of what constitutes ‘women’s work’; most have to be combined with housework, their designated gender role. Manuh (1984 cited in Awumbila 2001) has noted that it is easier to combine household work with waged work in the informal sector. However, other scholars disagree (see Clark 1999). The multiple roles women perform make it difficult for them to balance domestic, conjugal, maternal and wage labour, undermining their status in society. This section has demonstrated the gendered nature of the labour market conditions in Ghana.

2.5: Gender relations in Ghana

Prah summed up the gender situation in Ghana when she noted that “the women’s front has chased illusions and is yet to realize its vision”, a verdict that the patriarchal social order persists (2004:39). Ghana comprises different peoples with different customs and the relations between males and females in Ghana are to some extent culturally and contextually specific in different regions and among different ethnic groups; however there are certain essential features that cut across them (Oppong 1977, 2006; Aryee et al. 2005). Ampofo (1999) argues that traditionally gender relations in Ghana were separate but complementary, and men and women exercised some elements of autonomy despite the patriarchal nature of society. Gender hierarchies and female subordination became more prominent at the onset of the colonial era, with the spread of Christian and Islamic ideas, western education, urbanization and commoditisation of the economy leading to further segregation of the female and male spheres (Mikell 1997, Dolphyne 2000). This, according to Mikell, provided support for ‘patriarchy’ and ‘individualism’ and challenged the African concept of communalism and dual sex concepts embedded in African culture and communities (Mikell 1997:17).

The relationships between men and women are defined by kinship, marriage, friendship or associational ties with specific norms and values associated with each gender. However, authority is vested in males in all societies in Ghana. Ankomah (1993), Ofei-Aboagye (1999) and Aryee and Forson (2005) share the view that in Ghana male dominance and superiority is expressed in all spheres of life, particularly in the domestic relationship. The wife has to abide by the wishes of the husband and he has complete authority over his wife/wives and children. Other scholars contend that Ghanaian women enjoy an independent economic life, personal autonomy and status in trade and agriculture (Oppong and Abu 1987; Overa 2007). There are groups of women in Ghana who wield power and are respected in society. These include wealthy market women, those in the fields of politics and the religion and professional women who through their education occupy respectable positions. Additionally, women who belong to the royal family are given due respect and recognition for their contributions to society (Dolphyne 2000).

Educated Ghanaian women are currently seeking marriage on partnership terms, with a blurring of the sexual division of labour and joint decision-making (Assimeng 1999, Oppong 2005). They state that education and paid employment are changing the status of women and transforming the male-female relationship. The numbers of such women are however limited and as Soothill (2007) asserts, their high status is not mirrored by those of ordinary women. Scholars such as Mikell (1995, 1997), Tsikata (1996) and Allman (1997, 2000) have been criticised for arguing that women's status sharply retrogressed after colonial rule. Boni (2001) maintains that there is not enough evidence to show gender equality and the fact that women were powerful in pre-colonial times, but that the ideology of gender relations has maintained continuity across the periods. While the debate continues, suffice it to say that there is evidence in contemporary times to show that women are more disadvantaged than men. However some women, albeit minorities, have been able to gain authority and power either through their education, wealth, position in kinship systems or religious vocations.

Ampofo (2001), in a study involving matrilineal and patrilineal communities, pointed out that from childhood both communities impart stereotypical gender roles to both sexes. Children are socialized into gender specific roles within the households where they are taught the role expectations through household chores that they perform (Dolphyne 2000; Sam 2001; Boohene et al. 2008). Boys for instance are educated to recognise themselves as breadwinners and heads of households, responsible for taking major decisions, to be assertive, independent, to show strength and authority, and are given control of resources where necessary to enable them exercise these functions. Girls on the other hand learn the requisite domestic skills to become homemakers and are responsible for childrearing, washing, cooking and house chores generally.

2.5.1 The Ghanaian household

Generally most Ghanaian household structures are conventionally male headed and all members have their roles delineated, though recently there has been an increase in female-headed households. Oppong et al. (1975) and (Pellow 1978) have noted that women's primary domain was and is the domestic, with the Ghana Living Standards Survey 5 (GSS

2008) providing evidence that women are responsible for most household services. According to Dejene (2008) women spend on average 7 hours on household responsibilities as against 4 hours by men. King and Oppong (2000) and Tanye (2008: 169) confirm the general notion that the “woman’s place is in the kitchen”. Caring for children is principally the woman’s duty (Awumbila and Momsen 1995; DeRose 2002). It is socially acceptable to make alternative arrangements for fostering assistance since the kin or lineage group also has responsibility for childrearing (Oppong 1994, DeRose 2002). Increasingly, however, though economic circumstances and modernisation require that women engage in economic activities, especially in the urban areas, kin and conjugal support is minimal (Oppong 2001, 2004; Badasu 2004). Social norms also lead to limited communication between spouses and influence bargaining processes, especially in polygamous relationships (Tolhurst et al 2008). Western ideas of the superiority of the nuclear family, monogamy and co-residence, according to Fair (2004), are now challenging traditional norms and behaviours and therefore attitudes are changing. In a study by Arku and Arku (2009) men were reported to adjust their daily activities to cook breakfast and supper while their wives were participating in micro-finance activities. There is therefore evidence that role segregation is reducing, though egalitarian relationships constitute a small minority.

Gender ideologies regard men as principally responsible for the financial well-being of the family, and confirm them as head of households (Awumbila 2001, Nowak 2009). Decision-making power is culturally vested in males as head of households and they have a responsibility to cater for all family members. A popular proverb states; *Oba to tuo kora etsrui bema dem* in Twi³ literally meaning; “If a woman buys a gun, it is stored in a man’s room”. This shows the dominance of men, that even if a woman acquires property the man takes control of it. There is a tacit unwritten marriage agreement that the man supplies the material provision and sustenance for the daily needs of the family (Ankomah 1996). According to the Ghana Demographic and Health survey 2003 (Ghana Statistical Service 2003) most Ghanaian women do not have control over household expenditure, their own health, visitation rights to relatives and preparation of daily meals. Though theoretically, married women are expected to be supported by their husbands, this differs from between

³ Twi: language spoken by the Akans in Ghana.

households and is not regarded as sufficient by most women. There is evidence that women are increasingly performing ‘provider roles’ in addition to ‘carer roles,’ especially in female-headed households (Robertson 1984, Aryee and Forson 2005). Within most households there is a division of purses between husbands and wives, and incomes are spent individually (Rangel and Thomas 2005, Oheneba-Sakyi 1999; Udry and Woo 2007). This is partly because of their role expectations toward the extended families, and also because of the prevalence of polygynous relationships. In the urban areas where men earn salaries and provide housekeeping allowances, they have become the main source of the ‘conjugal’ income, which is under their full control.

Women’s contribution to the household is often neglected due to ideologies which characterise it as ‘supplementary’ to the male breadwinner, such as traditional mores and Christian religious beliefs. Therefore in decision-making women have not had influence proportionate to their contribution, and so women remain voiceless and disempowered (Owusu-Ansah 2003). Awumbila (2001) explains that the ability of women to participate in household decision-making is contingent on their occupational, financial and educational resources. This is confirmed by Oppong (2005) who found a positive relationship between joint financial expenditure patterns and joint decision-making. Ampofo (2001) argues that in conflicting situations the male voice prevails and female dissent could lead to domestic violence. Abu (1975) and Brown (1996) have noted that there are considerable tension and conflicts among partners in the area of the allocation of financial responsibilities, with each partner desiring to know and control the other’s spending, and women are quite unyielding about the control and disposal of their income. In some situations, the failure of the man to provide housekeeping allowance for food and general upkeep could be grounds for divorce (Ankomah 1996). Assibey-Mensah (1998) comments that many husbands see their so-called socio-economic roles as sole breadwinners and decision makers challenged and threatened.

2.5.2 The Kinship System

Kinship underlies many institutions in Ghana and shapes the rules, responsibilities, privileges, duties and obligations of individuals and groups in their interrelationships in

different spheres of life. Most Ghanaian traditional societies are patriarchal in structure and membership of the kinship system determines one's political position, social location, sense of identity and right to resources. The main lineage/descent groups which co-exist in the Ghanaian society are the matrilineal system, among the Akan; patrilineal, among the Ewe and Ga- Adangme and some northern ethnic groups; and the double descent type, among the Fanti (Assimeng 1999). The matrilineal system is the most widespread because the Akans are the largest ethnic group in Ghana. The lineage arrangement is built along female lines of descent, and therefore all Akans belong to the mothers' lineage (Osei 1998). Nukunya explains that the lineage/clan is normally headed by a leader, the *abusua panyin* (usually a man – in a few cases a woman could head), who is supported by an elder woman the *obaa panyin* (2003). While the *abusua panyin* sees to the overall administration of the lineage, the *obaa panyin* oversees mainly the women and children. The father does not belong to the same *Abusua* (lineage) as his children, but he is expected to provide them with spiritual, moral and educational training. The father, and husband, belongs to his own matrilineage (Assimeng 1999). In the patrilineal system all persons are descended through the male line only, and belong to or are owned by the father's lineage. The wives are therefore regarded as 'strangers' and belong to their own patrilineage. The father ensures children are disciplined and also has responsibility for inculcating in them the values of the society. The double descent system existing among the Fantis recognises both lineages of the father and mother. The matrilineage is recognised with regard to rights and obligations, and the patrilineage is accredited with military office and spiritual protection (Ibid. 1999).

2.5.3 Inheritance

Inheritance among the Akans passes through the mother's line, but from man to man. Therefore a man's potential successors are his brothers in order of age, his mother's sister's son or his sister's son (Nukunya 2003). Inheritance in the patrilineal system is based on the male line, with children eligible to inherit their father's personal property and succeed his position. While daughters are not disqualified from inheriting the deceased father's personal property, sons take precedence. Lineage property reverts to the family head, who is usually a senior male. In terms of inheritance in the double descent system, land is

inherited via the maternal line, with the patrilineal line inheriting the spiritual office and priesthood (Assimeng 1999).

Polygynous marriages are common to all Ghanaian lineage systems, but they have been criticised for contributing to the subordination of women in Ghanaian society. A major problem inherent in this practice, more especially in patrilineal systems, has to do with inheritance and care of widows and children when the man dies intestate. According to Manuh (1997) wives are not members of their husbands' families and have no inheritance rights to husbands' property in either matrilineal or patrilineal descent systems. She further noted that there were gender inequities in customary inheritance of property which favoured the extended family and economically marginalised wives and children. Even where they were entitled to it, in their lineages as daughters in the matrilineal system, their rights to property ownership and control were mediated through men who were given priority. Dolphyne remarks that wives are reluctant to embark on partnership ventures with their husbands for fear of losing everything, especially if the husband comes from a matrilineal society (2000). She may also have to share the property with co-wives or children born out of wedlock, who usually emerge at the death of the man. According to customary law the husband is the owner of all property despite the fact that the wife contributes in various ways, including performance of unpaid housework and childcare (Sam 2005). Most women therefore strove to accrue property for themselves. This led to the promulgation of the Intestate Succession Law (PNDC Law 111) of 1986, the Customary Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Law, the Head of Family (Accountability) Law, and the Administration of Estate (Amendment) Laws. These laws "collectively provide the framework for more equitable system of division of property on the death of an intestate spouse, irrespective of the form of marriage" (Baden et al. 1994:54). They provide legal rights for all Ghanaian women in both patrilineal and matrilineal societies' over the property of deceased spouses. All surviving spouse(s) and all children that are acknowledged by the man inherit a greater share of the spouses' self-acquired property, with only a lesser proportion going to parents.

2.5.4 The extended family system

The extended family system is common to all lineage systems in Ghana; Nukunya argues that "...family is conterminous with the extended family" (2003:9). It is defined as "any grouping broader than the nuclear family which is related by descent, marriage or adoption" (Bell and Vogel 1968 cited in Assimeng 1999). The extended family is noted for its residential and non-residential setting, economic interdependence, higher prominence of extended grouping over nuclear set up, and emphasis on extra-nuclear relationships (Nukunya 2003). A person's extended family ties go beyond his lineage or clan, as "a man and his father's siblings and other relations may not belong to the same matrilineage but they are covered by extended family ties; and in a patrilineal society a man and his mother's siblings are also covered" (Ibid.:10). It is characterised by strong kinship ties with kin participating in individual members' activities, mutual reliance of the kin group on the individual and vice versa, male dominance and the imparting of socialisation processes by kin group. The extended family provides economic, moral, social and emotional security and communal comfort to its members. Wealthy members who ignore kin are seen as irresponsible and sometimes become subjects of insult, and individualism is considered selfishness. All members share "sorrows and joys" by caring for each other (Osei 1998: 15).

The different kinship structures are not static and therefore are undergoing changes as a result of socio-economic pressures (Baden et al. 1994, Assimeng 1999). Individuals are becoming more individuated due to education and economic factors. Migration to urban areas has led to the formation of nuclear households which creates spatial distances between lineage members, promoting "psychological distance" and impacting on bonds and loyalty (Assimeng 1999:94). Christian religion for instance has led to the questioning of some of the basis of the lineage cults and taboos undermining the sanctioning system of extended families. Other factors cited for this situation are the monetized economy, population pressure, science and technology. The level of the emotional and material support structure is therefore being undermined.

It is worthy mentioning that despite these factors the extended family continues to endure with reconfigurations and adaptations to modern circumstances. A major reason for its resilience is the fact that most individuals believe they will be disadvantaged at some point if they do not fulfil their responsibilities. Additionally, an infraction by a member is thought to affect the whole lineage, therefore most members adhere to its tenets to avoid being liable for harm to others. Rewards are provided to those who conform through being accepted as good and responsible members of the lineage and acquiring a good reputation. Caring for parents at old age is a revered tradition, so extended families also gain prestige by successfully organising funerals for their departed members (Nukunya 2003, Mazzucato et al. 2006). Most individuals who are capable fulfill these roles in order to be regarded with admiration and deep respect. As noted by van der Geest (2006:487), “money... is a measure of social prestige” and therefore members try to fulfill lineage expectations to legitimize membership. Lineage inheritance, and for most individuals a desire to be buried on the ancestral land, are objectives they work towards through financial provision and conformity to norms and values (Assimeng 1999, Mazzucato et al. 2006). The extended family norms and attitudes are therefore not entirely disrupted, though they no longer have the grip on the nexus of social relations that they held in the past. They continue to co-exist with modernization trends. Mohan confirms that “Ghanaians still honour blood kinship while feverishly renegotiating its obligations” (2006:875).

It should be noted that the kinship system influences access to resources and decision making power by gender. Brydon (1992) observes that women from matrilineal groups have more autonomy than those from patrilineal groups, while those from patrilineal groups from the South can be increasingly financially independent. Both in the matrilineal and patrilineal societies male superiority over the female is well entrenched and differs only slightly in scale. “Men rule in both” (Mendoza 2002:55). Matrilineal women have greater access to resources such as land, outside the conjugal union than patrilineal women. This acts as an alternative to dependency on husbands and a leverage on conjugal relationships. Because women move to the husband’s household, patrilineal men tend to have greater responsibility for their partners and children. Due to the unavailability of lineage support networks, urban women tend to be more dependent on the conjugal relationship. Marriage

is regarded as a union between two families, not only between husband and wife. In general among the matrilineal Akan and even with the patrilineal groups in the past, Ghanaian systems of kinship and marriage have been considered relatively fragile in conjugal ties, compared with strong enduring and lineage attachments of camaraderie (Lloyd and Gage-Brandon 1993, Clark 1999). Tensions therefore arise over the level of support to a man's relations as opposed to the woman's relations, which lead to hostility and distrust between men and women focused on competing loyalties for lineage and marital relations (Clark 1999; Manuh 2003b). Having discussed the gender situation in Ghana, the next section examines the labour market in London, its policies and conditions partly determine social and economic outcomes for migrants.

2.6 Labour market in London

Despite variations between London and other British regions, essential generic features include social policies, legislation and certain structural conditions. This review examines London particularly but refers to Britain in the broader context. London is acknowledged as a global city (Eade 2000, Hamnett 2002). Gordon et al. (2007) describe it as ethnically diverse, with nearly one third of the population from black and minority ethnic communities (Mayor of London 2004). The reasons for which most migrants have settled in London include employment, personal development and pleasure, and to seek refugee status. According to Gordon et al. (2007) the late 1980s witnessed the new less-managed (post-Fordist) migration from more heterogeneous sources. Somerville et al. (2009) maintain that it was in this period that UK became a country of immigration. London has received about 40% of the gross migrant inflows to the UK, in the last twenty years and in 2006 the foreign-born population was 30.5% of total population of London (Gordon et al. 2007).

Kenny (2008:21) has attributed the unequal nature of London's labour market to characteristic features of the city's economy. The employment rate of London is 71.6%, leading to a competitive labour market as population growth exceeds job growth, particularly in the low-skilled sector. In addition the structure of the London economy has changed into a more service-based economy, with financial services and a rising demand

for ‘soft skills’ and decline in manufacturing, transport and construction jobs (Buck et al. 2002, Anastassova-Chirmiciu 2008) leading to a skills gap. Hakim adds that the British economy has been unregulated permitting “all types of job, all work hours and all employment arrangements to be introduced” according to the inclination of employers and employees (2003:21). Lack of regulation has led to a situation where employers can hire and fire indiscriminately (McDowell et al. 2009), accentuating the rising struggle between migrants for marginal, casual low-end jobs. Wills et al. (2009) basing their assertion on the statistics of HM Treasury, maintain that for every low-skilled job available there are three potential workers, and therefore labour oversupply provides employers with a lot of options.

2.6.1 Women

Hakim (2000) points out that equal opportunity policies, equality movements and labour market changes have enabled women to opt for paid work instead of staying at home as housewives. Vaid (2006) finds that 55% of mothers in London are in paid employment; Crompton et al. (2003) state that women’s involvement in economic activity increased from 66% in 1984 to 72% by 2001. Harkness (2003) also maintains that by 2002 female employment among 25-49 year olds had increased to 73%. Hakim (1996) further notes that work commitment has increased for women while that of men has reduced, and Pfau-Effinger (2000) concludes that women have become integrated into the labour market. Perron (1996) argues that this is likely to influence their traditional roles, and through their independent incomes may lead to their empowerment. Pfau-Effinger (2000) confirms that the robust patriarchal structures in most households where men dominated women have waned. Maternity leave provisions permit more women now to return to the previous employer after childbirth, contributing to longer tenure in their jobs (Desai et al. 1999).

A significant finding of Hakim (2003) is that most black British women in her study worked full-time and considered themselves as primary earners, while the white women mostly worked part-time and saw themselves as secondary earners. Warren (2000) using the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) found out that while women’s participation in the labour market was increasing, they were mainly moving into part-time employment.

She concluded that such movement would not greatly impact on the patriarchal gender order since part-time pay rates are low and working hours are short. Part-time work is associated more with the traditional gender division of labour which perpetuates dependence on men. Taylor (2002) suggests that women in the low income bracket are finding it hard to juggle work and family. The situation has tended to favour those in higher-status jobs who may be in full-time employment and able to afford childcare, leading to class distinctions. Women on higher incomes are mainly practicing dual-breadwinner typologies, though there is a 'lagged adaptation' so far as caring work is concerned.

The British labour force is segregated according to Hakim (2003), into typically female and male occupations. McDowell et al. (2009) find that factors such as employers' workplace practices and conventional notions of femininity together push migrant women into jobs regarded as suitable for them such as care, cleaning, and nursing. Evans et al. (2005) found migrant women working in 'semi-private' spaces like hotels and in homes, and men in 'semi-public' spaces like office cleaning or underground. Bondi and Hazel (1997) also report that the women were segregated horizontally in public services such as health, education, social work, and personal services such as hairdressing, cleaning, waitressing and hairdressing. They are further segregated vertically, mainly in lower ranks of occupational hierarchies.

2.6.2 Men

According to Drew (2000) traditionally, measuring economic activity in the labour market has been based on the pattern of male employment, as the female's work was thought to be in the unpaid private sphere, and therefore she was regarded as economically inactive in the labour market. However, Crompton et al. (2003) indicate that men's participation rates reduced from 88% in the 1980s to 84% by 2001. The full-time manufacturing jobs which were previously held by men have been lost to service employment, leading to increasing uncertainty especially for young and old men, as women gain more influence in the labour market. Warren (2000: 362) considers that the labour market "is characterized by a distinctly gender-unfriendly class-bound working time regime" and because employment is

poorly regulated men particularly those in the upper- and lower-end of the occupational occupations work for long hours. Low paid workers at the bottom need to work longer hours to increase their income levels as breadwinners. Because contracts of professionals and managers are more task-specific than hours-specific, they also work long hours, and this ultimately affects gender relations in the household. Pressures of work by employers and 'job related structural constraints' limit their ability to participate in housework (Crompton et al. 2005).

2.6.3 Employment

Gender affects levels of labour market participation, with employment rates 17-19% points lower for women than for males in London (Spence 2005). However, female employment has increased remarkably from 19% to about 56% for women with children under age two. According to Buck et al. (2002) unemployment in London is 30% higher than for the rest of the UK, with variations depending on the ethnic group. It is observed that men in non-white ethnic groups, especially blacks, show higher rates of unemployment, particularly for those without recognized educational qualifications and social housing tenants. In most sectors of the labour market women earn 79% of men's pay (Woodward 2001). The minimum wage legislation has led to a lessening of low pay and decreasing gender pay gap, reducing from 26% to 23% from 1994 to 2002 (Robinson 2003). Kenny (2008) explains that the labour market in London marginalises those on low wages because of competition from younger and cheaper workers, probably with higher skills, seeking the same jobs.

Dustmann et al. (2005) note that all non-white minority groups earn about 10% lower average wages than UK-born and immigrants whites. This situation is similar for women and men, though the differences are more marked among men. According to Evans et al. (2005), 90% of workers in the low sector earned as low as £5.45 an hour, lower than the Greater London Authority's living wage of £6.70. Due to the low wages and the high cost of living, a London living wage has been set above the national minimum wage to assist low-income families. May et al. (2007) confirm that only one in five earn the national minimum wage. They add that the lowest-paid sectors have a high employee turnover and few opportunities for progression. The workers are not entitled to sick pay and paid leave.

Dustmann et al. (2005) further found that most of the respondents worked atypical hours: early, late or night shifts, and had to work overtime but were paid for normal work hours. Due to the low and insecure wages as well as precarious employment coupled with the high cost of living, Bondi and Hazel (1997) note that both partners had to work, and some had multiple part-time jobs to survive.

2.6.4 Migrants in the Labour Market

Kenny (2008) observes that London's high ethnic minority representation face high poverty risks. Though migrants from developing countries possess qualifications higher than the London average, the jobs they find are in the low-paid and unskilled sector, and even with time, though their jobs change they still earn low wages. Datta et al. (2007) and Wills et al. (2009) found similarly that a large number of foreign-born workers (women and men) mostly from developing countries were clustered in elementary jobs such as care, cleaning, domestic work, catering, and garbage collection, although some of these jobs are classified as female jobs. Low-paid work is unattractive to British-born citizens but these jobs are offered more to Eastern Europeans from the so-called A8 countries rather than migrant stocks of colour from the former commonwealth countries who have stayed longer in the UK (Wills et al. 2009). Most low-skilled workers are foreign-born nationals who do not benefit from social policies. For both women and men, Black Africans, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are the most disadvantaged (Dustmann et al. 2005).

In the 1970s the Equal Pay Act 1970; Sex Discrimination Act 1974 and Race Relations Act 1976 were passed. Equal opportunities legislation was passed prohibiting sex discrimination in all areas of life, and granting women equal access to all posts, occupations and careers in the labour market and equal pay. Walby (1999) states that the principle of equal opportunities is fairly well established in the UK, and Kesler (2006) thinks it is the best-developed anti-discrimination legislation in the labour market in Europe. Irrespective of the above, the Mayor of London (2004: 72) commented that "discrimination in London's labour market is a recurrent problem for many black and minority ethnic groups, particularly young black men". Buck et al. (2002: 215) confirm that "objectively there is still strong evidence of discrimination in the labour market on ethnic lines". Tubergen and

Maas (2004: 709) attribute the greater advantage in the labour market to British-born whites who possess similar educational qualification and age to “in-group preferences and out-group prejudices”. Polish migrants that Eade (2007) interviewed mentioned that ‘whiteness’ connoted a higher status, and therefore this placed them on a higher hierarchy in the labour market than non-whites.

Following EU enlargement, the UK government introduced legislation to strengthen the enforcement of section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 (Anderson et al. 2006), to criminally charge any employer who engages any person above 16 years who is not supposed to be in the UK or whose status does not permit him/her to take employment. Another policy with a bearing on the labour market is the introduction in 2006 of the ‘points system’ framework to facilitate the employment of highly-skilled workers and limit low-skilled immigration from outside the EEA, and to recruit low-skilled jobs from within the EU. These policies make it difficult for illegal immigrants to gain employment.

The above analysis shows increasing levels of participation of women in paid employment. Kreimer (2004:227) has stressed that the “gender division of labour of paid and unpaid work has clear consequences on the gender division of labour within the market.” The labour market, reflecting the relations of production and reproduction, epitomized by the household, are argued to be co-existing systems (Moore 1988). Therefore, one of the consequences expected as a result of the increased female participation in production is a transformation of familial and household relationships.

2.7: Gender relations in London

This section provides a sense of Ghanaians’ host country, describing gender relations among British nationals in London. Changes in the household have a bearing on the labour market and the changing face of the labour market also has repercussions for the household.

2.7.1 Breadwinning

Using Pfau-Effinger’s (1999) ‘gender arrangements’ models, there is a consensus that the classical male-breadwinner is on the decline but there is no uniformity in the model

explaining it. To some it has given way to 'dual breadwinner/state carer models', the 'dual breadwinner/dual carer models' and to yet others 'male-breadwinner/ female part-time carer models'. Yeandle (1999) and Burchell et al. (1999) attribute this to the increase in flexible and non-standard jobs, which women dominate, and the reduction in full-time, permanent employment. The decline in real wages and the family wage paid to a male breadwinner, rising unemployment or job insecurity, less fiscal support for families, and other attitudinal changes have also been discussed as being responsible for this phenomenon (Hearn 1999; Charles and James 2005). Other studies, point out that all these factors may not necessarily lead to the end of the male breadwinner ideology (Morris 1990; Delphy and Leonard 1992). However, Gershuny et al. (1994) suggest that there is a process of 'lagged adaptation' as men are changing at a slower pace than women's participation in employment. Hakim (1995) on the other hand argues that it is women's involvement in full-time employment not part-time work that leads to changes in men's attitude to housework. The narrowing of gender differentials through the nineties is attributed more to women's than men's behaviour (Hoyng et al. 2005:63).

Warren (2000) has identified a class dimension to gender relations: where women were in full-time employment and high-status occupations, they earned high wages and contributed equally to household incomes. In such relationships there was a balance in work and family life. On the other hand, women from lower classes who had low wages still depended on male breadwinners, and made small contributions to household income. In this situation most of the women were part-timers to enable time to care for the children. Thus British women in part-time jobs were not likely to be the main breadwinner. Daycare Trust (1997) and Hakim (2003) confirm that the male breadwinner family form is now declining as most families need two adults working to earn enough income, with the male sharing the breadwinner role to some degree. Dual breadwinning is becoming the norm in most British households as women contribute to household finances (Warren 2000; Crompton et al. 2005), but with female-carers still quite widespread. To Hakim (2003) men are to some extent at the forefront in assuming 'egalitarian' attitudes with respect to sharing the income earning role. She also points out that the majority of younger people (55%) reject patriarchy, and few (17%) accept it. The younger generation exhibit egalitarian attitudes

showing a generational shift. Lopez and Pairo (2000) have remarked that women's improved access to education and paid work and the knowledge of gender equality has led to the change in their roles, leading them to reject their subordination and the rigid division of labour in hierarchical relationships. Dex (1999) reports that in 1995 in almost two thirds (63%) of all couples with dependent children both adults were working.

2.7.2 Domestic division of labour

Hakim (2003) explains that most British now refuse the ideology that segregates men's task to income earning and reserves the housekeeping role for women. This has led to a flexible situation where either partner can stand-in for the other, a compromise model. Where both partners work full-time, parents tend to share domestic work; however the part-time mother does relatively more than the full-time mother but considerably less than the full-time housewife. Crompton et al. (2005) have identified gender attitudes, educational attainment, extent of employment and earnings of the woman, age, and children as factors influencing the division of domestic labour in London. They find that younger couples and families with children tend to have more egalitarian relationships. Walby confirms these changes, noting that changing gender relations are leading to a new social contract, "more equitable, productive and socially inclusive for both women and men" (1999:1). The traditional division of labour is however maintained if the man earns higher wages. They contend that though a sizeable number of women in Britain are employed as part-time workers, this has not caused much change in the allocation of household tasks.

Hakim (2003) points out the inability of women and men to achieve a fully symmetrical sex-role position where they share earning and caring tasks on a daily basis. This situation has been attributed to the general inequality in the labour market and the lack of support from the state for working parents. Dex (1999) explains that the situation is more difficult for ethnic minority mothers. Crompton et al. (2005) suggest that work intensification, 'high commitment' practices, and demands at the workplace contribute to making it difficult for men working full-time to assist in the household. This reflects the interconnectedness between the public sphere of paid work and the private sphere of unpaid domestic work.

Lewis (2000) questions why though men assist at home they are still perceived widely as the ‘breadwinners’ or ‘providers’. He reports the National Child Development Study (NCDS) which found that in 36% of dual earner families, in comparison with other individuals, fathers were the major carers while the mothers were working. He adds that fathers are becoming more involved in domestic tasks and that the average time spent for domestic work has increased, while they provide psychological support and are physically present. More men are seen to be contributing to domestic work now than in the 1980s (Brannen et al. 1994). Men’s household activities include ‘shift parenting’ when women worked, and they took charge of household chores. Sullivan has suggested that the increase in men’s participation should be regarded as significant, because

there has been a reduction in gender inequality in the performance of some of the normatively feminine associated tasks (cleaning, cooking, childcare) and a larger proportional increase in the time contributed to domestic work tasks by men from lower socio-economic strata, to a position of near equality with men from higher socio-economic positions, and a substantial increase in more ‘egalitarian’ couples” (2000: 453).

She confirms that though slow and still imbalanced, transformations are occurring. This is confirmed by other studies (Owen 2003, O’Brien and Shemilt 2003).

Because childcare is seen as a private rather than public responsibility, Kenny (2008) observes that there is far less opportunity for parents, especially mothers, to combine work with caring responsibilities, and this has implications for women and men and the gender division of labour. The UK is very near the bottom of EU childcare league; until very recently only 2% of children under 3 years received public funded childcare services (Lister 1999). Warren (2000) confirms the provision of child care to be inadequate and high-priced. According to the Daycare Trust (2009) London has the highest childcare costs with some parents reportedly paying £400 per week for childcare. 69% of parents in a Family Information Services (FIS) survey indicated that they did not have enough childcare provision in their area. Dex (1999) reports from the 1996 Policy Studies Institute (PSI) maternity rights research that inability to earn enough to pay for childcare prevents about one-third of mothers from returning to work. The only childcare subsidy is free part-time early years education for all three- and four-year olds but parents still need to find care services for the remaining time. These factors impinge on the household division of labour.

Most mothers and some fathers have to care for their children, or pay to get other women to do it for them. Mothers provide most childcare services, followed by fathers and grandparents (Dex 1999 and Mayor of London 2004).

As Dex (1999) reports, parents work when children are away from school, such as over weekends. Nevertheless, British men spend more time with their children now than before and participate in a third of all childcare, (two hours a day by the '90s) although they do not get the flexibility from their workplaces to make this easy. They express the desire to be 'good fathers' or 'New Dad' (O'Brien and Shemlit 2003). Large minorities do share childcare, especially in 'shift'/'split-shift' parenting, mainly with the man working during the day and women in the evening or night (McDowell et al. 2006; Harkness 2003). The adoption of flexible childcare facilities in a few places is proving popular with parents indicating the need for them.

2.7.3 Singleness

Another important dimension of change is women's increasing choice to live on their own without relying on a formalized marriage union (Lopez and Pairo 2000). Marital and parental unions are reducing, with most people preferring companionship (Dex 1999). Dex adds that as 'individualisation' is becoming more prevalent, individual aspirations take precedence over domestic family values as women want to be educated, pursue a career, and delay childbirth. Women are no longer focused solely on the home and the family by marriage, but are actively involved in the public sphere of paid work (Hakim 2003).

2.8 Welfare state

Welfare states influence the gender division of labour through social policy, tax policy and work/family policies. This section analyses how the UK welfare state's provisions accommodate gender differences and the impact on the labour market and gender relations as a background to migrant experiences in London. Bussemaker and Kersbergen (1994) identify certain conditions under which social policies affect gender relations and others in which gender relations influence social policies. As Geist (2005) found in her study of 10 countries, the gender division of labour is partly determined by contextual factors in the

state. She concludes that welfare states create an environment conducive to transforming and determining gender relations. There is a relationship between care/work boundaries as well as state welfare provision (Walby 1999). For instance, where welfare legislation such as Britain's 'familist' social policy assigns primary responsibility for care work to 'the family' and the wife is expected to provide unpaid care, this seriously undermines women's capacities to enter the paid labour force on an equal footing with men influencing gender equality in the household (Orloff 1996).

According to Morris "the welfare state, the nuclear family and a traditional sexual division of labour" were fundamental to postwar British society (1999: 32). The "work-family-welfare nexus" combining social structures with individual's expectations of well-being was contextualized on the assumption that the "the ideal social unit is the household of man, wife and children maintained by the earnings of the first alone" (Beveridge, 1942 cited in Morris 1999: 32). This paradigm recognised the man as the breadwinner and the wife as responsible for social reproduction within the home. Lopez and Pairo (2000) note that Britain as a 'liberal welfare state' employs the subsidiarity principle, whereby it is exempted from significantly assisting families. However, since 1997 the New Labour Government introduced the New Deal programme to assist the working poor and to reduce benefits to those remaining out of work (McDowell et al. 2006). Citizens were therefore obliged to seek employment under the 'Welfare to work policy', which restructured the relationship between the home, market and state. Welfare work-life balance policies were developed to help families cope with the reality of being carers and employees and also because the labour force was declining as longevity led to a demographic gap (Dex and Smith 2002). 'Work-life balance' is now part of the political lexicon (Department of Trade and Industry 2003).

Family incomes are dependent not on earnings alone but also on benefits received and taxes paid. Gangl and Ziefle (2009) and Waldfogel (2001) have noted that developed countries including Britain have developed various welfare policies to reconcile work-family life, reducing the burdens for parents and especially mothers who have to do a 'double shift'. The working families' tax credit (WFTC) which includes child tax credit, was a monetary

benefit introduced in 2003 to support families on low incomes. It also assists parents to move into employment by ensuring that their earnings do not make them worse off after their benefits have been withdrawn, and also enables women to participate in work while children are young (Katungi et al. 2006).

2.8.1 Eligibility Criteria

Immigrants are restricted from receiving non-contributory benefits and access to social assistance for the first five years (Kesler 2006). To qualify for welfare benefits, a person should be ordinarily resident in Britain (May et al. 2007). Unless habitually resident, a claimant is not entitled to income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, pension credit or housing benefits. To claim working tax credit one or both parents must work over 16 hours per week. In order to qualify, at least one partner must work over 30 hours in a week, which could exclude those on low incomes. From 1 May 2004, claimants for the above benefits should also have a right to reside in the UK; so persons whose immigration status is subject to 'no recourse to public funds' do not qualify. The benefit system has become complicated by qualifications based on immigration and residence status; and though some migrants' admission to the country is facilitated, their access to benefits is controlled (May et al. 2007). Furthermore, Fredman (2004) argues that workers whose wages are below the lower earnings limit (LEL) for national insurance contributions are effectively excluded from the national insurance system, since they or their employers are not required to pay contributions on their behalf. They are therefore denied key contributory benefits, including incapacity benefit, retirement pensions, contribution based job seeker's allowance, statutory sick pay, statutory maternity and paternity pay. May et al. (2007) conclude that the benefits system does not protect those in low employment, especially marginalised migrant workers. Clarke et al. (2001:80) maintain the welfare system favours 'selective and conditional benefits': 'targeted' rather than 'universal benefits'. Though most migrants pay tax and national insurance they do not claim income support or unemployment benefits (Evans et al. 2005).

2.8.2 Parental/ Maternity Leave

The Parental Leave Directive (1999) permits working parents to take unpaid leave of 13 weeks for each child born after 15 Dec 1999 up to the child's fifth birthday, to be taken either by the mother or father (Department of Social Security 2009). The disadvantage of this policy is that it is unpaid leave and therefore low income families can't take advantage of it unless absolutely necessary. This discrepancy reinforces class distinctions as only high waged couples can take advantage of it (Warren 2000; Waldfogel 2001). Britain now provides 18 weeks of maternity leave to all new mothers, based on the woman's prior employment status. 90% of her wage is paid for six (6) weeks and thereafter a flat rate for 12 weeks, based on sufficient work history (Waldfogel 2001). The statutory maternity leave period has been extended from 18 to 26 weeks since 2003 (Gangl and Ziefle 2009). Additionally, paternity leave was extended to 2 weeks from 2003 (Dex and Smith 2002) and is usually paid by larger establishments.

2.8.3 Social Housing

Social housing (council flats) is among the benefits provided for families who are in urgent housing need and have low incomes. Local authorities use a points-based allocation system to assess applicants' housing needs and the households, with the highest number of points are offered accommodation. Eligibility is based on family circumstances and income than on ethnic or migrant status (Gordon et al. 2007). Priority is given to expectant mothers (Directgov 2009). According to Hill "more than a quarter (27%) of all black or minority ethnic householders are social tenants (including ... 43% of Black Caribbean and black African householders), compared to 17% of white householders" (2007:6).

2.8.4 Provision for Childcare

For both women and men any intermission could affect their career advancement, so either full or partial cash-subsidies for childcare or provision of childcare spaces is essential for parents. The National Childcare Strategy is a framework developed for childcare provision in London in 1998. Parents are entitled to child benefit, a tax-free payment usually paid weekly or every four weeks with separate rates for each child. A higher weekly amount is paid for the eldest (or only) child amounting to £20.00, and £13.20 for each other child

(HM Revenue & Customs 2009a). Parents may also get help with childcare costs. Apart from helping to reduce poverty, child benefit subsidises parents with low incomes, and can help parents stay out of the labour market to provide childcare at home. Family arrangements and structure could therefore be impacted by enabling a parent to separate or bring up a child alone (Bradshaw and Finch 2002). According to Bondi and Hazel (1997) child care provision may reduce gender inequalities, permitting women to concentrate on paid work.

2.8.5 Development of Flexibility

Watt (2003) has stated that the reduction in manufacturing industries transformed the London economy from a ‘male-dominated Fordist,’ to a non-unionised female-dominated service economy. Turok and Edge (1999) also report that flexibility involving non-standard work has since been on the increase. Attempts have been made to integrate caring and earning into the British welfare state. Basically, these family friendly practices and policies are meant to help parents concentrate on family. Other policies concerned with ‘work-life balance’ for employees include the part-time work directive (2000), which ensures that part-time workers receive similar treatment as full-time workers in terms of pay, holidays, sick pay, and maternity/parental leave. Other arrangements include job sharing, term-time only working, flexible (hours) working, working from home, working at home, workplace or other nursery provision and flexi time. The aim is to support economic growth through a competitive and flexible labour market to make Britain competitive globally. Fredman (2004) coins the term ‘flexicurity’ and argues that though flexibility is family friendly it does not offer equal/matching security for the workforce. The study identified those in part-time work as insecure, with low pay, low status and little prospects of progression. Crompton et al. (2005) and Kesler (2006) consider that levels of social welfare are low, and their welfare provisions are not far-reaching. Questions raised by Sainsbury (1994:4) are how to ensure that social policy does not maintain women’s economic dependence on men, and how welfare states can assure independence from the market by a ‘state-market-family’ relationship that promotes egalitarian relationships in paid and unpaid work. The present study analyses how migrant women and men relate to the different parts of the benefits system and how this affects the relations between them.

2.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the complex political, historical and economic developments in Ghana and how they have shaped migration. The independence and post-independence circumstances prevailing during any period of Ghana's development have triggered patterns of migration. It is confirmed that there are large numbers of Ghanaian women and men in the diaspora, but there is a dearth of data on the exact numbers. A major concern of this study is to incorporate gender analysis into migration studies in Ghana. I revealed the lack of attention to gender as constitutive of migration research, justifying the need to shift focus to fill this gap considering the gendered nature of migration and settlement and the fact that gender infuses all life. The chapter has discussed the relative positions of women and men in the labour market in Ghana. Focusing on their employment experiences, among other things, provides the background information for exploration of the relationships between the labour market dynamics in both origin and destination countries, and enables changes over time and the extent to which migration has impacted on their employment activities and vice versa and its implications for gender relationships to be appreciated.

In the domestic sphere in the UK, the chapter has shown transformations in gendered roles especially among dual-earning partners, with men's private sphere contribution appreciably improved, though lagging behind women's participation in the labour market. The labour market has impacted differently on women and men, weakening men's breadwinner role presenting women with different opportunities. The change in women's public role has affected the productive and reproductive spheres, shifting towards egalitarian sharing of household and childcare responsibilities. London, impacted by such differentials as class, gender, and nationality, paradoxically polarizes the rich and poor with the highly successful co-existing with the least successful. Low wages at the bottom of the labour market and London's high cost of living disproportionately undermines sections of the community, affecting gender relationships. Welfare and 'family-friendly' employment policies, aimed at easing family pressures, participation of both partners in employment and increased incomes and meeting caring responsibilities, were identified and discussed.

How do circumstances in the host country context including diminishing gender inequalities in the home, participation of women in new opportunities, lessening of gender differences in the labour market, social differentials in the labour market, welfare benefits and social policies aimed at reconciling demands of home with those of work, redefine the life chances of migrants and the ramifications for gender ideologies and relations? The empirical data in Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 will address these issues. However, chapter 3 looks at the methodological underpinnings of the study.

Chapter Three: Research design and Methods

This chapter discusses the methodological framework of the study, commencing with a justification for using qualitative research. The rationale for the selection of a multi-sited ethnographic methodology is discussed, and methods used for collecting the data are explained. The ethical issues are considered; data analysis processes examined and conclusions drawn.

3.1 Qualitative research

This study employs a qualitative research design relying on an inductive approach, to explore the field and build theory from data collected. This strategy is required in order to understand the meanings and context of women and men's behaviour and explore their values, perceptions, attitudes and complex experiences. It offers the opportunity to listen to the participants and place them at the centre of the analysis, observing them in their own surroundings and emphasizing the gendered accounts of their lived experiences. The qualitative research strategy recognises humans as active and creative, and constantly negotiating through their actions to construct and sustain meaning for the world around them. The study's research questions are best answered through an interpretative approach that tries to "explain and understand social phenomena and their contexts" (Snape and Spencer 2003:5), through people's meanings and perspectives, individual feelings and experiences of their everyday lives in such activities as care-giving and performing housework. Such meanings cannot easily be attained through the use of numerical formulas and statistical measures (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

These two approaches are complementary insofar as they try to address aspects of the social world from different dimensions. However, for this study I have concentrated on qualitative methods. Numerous other scholars who have tried to understand gender perspectives have similarly used this approach (Parrado and Flippen 2005; Salih 2003; Chant 1997, Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994). To capture the complexity and diversity of gender relations I concur with Holdaway (2000) that qualitative researchers need to be involved in the context of the participants, in order to identify with their construction and negotiation of meanings

for their activities across space and time. As King et al. point out, the “real experts on migration are the migrants themselves” (1998:158). By interacting with migrants, interpreting their lived experiences, actions and perceptions I have gained insight into their points of view and activities. In line with understanding the socially constructed nature of reality, ethnography was applied because it is valuable in producing rich descriptions of the social world. In addition to the primary data collected from the ethnographic methodology, I have used secondary material to interrogate the empirical issues.

3.1.1 Using ethnography for migration research

Ethnographic methods are useful for understanding the experiences, interpretations, activities and meanings of the actions of women and men in trying to relate to one another as well as the power relations, contestations and decision making processes ensuing in these interactions. Wacquant defines ethnography as

social research based on the close-up, on-the-ground observation of people and institutions in real time and space, in which the investigator embeds him/herself near (or within), the phenomenon so as to detect how and why agents on the scene act, think and feel the way they do (2003:5).

It provides an appropriate platform to understand the meaning of events through words and actions, by foregrounding the experiences and voices of the participants - in a sense through the culture of migrants. Ethnography stresses the examination of specific social phenomena, concentrating on the use of unstructured data without any prior hypothesis, and especially “involves explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human action” (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994:248). Ethnography, both as a practice and a product (Macdonald 2001) guided the research through the essential process of collating, analysing and interpreting observations, and producing the written text. This approach therefore permitted me to address the questions of the study and draw relevant conclusions. McHugh gives three reasons why ethnography facilitates migration research. The first is that migration connects people across space and time, and ethnography effectively enhances the understanding of the “tempos and rhythms” of migrant movements and their meanings. Secondly, the study of migration has ignored the ‘human’ element, although migration affects people’s personality and values and has social meaning for actors. In contrast, ethnography unearths the meaning of experiences from the interpretation of social context

rather than the “search for law” (2000:72). Thirdly, McHugh cites Fielding’s point that (1992) research in geography should speak to migration and culture, and Halfacree and Boyle (1993) who argue for a biographical approach to migration, maintaining that migration is a cultural phenomenon, ingrained in people’s daily lives. Ethnography’s interpretation of everyday life in the social context is desirable to encapsulate the social reality of migrants. McHugh concludes that ethnographic research is useful in showing the relationship between migration and socio-cultural change.

Ethnographic research therefore provides the strategy to understand the gender relationships embedded in migratory existence and capture power relations and negotiations within households and the community that underpin gender relations. To understand the phenomenon better I included London and urban southern Ghana in my fieldwork to ascertain how migration and gender interact in the social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of the interactions between women and men. This gave an opportunity to assess how migrants negotiate gender relations across the transnational social space. I applied a variation of what Marcus calls a multi-sited ethnography (1995:104-105), designing the research along trails where a rational correlation ‘of variously situated subjects’ will support and justify the study. Additionally, a matched sample approach was applied to highlight the two-way flow. Mazzucato explains that

because such studies collect information from both sides, they can best investigate questions about the inner workings of transnational flows and link migrants’ actions with those of people back home.... reciprocal relations [that] exist between people living in different countries, and how ... they work (2007:6).

Beginning with fieldwork in London, I deliberately tracked down contacts of my London interviewees who were living in *urban southern Ghana*. Although Mazzucato encourages simultaneity, this PhD study was limited financially and only one researcher was involved in the fieldwork, so the urban southern Ghana data was not gathered simultaneously with that in London.

3.2 Choosing the community and access

My focus of study is on gender ideologies and relations among Ghanaian migrants in London. As Murray and Overton (2003), Robson (1993, cited in Scheyvens et al. 2003),

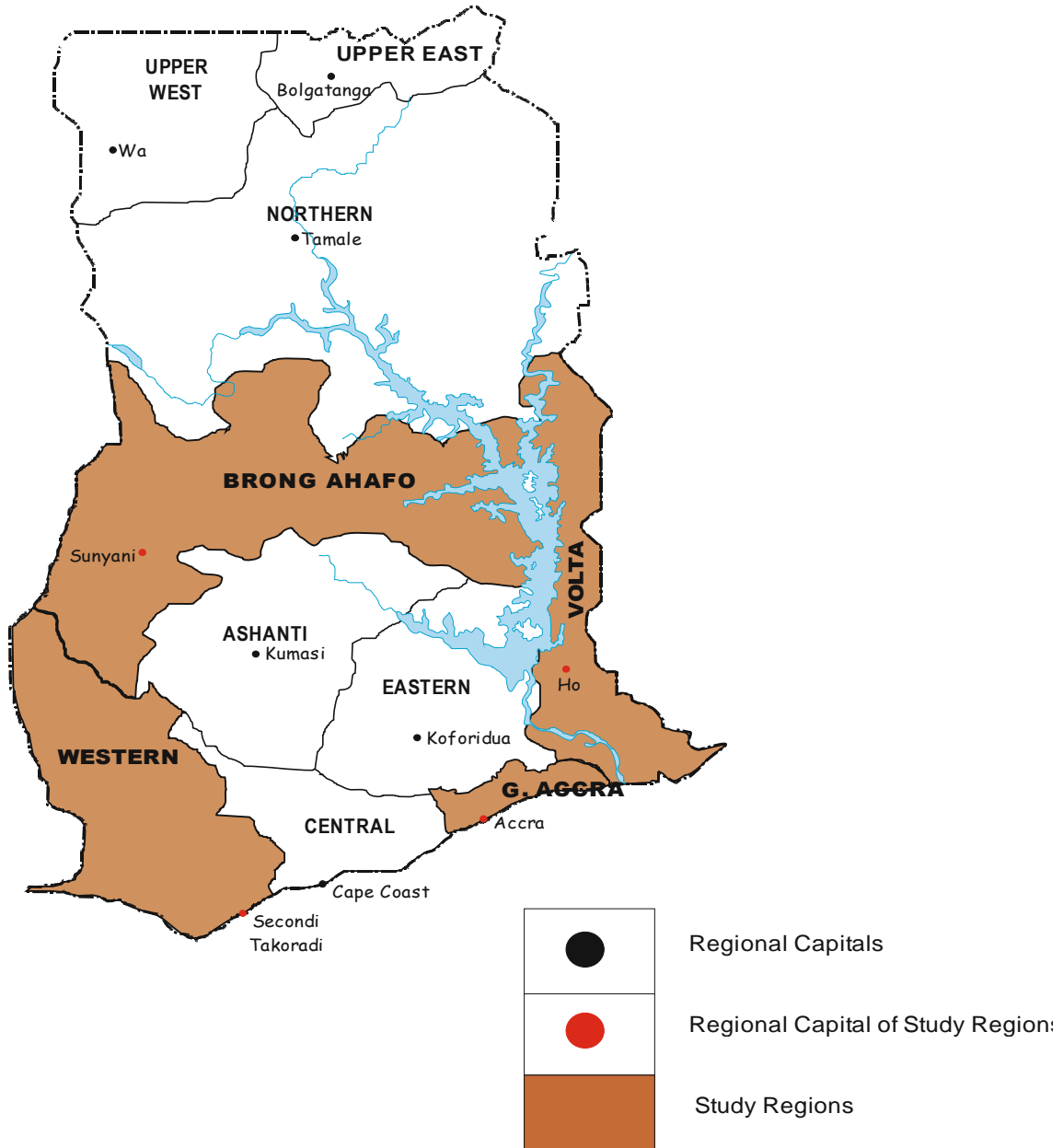
and Punch (1998) note, a researcher should consider research questions, motivation, size of the project and manageability within framework and access issues. These considerations informed the present research. I chose London because, as noted by Twum-Baah et al. (1995), most Ghanaians at the initial period of emigration chose the UK because of colonial linkages and the fact that most Ghanaians can communicate fairly well in English. The migration systems theory confirms that “migratory movements generally arise from the existence of prior links between sending and receiving countries based on colonization ... trade or cultural ties (Castles and Miller 1998:26). Further to that, Spence (2005)⁴ notes that 83.8% of the total Ghanaian population in England and Wales reside in London. Available estimates show that they are concentrated in Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Haringey, Lewisham and Croydon boroughs (Van Hear et al. 2004). Given the specific concentration of Ghanaians in the Borough of Haringey, specifically Tottenham and Seven Sisters, I selected this borough as my field for study from September 2007-April 2008. Map 1 below shows the map of England, indicating the study area Haringey Borough, located in its capital, London.

Map 1: Map of England and London showing study area (Haringey)



⁴ Spence (2005) used the Labour Force Surveys 2002/3 and the 2001 Census.

Map 2: Map of Ghana showing study areas



Using a multi-sited approach, I conducted fieldwork in Ghana (April - August, 2008) in four regions: Greater Accra, Brong-Ahafo, Western and Volta regions. The regions denoted by bold letters and their capitals marked with red dots; Accra, Sunyani, Sekondi-Takoradi and Ho constitute the study areas in the portions shaded brown on Map 2. These regions were chosen primarily because most participants encountered in London, for the first part

of the fieldwork from September 2007 to April 2008 originated from these regions and their contacts were mostly resident there. They were also actively engaged with non-migrants in these settings. Though some of the London participants were from the remaining six regions, like the Northern and Ashanti regions, they were too few to follow up to their places of origin. In addition, I was interested in finding out gender relations as they pertain at migrants' place of origin. Given the complexity of transnational networks and reality of 'two-way' flows which transcended nation-states boundaries, this was essential to provide analytical depth to the study.

Further follow-ups were done in London between September 2008 – November 2008, applying an 'intensive research methodology' (see Mazzucato 2007). The study investigated first and second generation migrants as well as non-migrants who were involved in the transnational social space. This permitted an appreciation of how intergenerational migrant issues crosscut gender ideologies and relations and the role of the transnational space in mediating gender relations.

3.2.1 Arriving in London and negotiating access

A major methodological problem for researchers is in gaining access to the field. Since the objective of this study is to examine gender relations between women and men and analyse the meanings, interpretations and implications for the migrants, their communities and for theory, I 'immersed' myself in the community, observing and interviewing as many people as were willing. In trying to build rapport in the community, my first point of contact among the Ghanaian diaspora in London was with a few Ghanaians, who I could already consider as friends and relatives. They facilitated my entry into the field and I built on their initial contacts using a snowballing technique based on their social networks to provide informal access. To avoid participant choice being skewed towards 'like' cases, I made further use of gatekeepers, such as leaders of the Akan, Ewe, Ga-Adangme Associations, Ghana Union, and Old School Associations in London and used my contacts at the Ghana High Commission in London to provide me with diversity. The churches also gave me a platform to establish contacts as I introduced myself to the Reverend Ministers in churches, who introduced me to their members. I worshipped at these churches and became acquainted with the members, creating opportunities for interactions. When eventually I

introduced myself and requested interviews they readily obliged. There are large numbers of Ghanaians in Haringey, and I regularly attended meetings and get-togethers of the numerous ethnic group associations. There were some exclusively Ghanaian restaurants as well, which I frequented especially over the weekends, giving me avenues to establish myself in the community as a researcher. I also used convenience sampling to take advantage of events, cases or situations where I could gain access to gather data. The fact that I was a Ghanaian 'indigene' enabled easy access to some activities in which I fully participated. My residence in the North London community for the period of the fieldwork provided me with valuable insights as I was using the same public transport alongside participants and accessing the same public places such as banks, supermarkets and health centres (surgeries).

Though initially I was apprehensive that as a man, I might find women not willing to participate, my perception was quite unfounded as borne out by the evidence on the field. Most women encountered were willing to discuss the issues with me provided they had been adequately informed and understood the purpose of the interview, and I had stayed around long enough for them to build enough trust in me. This also depended on the trustworthiness of the gatekeeper who introduced me. They invited me to their homes, but unfortunately for some of them, their husbands sometimes were informed of the interview only when I had arrived. The men mostly excused themselves, but on a few occasions said that they wanted to listen in, which I sometimes obliged depending on the inclination of the wife, and occasionally the interview turned to a group interview between the partners. On a few occasions women who were not so sure about my purpose asked that their husbands sit in on the interview. The interviews on those few occasions were illuminating as I established the power relations through the interactions, and took the opportunity to observe gender dynamics. There were also a few instances where the men I had gone to interview asked their wives to also join in.

To enable me to appreciate the dynamics in gender ideologies and relationships between home and the diaspora I visited the home communities in urban southern Ghana. I used the 'matched samples' approach and linked with networks of the families and friends of

participants I had encountered in London. Though this was not reflected in all cases it provided me with an appreciation of the intricate mechanisms that connect migrants to their home country. I used snowball technique in urban southern Ghana through informal networks of friends and relatives, and also approached participants through varied entry points, such as churches, schools, markets, workplaces and social gatherings in which I participated.

3.2.2 Sampling techniques

I used a non-probability sampling technique as it would be impossible to construct a 'reliable' sample, because official statistics do not reflect hidden populations and estimates may not be accurate. And also my objective was not to seek statistical representativeness. The fieldwork employed snowballing techniques as earlier explained. Because most people associate with people of like mind, various sources were approached to ensure diversity in participants with a wide range of experiences to avoid skewing the sample (Ritchie et al. 2003). I took particular care to interview elders of the churches, opinion leaders, pastors and executive members of hometown and old school associations. Because some of them acted as arbiters in misunderstandings and superintended social functions, they were knowledgeable about gender issues although not necessarily unbiased. As leaders they helped new arrivals to settle down and assisted others who needed accommodation, employment and their personal experiences of gender relations were also very helpful to the study.

With respect to transnational fosterage, the sample was purposely selected based on initial contact with parents who had sent their children to Ghana. Using these young adults and foster parents allowed me to investigate the networks from the two different sites across national borders. This was strategically done to enable me investigate the negotiations in gender division of labour across the transnational space from the different perspectives and enable me illustrate the relevant characteristics important to my research purpose (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Apart from interviews the children and foster parents were also observed in their foster homes as well as in their school environment. The investigation provided evidence and offered insight into the focus of study relating to the

influence of gender relations on transnational activities and vice-versa and its implications for intergenerational relations. The aim was not necessarily to achieve statistical generalizations, especially because the number of migrant parents who have sent their children to Ghana would be difficult to determine. The aim was also to provide in-depth rich data which was achieved.

3.3 Methods of data collection

Ethnographic research was chosen as the primary medium to collect data as it provides the avenue for a “first-hand exploration of research settings” (Atkinson et al. 2001:5). This method allows researchers to gain knowledge by being directly involved in the activities of the researched in a specific social setting using participant observation. However, I also used other relevant methods, as multiple data collection or triangulation can enrich and add depth as well as “breadth and richness” to the study (Denzin and Lincoln 2005:5). I therefore used a combination of informal conversations, in depth-interviews, participant observation, and focus groups to understand the lived experiences and gender relations of migrants and non-migrants as well. Apart from the methods corroborating each other, triangulation also “enhances confidence in the validity of the findings” (Greene et al. 2005). This section briefly describes these other methods.

3.3.1 Interviews

To gain a “greater breadth of information” (Boyle et al. 1998:51), and to help understand how participants make meaning of their lives in their different gendered domains, I used both informal and semi-structured interviews to allow for flexibility and enable them to reveal their perspectives without imposing a structure on them. However, an interview schedule was followed for semi-structured interviews to help focus the interviews, and also ensure the data is comparable. During occasions when I interacted with community members, informal conversations offered me the opportunity to build rapport and gather useful data for the research. For the formal interviews, I requested and ensured that participants consented to the interviews. As a male researcher, I was aware that women might find me a threat or not wish to be secluded with me, so I tried to arrange meetings at public places such as church premises, their places of work or cafes. However, they accepted me into their homes and I think the fact that I was a married man (evidenced by a

wedding ring – passing comments were made that I am married), and I also attended most social events with my wife who was with me in the community during the fieldwork, also contributed to my acceptance and the trust they built in me. I was therefore able to cultivate a respectful relationship and considerable rapport to gather rich data from my participants. The interviews conducted requested information on basic demographic data: age, sex, marital status, education, number of children and employment status, religion, town/city of origin, ethnic group, and length of stay in UK. Other issues covered in the interviews included information on their attitudes and gender orientations as well as changes to gender relations as a result of migration to a different social space, whether they work outside the home, whether they had done so in the past and how long they have been working in London, whether they had had any difficulties entering the labour market, either from the home or in the labour market itself. Furthermore both women and men were asked about some key items under household expenditure, such as the provision of household allowance and some long term financial decisions such as purchase of a car, or mortgaging a property, responsibility for day-to-day household expenses and also responsibility for decision making. The interviews provided me the opportunity to learn at first hand, information that I could not pick up through observation.

To enable a detailed examination of the data collected and also considering the limitations of writing responses *verbatim*, I audio-recorded all interviews, which were subsequently transcribed. The interviews took between forty minutes and three hours. I interviewed some participants more than once to clarify issues and assist in throwing more light on emerging ideas. However, I visited some households several times as my long presence in the community enabled me to cultivate some friendships, and some families invited my wife and I to meals during festive occasions or family get-togethers. The sensitive nature of the illegal status of some participants was a worry to me before I got to the field, and therefore during interviews I avoided direct questions about individuals' migration status. Though some would boldly inform me of their status, others were reluctant, although through indirect probing I was usually able to determine their status. For instance some informed me that they would wish to visit Ghana but that if they went they would not be able to return. Others informed me they were using different names abroad, an indication that they

might be impersonating somebody, due to their illegal status. Through such snippets of information I gathered the relevant data. I further acknowledged the viewpoint of interviewees throughout the process of interviewing without imposing mine on them. The interviews helped to authenticate some of my observations, because there were issues that would have been missed without them.

Interviewing in urban southern Ghana followed a similar pattern through the matched sampling technique. Unfortunately, when I got to Ghana a few migrants had not informed their relatives about the project as they had promised me, and therefore their partners were reluctant to participate in the project. I therefore had to call back to London for their partners to advise them to participate in the interview. I gathered that some were aware of the status of their partners and were afraid that they might inadvertently divulge information injurious to their partners. Therefore I could not take advantage of the matched samples technique in a few cases. Nonetheless, I also interviewed others whose partners I had not encountered in London, but who I had been reliably informed in the communities (and this was also verified by their partners) that their spouses were living in London. I was able to follow up on a few such cases when I returned to London.

James (2001) argues that ethnography facilitates the engagement of children and enables them to express their views. Young adults, ranging from 12 -21 years, were involved as part of the present project and were interviewed in urban southern Ghana. I sought the consent of their parents in London as well as the children's consent when I met them in urban southern Ghana; and that of their guardians and their teachers before involving them in the project. They were made to know they could withdraw at any time in the interview. Because the information I needed was personal and sensitive, most interviews were conducted as private discussions in quiet spaces. I developed rapport with the children and reflexively questioned my presence throughout the research process, being aware of the adult-child power relationship, ensuring that they did not identify me as an authority figure. A group discussion was also facilitated where they were allowed to share their views and experiences on the subject. This method was adapted from suggestions from other scholars (see Christensen and James 2000). For instance, O'Kane advises that young adults should

be given information on the project, and determine where, when and with whom the interview should take place; and researchers should show that they value their time by thanking them, and also by payment for their participation (2000: 151). In this study the young adults were rewarded with stationery, since all of them were students.

3.3.2 Participant observation

In studying gender relations among Ghanaian migrants I adopted participant observation as a core of ethnography, because as Hammersley has argued, just relying on what people say they believe and do without observing, “neglects the complex relationship between attitudes and behaviour” (1992:11). The participant observation researcher is expected to observe and participate in the daily interactions and activities of participants over an extended period, observing, listening to conversations and asking questions where relevant to learn about the whole gamut of their life experiences and recording information about their lives (Dewalt and Dewalt 2002; Bernard 2006). This refers to the process as well as the written product at the end of the study (Emerson et al. 2001). I immersed myself in the Ghanaian community in London, listening to them and observing their daily lives. I was a member of the men’s fellowship in the church, attended meetings and paid dues and was therefore seen as one of them and sometimes was asked to lead meetings. I spent many hours with community members during social activities, providing me the opportunity to understand the social context and draw together important observations. Due to my physical build I was regarded as a good ‘bouncer’, so during a few social gatherings I was asked to play the role of a security guard as well as a ticketing agent at the event gates, for which I collected no allowance⁵. Based on their perception of my status, executive members of groups asked me to review their speeches, earmarked to be delivered during social gatherings. Though sometimes they were unconscious of my presence among them, I was always conscious of my role as a researcher and cognisant of other scholars’ advice that the researcher should maintain a professional distance (Adler and Adler 1994). Apart from what they said, I observed their interactions and noted gender roles in activities such as responsibility for the distribution of food, and changing children’s nappies. Field notes

⁵ A ‘bouncer’ is a security officer or door supervisor. Apart from my professional training as a security officer, I had also undergone training and was licensed by the Security Industry Authority (UK) as a door supervisor.

were taken during such informal gatherings. I had the opportunity to stay in people's homes as part of observations. In urban southern Ghana I stayed in a home each in Ho, Accra and Sunyani. I also stayed in three homes in North London. The period of staying in homes ranged from 3 to 8 days. The longest I stayed was with a family in Sunyani who hosted me for part of my field work in the locality. I sought permission from both partners through mainly using the partner initially introduced to me as the link for the opportunity. The visits and participation in activities allowed for observation of male and female roles and interactions, enabling me to present the lives of women and men as I observed and heard.

The participant observation techniques used in London were replicated in urban southern Ghana, where it was far easier to melt into the communities as I was more comfortable and Ghanaians generally had nothing to be apprehensive about, unlike some migrants in London. In homes I took the opportunity to observe children's work, their social lives and their relationship with adults, especially studying second-generation young adults who had been sent by their parents from London to be fostered in Ghana, while I interviewed their foster parents. I also observed them in their schools.

3.3.3 Focus group discussions

I applied focus group discussions as another complementary method to contribute to methodological triangulation. I wanted to witness the interactions of participants on the subject matter especially to corroborate some observations, and also because at interviews there were some issues which were not very clear. There were also some general inconsistencies about which I thought understanding why they "feel as they do" (Bernard 2006) about the subject would illuminate. Agar and MacDonald comment that focus groups provide 'added significance' to ethnographic data by helping to confirm and interpret earlier findings, and also provide new learning from "the group point of view that is the goal of ethnographic research" (1995: 81). Therefore this process was adopted to validate the data. Due to logistical, time-constraints and other factors, eight focus groups were initially planned and conducted, composing between 4-8 persons in each group. A major consideration was to estimate the time available for each participant to contribute and their level of interest in the subject matter. There were three each of same-sex and two mixed

focus group sessions. They lasted between approximately an hour and an hour and half. Participants were selected randomly using snowball techniques through contacts in churches, hometown and old school associations as well as informal networks. Some respondents who participated in in-depth interviews also recommended others for the focus group discussions. There was a ninth session, originally an individual interview, which became a group interview due to the participant inviting two of her female friends. The sessions were conducted by the researcher alone, and their perspectives, experiences and opinions were obtained by exploring gender ideologies and relations, to confirm viewpoints I had already gathered (cf. Gibbs 1997). I guided the discussion as a moderator, raising relevant themes on their perceptions of how gender ideologies influence their relations and actions and whether there are any 'gains' or 'loses' for male or female, as well as whether issues of class, ethnicity and legal status intersect with gender in their efforts to integrate into London. I also assessed their incorporation in the UK labour market, their fiscal distributive systems and decision making processes, and clarified some ideas. The sessions provided the opportunity for 'synergistic effects' as members took the lead from others and expanded viewpoints, leading to novel insights (Langford and McDonagh 2003; Oates 2000).

The focus groups were held in a group member's home, social centre or at the church premises - where the majority were members of a particular group. A major challenge was whether to constitute homogeneous or heterogeneous groupings. Flick (2002) favours an approach where participants do not know each other; but others prefer more openness, achievable with people who know each other as there would be no inhibitions about participants openly engaging each other. While I favoured groupings which knew each other to allow them to feel comfortable and speak openly, I did not always end up with a perfectly homogenous group. However, I segmented the composition of groups based on demographic characteristics such as age and gender where appropriate. The success of the interactions in eliciting varied interpretations and view points showed that there was a case for using both approaches, either strangers or acquaintances; the researcher plays a critical role in facilitating the process irrespective of acquaintance levels. These discussions opened

up new areas not covered in the individual interviews, and issues not well reflected in the individual interviews were clarified.

3.4 Participant profiles

In all, I interviewed 240 participants in both the destination and host countries. In London 105 in-depth interviews were conducted, eight focus groups comprising 35 individuals, and a group interview of 3 persons. Included in the in-depth interviews were 22 migrant parents of young adults sent back home, and 21 migrants whose spouses were living in Ghana. There was an overlap as 6 persons participated in both the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. In effect, 99 took part in only the in-depth interviews, 29 in only focus group discussions, 6 in both in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Then 3 participated in a group interview. This brought the total number of participants in London to 137.

In urban southern Ghana, I interviewed 82 adults in four regions, including 20 foster parents and 18 non-migrants whose spouses were living in London. 21 young adults who had been sent to Ghana by their parents in London, to be fostered were additionally interviewed. They ranged from 12 to 21 years. Therefore in urban southern Ghana I interviewed a total of 82 adults and 21 young adults, totaling 103. 137 in London with 103 in urban southern Ghana made the total of 240 participants. I present below the general characteristics of the participants.

3.4.1 London

The profile is based on 105 participants comprising 56 men and 49 women, who participated in the in-depth interviews in North London. The participants were of a variety of social, educational and economic backgrounds. Their ages ranged from 26 to 61 years. I interviewed cab drivers, pastors, nurses, chefs, customer assistants, security officers, teachers, lecturers and accountants among others. The majority of the participants were married and were full-time employees or doing two or more part-time jobs. They were mainly from three major ethnic groups in urban southern Ghana, the Akan from the Brong-Ahafo, Ashanti and Western regions, the Ewe from the Volta region and the Ga from the

Greater Accra region. Throughout the fieldwork it was evident that these ethnic groups compose the majority of Ghanaians in London. The official data on Ghanaians in London do not separate Ghanaians into ethnic groups but put them together as Black Africans or by their nationality. The numbers and characteristics of the participants are not necessarily representative in a strict statistical sense, though I tried to cover a broadly representative cross-section. They could also be grouped into different generations: their times of arrival to the UK differ and second and third generations have been born in the UK. The diverse nature of the participants provided me with different viewpoints and knowledge of their experiences both in Ghana and in the United Kingdom. It was however difficult to collect full demographic data for all the individuals who participated in the focus group discussions due to time constraints. Some were also unwilling to provide any personal information in the presence of others. I have therefore not included focus group participants in the analysis below. They have been categorized for purposes of analysis under the following headings; age, marital status, year of arrival, education and occupation.

Table 1: Age of London participants

Age	Women	Men	Total
19-29	7	3	10
30-39	21	9	30
40-49	10	21	31
50-59	8	19	27
60+	3	4	7
Total	49	56	105

Source: own fieldwork 2007-08

Table 1 shows the age distribution of the participants, with the majority being between 30 and 59 years. They were purposely selected to ensure that they had some experiential knowledge of the cultural and socio-economic circumstances of Ghana at the time of their migration, to enable them to link Ghana to their new environment in the United Kingdom. However a few of the respondents were below 29, because it was necessary to consider the attitudes of the youth on gender relations in generational terms. The inclusion of those

above 60 was important; most had been in UK for a long period and therefore could comment on gender dynamics in UK and how it was shaping Ghanaian livelihoods and activities. The men were generally older than the women, probably because culturally in Ghana men mostly married younger women: this seems to be reflected in the finding. Additionally, initial emigration to UK mostly involved men; however, women are now migrating independently and joining the migration streams.

The majority of my respondents were married (Table 2). While my aim was not to study marriage as an institution, invariably gender relations and ideologies are best exemplified in the household, and households are social units within which women and men are studied (Lloyd and Gage-Brandon 1993). Though this is a non-random sample of the Ghanaian migrant population, I purposely oversampled married persons. It is acknowledged that this strategy has some limitations, in that for instance, it could mask the power dynamics that lead to the formation of single parent households as the views of single parents are under represented. However, this strategy was useful for exposing the power relations inherent in gender relationships in the household.

Table 2: Marital Status of London participants

Marital Status	Women	Men	Total
Single	16	4	20
Married	23	47	70
Separated	6	4	10
Divorced	1	1	2
Widowed	2	0	2
Engaged	1	0	1
Total	49	56	105

Source: own fieldwork 2007-08

Some of the respondents however did not have their spouses staying in the UK, enabling me to explore issues related to transnational marriages. It was also important to talk to single persons in order to gauge their perceptions about gender relations and attitudes to egalitarianism. Out of the 20 who were single, only 4 were under 30 years, indicating that

both men and women may be postponing the age of marriage. The greater number of young single women also testifies to the feminisation of migration. Most had travelled independently for economic reasons.

Table 3: Year of Arrival of London participants

Year of Arrival	Women	Men	Total
Before 1970	4	4	8
1971-1980	8	2	10
1981-1990	12	25	37
1991-2000	16	12	28
2001-2004	9	13	22
Total	49	56	105

Source: own fieldwork 2007-08

The cut-off point for the year of arrival for study participants was 2004 so that they would have been in the United Kingdom for more than four years (see Table 3). It was necessary to ensure that they had been in UK long enough to notice any variations in life circumstances and experience, as well as appreciate gender dynamics. It was also assumed that after four years they would have settled down considerably in the diaspora. The research showed that most of the arrivals were concentrated in the 1980s and 1990s, and most participants indicated that they came to UK at that time due to economic hardships faced at home. This corroborates other studies indicating Ghana's economic crisis in the 1980s and 1990s (Hutchful 2002; Kessey 2000; see also section 2.1). From 1991 to 2004, 25 women and 25 men arrived. However, there were more single women in the late arrivals than married women, who had arrived in earlier cohorts.

Most of the participants in this research, totalling about 51% of the sample were university graduates (Table 4). Spence (2005), using the 2001 Census data, states that 33.3% of Ghanaians were from the higher levels (degrees, NVQ4 &5); 48.2% lower levels (GCSE, 'O' Level) and those with 'none'/'other'/'unknown' qualifications, 18.5%. The unknown qualifications of 18.5% make comparability with my data problematic. While there was an

attempt to interview migrants from as varied a background as possible by using several networks, there were some constraints. Migrants with an educational background below secondary education were reluctant to communicate with me since they were suspicious of any research project.

Table 4: Educational level of London participants

Educational Level	Women	Men	Total
Basic Education (Up to 10 years)	6	5	11
Secondary (GCE 'O' Level)	6	4	10
Post Secondary Education (GCE 'A' Level/ Diploma)	13	17	30
Degree/ Professional Qualification	15	19	34
Masters	9	11	20
Total	49	56	105

Source: own fieldwork 2007-08

Many migrants who are uneducated have found it difficult to regularise their status and live as illegal migrants, and were therefore unwilling to interact with any person they were not very familiar with. Additionally, it appeared from my interactions with the community that it was easier for graduates to obtain visas to the UK; considering the unemployment situation of Ghanaian graduates, including nurses and teachers, many were seeking greener pastures abroad. The UK government policy objective for managing migration under the work permit scheme aimed at attracting skilled migrants, and de-emphasised low-skilled programmes from non-EU countries, seeking to meet low-skilled vacancies from mainly EEA countries (House of Lords 2008). This favoured skilled migrants from Ghana. This therefore means that about 80% of the sample is educated above post secondary level, which has implications for thesis findings. Significantly, although 51% of the sample had at least a first degree, their present occupations did not reflect this as only about 30% could be regarded as working in senior level positions predominantly men.

The majority of participants were working in the service sector, comprising education, health and other services (Table 5). Those categorized as working in other services include cleaners, lawyers, factory workers, security, accountants, chefs, drivers (mini-cab/bus), social workers, pastors, hairdressers, receptionists and customer service assistants.

Table 5: Occupation Categories of London participants

Occupation	Women	Men	Total
Education	7	6	13
Health	7	6	13
Other Services	35	34	69
Manufacturing	0	10	10
Total	49	56	105

Source: own fieldwork 2007-08

Those in education comprise mainly teachers, lecturers and teaching assistants. Nurses, doctors and care workers were recorded in the health category. Though both men and women were almost evenly balanced in the sectors, there was gender segregation under manufacturing with none of my female participants working in that area. The women migrants confirmed that factory work is tedious and difficult and taken up only as a last resort; mostly illegal migrants enter into this sector when they do not have a choice in the labour market. The group comprised mainly labourers and packers.

Ghanaian migrants can be categorised in broad terms into four generations, which also impact on their gender relations, practices and roles. The first-generation migrants arrived before independence to educate themselves and prepare for self-rule. Some interviewees maintained that the women in this category helped their husbands by working while their men (husbands) came to study in the UK. When they got back to Ghana, these women were divorced by their husbands with the excuse that they were illiterate and not sophisticated enough for their now elite husbands. The second-generation migrants, who arrived around the 1960s and 1970s, decided that both spouses should work and also pursue studies. In this case, they both became educated and therefore the basis for divorcing the women was no

longer tenable. Those who remained could rub shoulders with their educated men, and began the process of egalitarianisation as both became integrated into the labour market because they were both educated.

Most women and men of the third generation arrived in the 1980s and 1990s quite independently of each other as economic migrants, having come purposely to improve their economic conditions and those of their families, who might have helped them as a household survival strategy. At this stage some also arrived due to family re-union policies and also to further their studies. This group tend to be more egalitarian in their gender relations than the previous two categories. They pursue individual lifestyles because their objective is to attain economic independence; therefore both consider that each individual has a stake in relationships and everything should be shared equally to enable them to fulfil their objectives for travelling abroad. This is reflected in their gender relations. Their extended families constantly reminded them both of their mission to improve their standard of living, and to remember their families back home. The ‘fourth generation’, who are basically the youth born in the UK, seem to have accepted equality because they have grown up in this society, which encourages practices of egalitarianism. Though British society cannot be described as fully egalitarian, it seems more permissive of gender equality. Most of the parents of the ‘fourth generation’ try to remind them of their cultural heritage and some are made to travel back home to learn about Ghanaian culture. Most of the third (recent migrants) and fourth generations (children of first generation born in London) belong to the same age cohort and are growing into adults.

3.4.2 Urban Southern Ghana

In urban southern Ghana I interviewed 82 persons in the four regions for the project, including 20 in Greater Accra, 19 in Western, 22 in Brong-Ahafo and 21 in Volta. They comprised 44 women and 38 men. In all, I interviewed 24 matched samples of women and men. The matched sample selection procedure was based on deliberately tracking down spouses in urban southern Ghana whose migrant partners had been interviewed in London. The permission of migrants was sought and where they agreed they made the initial contacts for me to interview their partners’ in urban southern Ghana. The migrants provided

the telephone numbers and location of spouses. In some cases the migrants called their partners in my presence and informed them that I would be travelling to Ghana and that they would be grateful if they (non-migrants) would permit me to interview them for the project. Though most respondents in Ghana cooperated a few were unwilling. In other cases when I arrived in urban southern Ghana for the interview the non-migrants called their spouses abroad to confirm my identity before proceeding. In a particular case the mobile number the migrant gave me could not go through anytime I called him from Ghana, and anytime I got to the partner she insisted on calling the partner to confirm first. Whenever I visited she maintained that the partner was not picking her calls, so I eventually gave up that matched sample. In two cases the matched sample was determined the other way round as I met non-migrants in urban southern Ghana who I got to know had their spouses staying in my field area in London and through contacts their migrant partners responded positively. Therefore on my return to London I interviewed their migrant partners as well. I further interviewed 21 young adults, comprising girls and boys who had been sent from London to Ghana by their parents to be fostered. The profiles below are for the adults.

The majority of the participants are aged between 30-59 years, 76% of the population (Table 6). I wanted participants from an age group closely resembling the majority age group of participants in London, because being contemporaneous would to some extent imply comparability. As in London, I included some youths below 29 years to investigate generational effects.

Table 6: Age of Ghanaian participants

Age	Women	Men	Total
19-29	7	7	14
30-39	15	10	25
40-49	10	9	19
50-59	9	9	18
60+	3	3	6
Total	44	38	82

Source: own fieldwork 2008

The inclusion of those above 60 was meant to enable an assessment of the evolution of gender relations from a historical perspective, and to provide rich information about their own experiences. There were more women than men among the participants, probably because there were more men who introduced their partners to me in urban southern Ghana.

Table 7: Marital Status of Ghanaian participants

Marital Status	Women	Men	Total
Single	3	5	8
Married	28	26	54
Separated	5	2	7
Widowed	3	2	5
Engaged	5	3	8
Total	44	38	82

Source: own fieldwork 2008

Table 7 shows that most of the participants (about 66%), were married. In addition, most of the participants who confirmed that they were engaged were living together and therefore were involved in a marriage relationship, though not fully consummated. Out of the 6 participants above 60 years, all the 3 women and one man were widowed, another man remained married and the other was separated.

Table 8: Occupation Categories of Ghanaian participants

Occupation	Women	Men	Total
Education	9	10	21
Health	10	6	12
Other Services	4	14	23
Manufacturing	5	6	7
Trading	13	2	15
Unemployed	3	0	2
Total	44	38	82

Source: own fieldwork 2008

Table 8 shows the occupations of those interviewed in urban southern Ghana. Those in the health category included mainly nurses, midwives, a pharmacist and a doctor. The education category consists of teachers in basic and secondary education and a few

lecturers. Other services comprised administrators, Rev. Ministers, bankers, journalists, IT professionals, secretaries and security officers. Manufacturing mainly comprised mechanics, electricians and food processing. There is gender segregation both in the trading sector, where most of the women are concentrated, and also in a greater number of nurses; the only pharmacist and doctor in the population are male. The unemployed women were housewives. A few lecturers, teachers and secretaries from the other services category were women. The men consisted mainly of bankers, administrators, teachers, and IT professionals. Though women and men were almost evenly balanced in the education sector, more men were in higher institutions while the women worked in the basic education sector.

Graduates constituted the highest number of participants of first and second degree holders combined, 34% (see Table 9), though this is not as marked out as with the London participants. This sample is more varied in terms of educational attainment, with Post-Secondary and Diploma holders constituting about 27%, because most teachers and nurses were 'post-secondary holders'. About 30% of the women completed basic education, and most were traders.

Table 9: Educational level of Ghanaian participants

Educational Level	Women	Men	Total
Basic Education (Up to 10 years)	13	5	18
Secondary (GCE 'O' Level)	9	5	14
Post Secondary Education (GCE 'A' Level/ Diploma)	12	10	22
Degree/ Professional Qualification	8	12	20
Masters	2	6	8
Total	44	38	82

Source: own fieldwork 2008

3.5 Ethical Issues

I was guided principally by the professional code of ethics of the Social Science Association governing the School of Global Studies at the University of Sussex. This is because employing ethnographic research means a likelihood of ethical issues to contend with. For instance, the research project engaged participants in informal conversations and observations which exposed their lives to me. During group discussions it was difficult to conceal the identities of participants. The following sections describe how I managed the incidents of ethical dilemmas.

3.5.1 Informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity

Before entering the field I designed a summary of the project, detailing the objectives of the research and participants' involvement in it, emphasising the fact that it was voluntary. I introduced myself and sought their informed consent. On first visiting prospective participants, I introduced the summary of the work, explained the research to them and then requested an appropriate time to conduct an interview. The use of e-mail facilitated the process, as the leadership of some groups just asked me to send them a summary of what I was doing. The summary was circulated to their mailing list by the executives and members were asked to contact me if they were interested. Those who were interested called me and an appropriate time and venue was arranged by phone. The consent form was given to them when I eventually met them. In most cases after the explanation, participants were reluctant to sign the consent form. They asked that I proceed with the interview or that we simply arrange a convenient time if the day is not suitable for them. They mostly explained that they understood the project.

What I learned from this is that Ghanaians are very suspicious of each other; stories abound of fellow Ghanaians who become acquainted with the Home Office and after interaction with their fellow nationals they inform on them. While these are anecdotes and nobody could pin-point anyone who had been deported or penalised for talking to anyone, they preferred to deal with me on the basis of trust. They constantly reminded me that if they were not interested in participating they would not have invited me to their homes, workplaces, meetings or churches. A few became suspicious when I introduced the form,

and asked me whether the research was for my PhD; if I replied in the affirmative, then they wanted to know who I intended to send the form to. Even those I considered to be conversant with research processes acted in this way. Therefore I did not persist when participants were reluctant to sign, but sought their oral consent. Their positions as migrants contributed to their reluctance to sign consent forms. Though some had regularised their immigrant status they were still distrustful of officialdom and uncomfortable with a formalised atmosphere.

Surprisingly I faced similar problems in my fieldwork in urban southern Ghana, but participants were more open. They made it clear that they were assisting me to acquire my degree and therefore if the signature would not bring them any monetary gain then I should just concentrate on what will help me achieve my objective, the interview. For the least educated, after explanations about the project they would inform me they could not read and therefore they could not sign. After I got some friends or relatives to read it out to them to confirm the contents they would just ask that I arrange for a meeting or go ahead where they were ready. However, as I was living in the communities, I constantly tried to explain the project to those willing to learn about it, and suspended using the consent forms. Sometimes, participants who had been earlier informed by their relatives or partners abroad of my plan to interview them still wanted re-confirmation from them after I arrived. I always allowed them that option, to prove the voluntary nature of participation.

After a participant consents to take part in research, it is incumbent on the researcher to ensure anonymity of the researched. My position as an 'insider' made it easier for me to enter the field and this made me privy to some information which might be difficult for an outsider to obtain. This position, Finch (1994) suggests, should not be exploited. As a Ghanaian, participants were sometimes comfortable enough in my presence to divulge sensitive information because, as they normally said, "but as for you, you are our brother". I therefore ensured that their identities were protected and also have tried to minimize any potential harm to any of them. I therefore consciously use the information provided me in a responsible manner, ensuring their anonymity. The issue of confidentiality is also paramount to this research, because with time I became accepted in the community. Friends

and previous interviewees sometimes requested out of curiosity, to know the viewpoints of colleagues I had interviewed. I politely changed the subject and ensured that I did not discuss such issues after the interview was over. To conceal their identity, where names have been used, they have been anonymised, especially because I have identified the field site. I ensure that all the minidisks of interviews conducted have been securely stored in a private safe.

During periods that I interviewed children, I ensured that the children understood the essence of the project and had their consent before proceeding with the interview. I made certain that these interviews took place in a friendly atmosphere without the young child being distressed or intimidated. I respected their opinion because I noticed that some did not want their foster parents to hear their opinions, and the discussion remained discrete. In all cases the guardians/parents first approved of the interview. Following on Mayall (2000), I acknowledged the power relations between adults and children in trying to understand their childhood relations with adults and their status as migrant children. Some interviews with the young adults were quite emotional, especially with those who felt they had been 'betrayed' by their parents. Some parents informed them they were going to the US, only for them to surface in Ghana, or that they were going on holidays, only for them to be informed in Ghana that they were not returning to London and that they would remain and attend school in Ghana. I made them aware we could discontinue the interviews if they were uncomfortable but they insisted they wanted to go ahead, and that they had overcome their bitterness but they thought it was inappropriate for parents to deceive their children.

3.5.2 Representation:

The question of representation as outlined by Loon is whether ethnographers adequately represent subjects in writing and whether the writing adequately represents what is happening (2001: 280). It is recognised that researchers are enmeshed in the social worlds they study, and therefore their reconstructing of knowledge is sometimes subjective. Put differently, Smith and Deemer (2003) argue that because researchers speak for others they must be circumspect in what they say, and that is why the issue of reflexivity becomes paramount in ethnography. Postmodernism and feminism encourage reflexivity because the

researcher cannot dislodge her/himself from her/his social, cultural and political context as they are part of the world they study. Rose (1997: 306) maintains that reflexivity is a “crucial goal for all critical geographies.” Though I do not intend to undertake a feminist methodology, I am conscious of their concerns and criticisms of ethnography. As Stacey explains, “ethnographic research depends on human relationships...it places subjects at grave risk of manipulation and betrayal” (1991:112). I side with Harding (1987) that there is no distinctive feminist method but feminist research practices, which are considered by this study. For instance various factors ‘filter knowledge’ (Fontana and Frey 2005:712) such as gender, nationality, class and other social differentials. It is important that the researcher recognises the effects that factors such as “his /her personal history, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity” (Denzin et al. 2003:9) could have on the production of the text. Based on these therefore I was self aware, self conscious and constantly reflected on the research and researched as well, throughout the process.

Language difficulties could also lead to misinterpretation, especially where the researcher’s language differs from that of the researched. I therefore noted these facts, and because I speak all the three languages of the people researched I did not face a problem of interpretation. The interviews were conducted in the three languages depending on the preference of the participant, and I transcribed all the data personally. Therefore I was able to reduce the problems associated with transcribing data to the English text, especially using a third party. This did not rule out challenges of shifting from one language to the other, but I was able to minimize deficiencies to a large extent.

3.5.3 Positioning the researcher - Insider/Outsider?

My interest in this project emerges from my experience as an immigration officer in Ghana for more than a decade. During part of the period I was stationed at various border controls in Ghana. The popular discourse has been that it is mainly men who travelled and women only did so as dependents or following their husbands. However, my initial observations disproved the discourse as women also frequently travelled, and this led to my questioning the discourses. During informal interactions with travellers I gathered that some of the women were travelling as independent migrants, either as business-women or seeking

better opportunities. My interest also grew from hearing anecdotes, mainly from migrants, indicating contestations and tensions in gender relationships abroad, though there was no empirical evidence to support these assertions. I found these narratives quite interesting and it is from these perspectives that I decided to document the experiences and investigate the situation, to explore the gendered implications of this phenomenon when I had the opportunity to pursue a DPhil programme.

In the ‘insider’/‘outsider’ debate, some researchers assume that sharing similar characteristics such as culture, age, race, and class with participants, would lead to easier access to the field and a more genuine understanding of the culture (Merriam et al. 2001). Wolf (1996:5) advocates that ‘insider’ research is richer in data collection than outsider studies, because outsiders lack “double vision” (Collins 1990). Others disagree, for instance Simmel indicates that “‘outsiders’ may have some advantages lacked by insiders (2002 cited from Ergun and Erdemir 2010:17). Merton cautions that “one needs not be Caesar to understand Caesar,” stating that social scientists need enough distance and professional knowledge to investigate social life irrespective of the “worth of one’s group” (1972:31). Merriam et al. draw attention to the ambiguity between the two terms. The ‘outsider’ proponents claim the detachment enables objectivity, and freedom from potential bias caused by affinity to research subjects. They claim the ‘insider’ will assume prior knowledge which would colour their judgement and therefore overlook essential details. Personally, I am conscious of my positionality as a Ghanaian, in a sense a ‘native ethnographer’. At the same time, I am aware that I am not a ‘migrant’ *per se*, but have imposed myself as a field worker in the time-space of others. My middle-class status, professional career and student status in a western university would create power relations. Significantly, the ‘field’ (host country) is another context for both researcher and researched, as Ghanaians. I am therefore positioned in various arenas with the researched, which I reflect upon to understand the landscape of power positioning inherent in these relationships (cf Rose 1997).

I find myself as an ‘insider’ and in some cases an ‘outsider’ or both, confirming the suggestion by Merriam et al. (2001) that positionality shifts. Noting my social location as a

Ghanaian, and the dilemmas and challenges of negotiating the insider/outsider position in both research sites in London and urban southern Ghana, I constantly reflected on the multiple positionalities and negotiated the power relationships. I had not lived in London before, so I managed not to act too much like an ‘insider’ and could probe many important issues to enhance my understanding of the subject matter. In the process, I was aware that my professional values and perceptions could influence the process of data collection, analysis and representation. I acknowledged the power relationship between a middle class elite like myself, and migrants some of whom are illegally resident and apprehensive about their very existence in UK. The question is what is the nature of the power relations between me and Ghanaian migrants, who in most cases find themselves marginalised in the country of destination? I reassessed my positionality as an immigration officer; a few people who knew my profession were anxious in my presence being unsure if I was a genuine student, or collaborating with UK institutions such as the UK Border Agency which they so much feared. I always tried to be reassuring in such circumstances.

Interviewing is regarded as a ‘masculine paradigm,’ and interviewing women especially demanded that I negotiate the process appropriately (Mapedzahama 2007). To maintain a non-hierarchical relationship, a guiding principle was Rose’s suggestion not to pretend to be an “all-knowing, all seeing” researcher (1997: 305). I needed to be aware that even at the later stage, I decide what interviews to interpret and what to present; as this also constitutes an act of power (Mapedzahama 2007). But as Mapedzahama notes, interviewees also have the ability to negotiate power. On many occasions my participants determined where and when interviews were held and who should be present. I conducted an interview in a pub because the participant felt that was most appropriate, but when I tried to transcribe the data, the background was too noisy, and without my field notes I would have lost parts of a very interesting interview. Sometimes, an interviewee turned up very late at a venue and I would have to wait for up to 45 minutes or more.

Like Mapedzahama, I went to the field assuming that because I shared the same culture, race and gender (men) I would be easily accepted. But I was confronted with challenges, some to do with access, and others displays of power relationships. For instance, one man

subtly withdrew his wife from an interview, because the wife had not informed him earlier. Sometimes I realised that I had been allocated ‘outsider’ status, for instance when asked whether I was a migrant studying in London or a resident in Ghana, studying abroad. When I said I was a resident in Ghana pursuing a course in UK, I was seen as privileged: that I would soon go back to Ghana and become a ‘big man’⁶. They probed where I was employed before the PhD programme. I was always dumbfounded in such situations: do I tell the truth or do I lie? Feminists and post-colonial anthropologists have raised concerns about deception in self-disclosure. If a researcher seeks truth from the researched should the researcher refuse to disclose his/her identity in return (Murphy and Dingwall 2001)? On the one hand, if I said I was an immigration officer they would mistrust me since they will not be sure of my relationship with the UK Home Office, and this could compromise my fieldwork. Any time I answered that question I had to add that my employers had no official relationship with the Home Office and that my research is independent of any institution. I was obliged sometimes to share my experiences with the participants, but this reinforced my outsider status, though potentially a liability. This approach however, attempting to answer the participants’ questions also promoted reciprocity.

Nevertheless, I was sometimes regarded as an insider. For instance when I tried to find out why men are reluctant to perform house work, the immediate reply, for both women and men was, “But you are a Ghanaian man, you should know”. The perception that I was part of the ‘in-group’ created a barrier to their expanding on their responses, potentially affecting the interview situation. As Allen et al. explain, laughter, “generates a common definition [and understanding] of the problem.... Building....solidarity...and alliance” between the participants and the researcher (2004: 178). Some women participants would ask me directly, with laughter, “so when are you people (men) going to change?” They identified me as part of the ‘out-group,’ Ghanaian men, against Ghanaian women, implying my complicity in the situation I was investigating. This situation sometimes improved rapport; the negative aspect is that participants tended to take the conversation for granted

⁶ A respectable person with a high socio-economic status and prominence sometimes regarded also as an elder by the community.

as they expected me to have answers to questions I was asking. This is why participant observation was also crucial to the study.

Angrosino and Perez (2000) remind researchers to be conscious of their gender and class in the setting. It was difficult to extricate myself from these perceptions, but sometimes I think it provided an opportunity for the women to release their frustrations because at least being a man, engaged in a shared empathic understanding with them, they could pour their hearts out to me. So I was constantly juggling between outsider/insider/ neither roles, and the ability to successfully gather the data, analyse it and present it is a testimony to self-reflexivity. As a male researcher, my position as ‘dominator’ interacting with ‘subordinates’ raised vital issues. I therefore noted the implications of my gender for the fieldwork.

I also was aware that the differences between adults and children must be recognised (James 2001). I sought to concentrate on the “quality of relations”, acknowledging ties of reciprocity and undertaking to elicit maximum cooperation and shared benefits for all (Narayan 1993:672). Interviewing young people, I ensured that my position as a professional Ghanaian male, did not influence the research process. Interviewees were free to communicate their views on their experiences and dilemmas, and I paid special attention to their voices during the interviews, some of which are reflected in the thesis. This study is presented conscious of the fact that it is situated in my multiple social locations. The issue of power is not readily solved, but being reflexive and conscious of the relationship has helped me to confront it.

3.5.4 Reflections of a male researcher

There is a perception that a married man is ‘cool’ and reliable and should be trusted. I noticed that most women did not see me as a threat and men were comfortable for me to interact with their partners because of the presence of my wife in the field. Women in the community were ready to help my wife gain employment and show her around. She facilitated my entry into the field, especially in linking me to women. When she started working and got acquainted with Ghanaian work-mates whom I got to know, some were

recruited as participants. We were invited to homes together as a couple and I took advantage of such visits to observe power relations. Our visits together to shopping centres, churches and social functions enabled me to easily engage myself as a participant observer. These socialising moments established and reinforced my presence in the field cultivating contacts, and facilitated my collection of data through in-depth interviews. I personally had the dilemma of rethinking my gender orientations. My wife was in paid employment while I was collecting data in the field, and in the circumstances I had to adjust to performing housework. For instance, in Ghana though I knew how to cook, there were very few occasions when I needed to cook, because there was always another woman relative available, if my wife was not in. This poignantly showed me the intricacies of migrants' lived experiences: I had to share their experiences as a natural consequence of my entering the research field with my wife.

Gregory advises that most information can be obtained from observations and informal conversations, and interviews then complete the picture. Researchers should therefore create a non-hierarchical relationship during interactions, being alert to signals that imply discomfort and reluctance to proceed such as "shifts in tone of voice, informant uneasiness, evasiveness, irritable responses to questions and attempts to change the topic" (1984: 319). Just as female researchers take up a 'pseudo-male role', I adopted a 'pseudo-female role' implying I was interested in concerns of the female community, associating with women in the pursuit of their interests, being a participant observer of female activities and regularly working with female informants: more or less operating in the female realm. Like Wade (1993) in his research, I did not find that the 'women world' was closed off. Based on rapport and trust that I had created, the power relationship was surmounted and this enabled me to interview as many females as males.

Emotions are a critical part of the ethnographic interview and could "produce discomfort and ethical dilemmas" (Heyl 2001: 374). I met some women who had been abandoned by migrant husbands, had become single parents and were caring for the children on their own. The interviews included tearful moments in which women recounted the daily indignities of their lives and the hardships provoked by the separation from their spouses. A 34-year-old

woman interviewee whose husband had left her with their three children for 7 years, without any financial support wept for most of the interview, which I suspended to save her from emotional trauma. In this episode, I was left feeling as vulnerable as the participant. She remarked that “They have left the children to me alone now ... I always have heart pains and I wish I could just die....” As suggested by other ethnographers such as Opie (1992), I tried to empower her by being sensitive to her situation and respectfully listening to her without being exploitative or intrusive. While I tried to stop the interview midstream she elected to continue until she felt she had said enough and then stopped voluntarily. As a male researcher, her opening up to me about another male seemed to lift some burdens off her. Though I was not paying participants for the project, I had to give her financial assistance because I could not leave her knowing that she did not know how she was going to obtain money for their next meal. While my intention throughout the process was not personal or political, some participants re-evaluated their gender relations, and reflected on the desire to transform them. Some women said they thought their partners were not helping them enough and they would subsequently negotiate for more assistance. Some men agreed that they had placed too much burden on women, and others in egalitarian relationships had not appreciated the improvement in the quality of their family life made by sharing. In their various situations they found the process gratifying and I dare say, empowering. I had not bargained for these outcomes while I was preparing for the fieldwork but I think it has become a learning curve for me as well.

3.6 Data Analysis

The simultaneous collection and analysis of data has been integral to the research process, following other scholars (Charmaz 2000, Strauss and Corbin 1998, Miles and Huberman 1994). A grounded theoretical approach was pursued based on the interface of data collection, analysis and interpretation, going back and forth to code data into central ideas/concepts (Bryman 2004: 399). As noted by Charmaz and Mitchell, grounded theory can “move ethnographic research towards theoretical interpretation” (2001:160). Common concepts were derived from the narratives, and named based on the context (Strauss and Corbin 1998) as the data was transcribed, critically analysed and coded. Interview extracts based on the concepts were copied to another file as a basis for categorising different

phenomena. Concept identification was simultaneously repeated in the process of transcribing interviews, supplemented with focus group discussions, informal conversations and participant observation field notes, by coding, building concepts and categorizing into thematic issues. All relevant issues were jotted down and then the process continued with coding into yet more themes. Transcribed material was categorized by reading reflectively, based on Watson and Wilcox's close reading method "zooming in" (2000: 61), enabling me to identify themes and gain a deeper understanding of the data. Where themes recurred the extracts based on connections and comparisons were added to previously defined categories, ensuring that they related to the gendered discourses and research questions. According to Charmaz categories structure emerging analytic frameworks (2000: 516). For instance where household expenditure patterns were recurring in transcribed interviews, they were isolated, coded, categorised and assessed to ensure that they were not merely anecdotal, but central to the data and underpinned research questions. This category had subsumed 'male breadwinner with homemaker wife', 'female-headed household', 'dual earner' and the like, ensuring that the data was properly classified. The process allowed a quantity of data to be reduced to suitable groupings (Creswell 2003) and categorized into themes. Theoretical sampling was further used to fill in gaps in the data, which helped to refine ideas and simplified the writing of the themes into text. While some themes derive from research questions based on literature, others were derived from the data. The process of collection, coding and analysis of data continued till saturation point, where further themes and categories were no longer discernable. The categories and empirical material were then used to interrogate, generate and develop the existing emerging theory.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have explained the research design and methods used for the study, by explaining the sampling techniques and methods of data collection used and how the data was analysed. I have showed the utility of a multi-method approach to achieve breadth and depth. I have described how I dealt with the ethical issues I confronted in the field and reflected on my positionality as a researcher. I have shown that researchers are multi-positioned and challenged by insider/outsider distinctions, outlining the implications for the reflexive process. The researcher needs to constantly recognise the different levels of power

interwoven in research practice. In the next chapter, I discuss through an empirical study gender ideologies and relations among Ghanaians in urban southern Ghana.

Chapter Four: Negotiating gender relations in urban southern Ghana

The household is identified as a major site for organising gender relations because the sexual division of labour, gender hierarchies and differences are reproduced, maintained and located in it (Glenn 1999; and Hardill et al.1999). To understand the relationship between women and men and their position in the labour market requires understanding of the organisation of the household. Ampofo (1999) argues that pre-colonial relations between women and men in Ghana were separate but complementary, with women maintaining power albeit in their own sphere. However female subordination became more prominent at the onset of the colonial era, with the spread of Christian and Islamic ideas, western education, urbanization and commoditisation of the economy (Dolphyne 2000; Mikell 1997). Despite these changes and women's limited access to resources and decision-making opportunities, other scholars contend that compared to their counterparts in Sub-Saharan Africa, and in relation to Ghanaian men, Ghanaian women enjoy a greater degree of economic life, personal autonomy and status in trade and agriculture (Oppong and Abu 1987; Overa 2007). Akyeampong (2000b) has suggested that Ghanaian women's engagement in the labour market may be challenging and reordering gender relations.

Baden et al. (1994) argue that irrespective of Ghanaian women's participation in economic activities, they are constrained by gender inequalities at the level of the household. Vogler and Pahl (2003) agree that the impact of earning income, on intra-household relations is speculative as inequalities still persist and income may not necessarily lead to gender equality and empowerment. The present chapter explores through an empirical study the above contradictory assertions to test their validity, by examining the extent and nature of negotiation and sharing in households in urban southern Ghana. It investigates the gender division of labour in the performance of housework and childcare, and participation in the labour market. It further analyses power relations, authority and the decision-making process and their implications for gender relations in Ghanaian households.

A dominant ideological theme in gender relations is the breadwinner model which identifies Ghanaian men as the main providers and household heads (Awumbila 1997;

Manuh 1999b). The structural adjustment programmes from 1983 and redeployment exercises however negatively affected men when many lost their jobs (Maxwell et al. 2000; Overa 2007). These circumstances have led to women increasingly participating in breadwinning and men in housekeeping (Brush 1999; Hardill et al. 1999). Scholars claim that households are becoming more egalitarian, with decision-making power and access to financial resources being more equally shared. This chapter assesses the extent to which independent incomes and income inequalities shape household financial management and the ‘breadwinner’ concept. It investigates the extent to which couples are pooling their resources and taking joint decisions, and leading to egalitarianism in intra-household financial decision making.

The investigation is conducted from the dual perspectives of production and reproduction, exploring the interrelationship from a specific Ghanaian cultural and socio-economic perspective. Cultural constructs such as ‘head of household’, ‘breadwinner’, ‘ideology of domesticity’ and others are interrogated, which differentiate women and men but which may not be intrinsic to their biological nature. Their actual behaviour in their social roles, as well as expectations and values associated with being female or male in Ghana, are analysed in relation to cultural constructions of gender. The study uses an analytical framework borrowed from Hakim (2003) to gauge the relationships, determining if the sexual division of labour is ‘egalitarian’, ‘compromise’, or ‘separate roles’ in nature. Finally, bargaining and negotiation processes that determine the household’s decision processes and allocation of resources is illustrated referring to the concept of ‘cooperative conflicts’ developed for the analysis of gender relations (Sen 1990). This is the first empirical chapter and it explores the contemporaneous context of gender relations in Ghana preceding investigations of gender relations among Ghanaians in London in subsequent chapters.

4.1 Gender relations in the household

4.1.1 Household Work

This section investigates empirically the extent and nature of sharing in households and gender relationships in urban Southern Ghana. Throughout my observations in homes and

informal interactions in the communities, excluding an insignificant number of cases of educated young couples, it was observed that reproductive labour was assigned to women. While staying over with families during fieldwork I noticed that, on a typical day, a woman would wake up at about 4.30am, sweep round the house, prepare breakfast and sometimes lunch for the children against their return from school, and bath the children. The man would wake up at 6.00am, have his bath, take his breakfast and leave for work. Where there were older children, the girls would sweep the compound, bath their younger siblings and wash the dishes and help their mother prepare the food, while the boys might polish shoes, and sweep and dust the living room. Sometimes if men got home early I observed that they would wait for the woman to return and do the cooking.

Ghanaian women and men recalled that their parents had gone through the same process and they were repeating the pattern, though some were suggesting the need for change. In most houses a female relative, usually from the woman's lineage, belonged to the household, viz. a younger sister, auntie, and mother, to assist in the performance of chores. Relatively women in Ghana seem to have more support from the extended family than Ghanaian women abroad. Those from wealthier upper-middle classes employed 'house help'. Amu (2005) confirms that professional women in Ghana employ domestic help rather than share housework with partners. However, most Ghanaian women are overburdened and cannot be truly empowered in the sense of making choices because they, especially those in the lower-income families, cannot afford 'house help' or get relatives to help them. The greater disadvantage of working-class women leads to class distinctions among women and gender inequalities. The labour market status of a spouse plays a part in the level of assistance in house keeping. A 50 year old housewife asserted that; "He goes out and brings money to the home. Why should I ask him to do housework? ... therefore all the chores are for me, he brings in the money...." This statement is very typical of the traditional set-up of 'separate roles' (Hakim 2003), which such women see as an obligation. There are also situations where the women performed equally taxing jobs to husband's, in the informal sector or sometimes as professionals, but also took care of the house chores. These women have 'role overload', consistent with Hochschild's 'second shift' (1989).

However, in some of these situations, although the women work the men earn a rather higher income, and therefore are the main breadwinners.

Both women and men explained that housework was the woman's duty, '*ashedie*' in Twi, meaning 'natural task,' and men were said to be 'too busy' to be involved in it. Urbanisation has led to the widespread formation of nuclear households, and in the cities where the fieldwork was conducted most households are mainly nuclear in form. Some quotations serve to illustrate the findings. A 49-year-old female civil servant respondent noted that:

The woman is to cook, cater for the house, and wash clothing. He does not do any house work. Saturday morning I do the cooking and washing at the same time. In the morning I soak the clothes; serve breakfast and start washing, then later prepare lunch and continue washing. He says it is not his duty, so he will be lazing about in the house and watching TV or go out with his friends.

The men were similar in their assessment of their involvement in housework. A 46-year-old male respondent confirmed, "If we should put it in percentages, then I will give myself 3%. I wash when she is not around, but when she is around she does everything and I iron, that is all." Because society does not condone the male playing certain roles, even if the man wished to help the woman she was reluctant to allow him. A 46-year-old female respondent noted, "this is a 'compound house' they will say that I am controlling himThe family members will say '*mejiminu*.'(Twi - I have made him foolish)." Sharing residential arrangements could therefore impact on men assisting in housework. Some power relations portray the subordinate position of women and the fact that men could even resort to ill-treatment if food is not ready. A 30-year-old female respondent commented, "woe unto you if he comes home and there is no food, you are dead...But I understand, he gets tired because he comes home late". Women could be faulted for the persistent separation of spheres; though in this case the husband could cook she found reasons to justify his reluctance. Women continue to uphold the ideology though it eventually works against their general well-being.

I differentiated between basic regular activities that women and men carry out in the household (washing clothes, washing up, preparing meals, shopping, ironing) which I term

'scheduled housework,' and the less frequent but equally essential ones like weeding the compound, changing bulbs, which I call *'occasional housework'*. This categorisation is based on how often the tasks are performed. From the above statements, it is clear that most of the *'scheduled housework'* done on a regular basis is done by women. It is only ironing that men seem to do as a routine task.

Significantly however, among the younger generation, aged below 35 years, a trend was observed towards more 'egalitarianism' based on Hakim's (2003) model. However, even in these households there are situations where the woman does more of the housework. What is significant about these relationships is that most of the couples have equally demanding jobs and comparable educational qualifications. Investigations showed they earn similar salaries, and both males and females support the ideology that both household tasks and financial commitments should be shared. Their gender ideologies therefore are reflected in their gender practice. Lennon and Rosenfeld (1994) also found in their study using data from the US that women do not expect men to assist them with a 50% of household chores to be acknowledged as a fair bargain. This parallels the statement by some respondents that; "all we want is the men to help us a little bit". Even among the egalitarian relationships women see certain tasks as their 'own' and therefore the men's role is to help them fulfil their roles. Tolhurst et al. (2008) have noted that gender orientation refers to the degree to which an individual internalizes and adopts gender expectations for females and males as acceptable. Most of the participants below 35 years had a more egalitarian orientation while the participants above 35 years had a more male-dominant orientation, reflected in their behaviour.

Due to socialisation into gender roles, most women and men understand their masculine and feminine roles and pursue these tasks even under the stress and marital strain it brings to their marriages. In a review of household labour, Coltrane argued that "with few exceptions, dual-earner couples are found to share more family work than male-only breadwinner couples" (2000: 1220). The findings of this research stretch this assertion further by stating that dual-earning is a necessary condition but not a sufficient reason for sharing tasks. This is because apart from the participants under 35 years, most of the others

were dual-earners but the men did relatively little housework. A possible explanation for this variation is that while both are employed, the man remains recognised as the breadwinner. So the predictor is not whether they both earn, but what is recognised as the ideological orientation. If their attitudes favour the separate-roles model, then although both work, they will continue to pursue that model's segregated roles.

Notwithstanding, the conclusion by Halrynjo and Holter (2005) among men in Europe that housework is not part of a 'gender equality strategy' is not wholly supported by this study. This is because among the younger generation, I found evidence that men were assisting in the performance of household tasks. Therefore in such situations women were relieved of their double burden as men provided a 'helping' hand. The similar educational qualifications of these participants and the fact that they did similar jobs, and earned almost equal salaries as noted earlier and their change in gender ideologies to egalitarian orientations contributed to their sharing of domestic tasks. While housework cannot be seen to be a 'symmetrical' arrangement in which husbands participate fully, there are considerably transformations occurring towards egalitarianism. Other studies such as Manuh (1993) and Mikell (1997) maintain that Ghanaian women are more overburdened than men with long hours of domestic work. Judging from this study there are subtle changes taking place, though Ghanaian men seem to gain more from the 'patriarchal dividend' (Connell 2000a:25) and the reproductive role is still seen as the woman's role, though men are to some extent helping to reduce the 'double burden' on women in urban southern Ghana.

Shopping

Shopping is one of the scheduled tasks, performed mainly weekly, on Saturdays. Throughout interactions and visits to the market during field work I observed that few men visited the markets. When they visited the market they waited in cars by the roadside. The few men who ventured into the markets would be walking behind their wives 'unassumingly', while their wives haggled for price reductions and they carried the baskets for items purchased. I asked a few men at one of the market centres, *Mallam Attah Market*, the basis for this arrangement. They suggested that it was because women were more

skilful at negotiating for the right prices. A 32-year-old male respondent carrying the basket behind his wife helpfully commented, “You see sometimes, the women would even make fun of you. The last time we came they said that “*ehh, aware fufuruu*” (literally meaning ‘newly wedded’).

I further inferred that women tried to maintain their hold over the market which they saw as a female preserve. It appears a positive dimension to this phenomenon is that women gain emotional satisfaction from social exchanges and social support in the market. Therefore they were reluctant to permit men to encroach in this domain. Market women explained that men who come to the market are ‘chisel’, meaning they are stingy and do not want to give their wives housekeeping allowance. Aidoo (1985) has noted that markets are a female sphere in Ghana. Significantly, society itself is a major barrier to changing gender norms and both women and men try to avoid being seen as deviants, as a 41-year-old female respondent noted; “He may sometimes want to go but I will not agree.... They will call him ‘*Kojo Besia*’”. ‘*Kojo*’ is the Akan for a male born on Monday, and ‘*Besia*’ is a woman. Therefore the husband would be seen as a ‘*man-woman*’ if he was spotted in the market. This is a derogatory term for men who are seen to be playing roles believed to be feminine, and the term constitutes a restraint. The society continues through such norms to segregate the roles for women and men, the discourse has created the market as a ‘feminised space’. The men see themselves as ‘spatial outsiders’ to the market. This finding is in sharp contrast to that of Sharp et al. (2003) who found among the Bedouin of Egypt that the market was rather a male social space.

4.1.2 Participation in decision making

An approach to gauging dominance in gender relations is to investigate decision making among both women and men and determine who has a greater say. This section presents data that investigates women’s and men’s relations in Ghanaian households to ascertain the power relations by looking at decision-making.

Final say on number of children and ensuring discipline

The findings on decision-making with regards to number of children produced or envisaged were differentiated by generation. Among the younger generation, informal interactions and interviews showed that either the woman took the decision or it was a joint decision-making process. However, among the older generation, while there was some joint decision-making, the man usually had the final say. A 49-year-old female respondent remarked, "I wanted to have six, but he explained that the economic situation would make it difficult to look after them, so he asked that we stop." The fact that the woman wanted more children contradicts the assumptions of literature that women want fewer children. Feminist scholars have been of the view that the ability of women to determine the number and control the spacing of their children would help to promote egalitarianism. However, where the man is the breadwinner, they attribute their preference for fewer children to the difficult economic circumstances.

Among the younger generation there is a lot of rationalisation before the decision is made; as this 31-year-old male respondent revealed; "I want two, she wants four. We are likely to use a ratio and pick three. She has just had the second one". A 33-year-old male respondent also noted that they already had two girls and he requested that they have a third hoping that they might get a boy; but "she looked me straight in the face and asked me whether I thought she was a 'machine'". Increased earnings enhance the decision-making power of women, as illustrated by this 30-year-old female respondent; "I want another one. How can he say he doesn't want it? His complaint is that there is no money but I will pay the school fees." Where the woman has the financial means she has a better bargaining position to influence reproductive health decisions. The above citations portray that women are able to make choices by challenging their spouses. They also have the capacity to use their resources as they will, for instance to negotiate for and look after another child. These are essential dimensions in the empowerment process. However, there are exceptions, the decision-making process disadvantages women who are negotiating from an inferior position due to patriarchal ideologies. Such women have to find subtle means to control their fertility, as this 39 year old female respondent confirms; "I want to stop...I know how to protect myself... I am ageing. He hasn't agreed but this baby will be the final." While

women have more say due to increased income levels and contribution they sometimes find themselves in conflicts where male dominant ideologies persist. They are then restricted from making choices. In such situations men subordinate women and make it difficult for them to enjoy their well-being.

Fieldwork observations showed that the decision on the number of children could be complicated by a preference for a male child. Both men and women pursue the dream of having a boy at all costs, which may further subordinate the woman. A 50-year-old female respondent recalled that she had eight girls because the man insisted that they have a boy. She concluded, “most men want boys before they feel accomplished. I tried it but it did not work.” Several reasons were given for the desire for boys, among them inheritance, especially among patrilineal lineages; to provide legitimacy to the woman in the husband’s family; to prevent men from practicing polygyny in the search for a male child; (common to most men) to sustain the family name. Some men believed that if they did not have sons they would not become ancestors. Dolphyne (2000) similarly found that the woman would keep on having children till she got a son. Only a few women claimed that they had a right over their body. Gender ideologies and societal norms place women at a disadvantage where they are expected to meet the aspirations of the society, and denied their own health and well-being. This observation contradicts the much acclaimed ‘autonomy’ of Ghanaian women (Manuh and Adomako 1992). Ironically, most of the younger generation, who seemed to be egalitarian in their attitudes to gender equality, submitted similar reasons for the desire for boys or girls. The findings found their attitudes contradictory; having decided that women and men are equal, one would have thought that they would be satisfied with any child they procreated.

Most participants wanted boys first and those who wanted girls wanted them mainly to help them with house chores in adulthood. Others explained that they admired girls when they were well-dressed. Most women wanted a girl after the boy, thereby contributing to making the girl a ‘second choice’ person. This attitude promoted a symbolic representation of feminism (Connell 2000a), and ended up essentialising womanhood as an ‘object’ only for beauty. These preferences cause the decision to have children to lead to conflicts and most

often it is the women who are subordinated, with the power vested in the man to make the final decision. Ampofo (2004) has noted that men have considerable impact with respect to reproductive decision-making. While there is evidence that the younger generation is changing in gender orientation, the fact that some also insist on having boys as heirs and girls for 'aesthetic' purposes and 'chores' leaves much to be desired.

Through participant observation in homes visited and informal conversations in the communities and interviews the study sought to determine who had the final say in disciplining children. It came to light that men had the authority and power in determining appropriate disciplinary measures for children and set the rules. A popular refrain observed during fieldwork was; "wait till Daddy comes and I will report you to him". In essence most mothers postponed punishment for children till Daddy returned to decide it. There was unanimity that this worked because children feared their fathers more than their mothers. While I agree with Townsend (2009) that the mother mediates this relationship, I differ with his conclusion that since it is the mother who decides when and what to tell the father, in effect she controls that decision, her power outweighs his. In most cases the mother is unable to deal with the situation. My interactions revealed that it is also the ascribed power of the father that makes the woman wait for him, because she knows he has greater authority. The men confirmed that they had the final say in decision-making on discipline. The women corroborated this, as noted by this 35-year-old female respondent:

Discipline most at times it is him. ... If it needs spanking he does it, but at times when it is a minor incident for instance if they are fighting each other I separate and talk to them. However if they refuse to do their homework or there is an issue of stealing I wait for their dad.

In an interview a woman explained that she was constantly reminded that in the patrilineal family the child belongs to the father. Despite societal pressures that made it difficult for women to assert themselves, decision-making on discipline is much more complex in practice. Because for instance as shown in the citation above women do play a significant role in real-time decision making. This is further substantiated below with evidence from the younger generation of participants. The findings showed that though the father was seen as having the final say, women also participated in decision-making on discipline. It seems that decision-making on discipline involves a hierarchical power relation, with the

father being responsible for what are considered ‘major’ or more grievous misdemeanours. Aidoo (1985) provides a philosophical/religious dimension explaining that the father is responsible for the moral behaviour of children in Ghana because the father’s *ntoro* (spirit) determines the child’s character and personality. In more egalitarian relationships, I noted there was a degree of consultation but each took action as and when required. This occurred mainly only among a few of the younger generation whose children were relatively young, and therefore they spoke hypothetically. The typical egalitarian situation was summarised in this manner; “when I am there, I am there. When she is there, she is there.” But there are situations that the women exhibit agency, especially when the man becomes irresponsible through alcoholism or is in a polygynous relationship and sharing his time with other households. The women mainly take up the responsibility in the absence of a man or where a man is perceived as ‘weak’; it therefore is still regarded generally as not her role.

Authority and control

This section further considers authority and control in the household, looking at the ‘head of household’, and other ideological norms to ascertain the basis of the power relationships determining decision-making in the household. The concept of the ‘head of household’ has been criticised by feminist scholars as one of the ideological underpinnings responsible for inequalities and conflicts in the household (Varley 2008). I found out that despite feminist reservations, this concept is still relevant in the study area and households defer to the head of household (mostly men) in decision-making. The findings of the study indicated that the heart of authority and power is derived from the gender ideology which recognises the man as ‘head of the household’. A 49-year-old female respondent summed it up, stating; “I consider him as the head, traditionally he is the head. If I want to do anything I have to consult him...even if he does not work, he is still the head.” Another 41-year-old female respondent said, “The men control us because of the way we are brought up...Because men give housekeeping money and pay rent we regard them as the head.”

Both women and men commented that the household head is somebody who directs the affairs of the house, is the decision maker, should provide financial and emotional support, should be respected by children, and should protect the family. However they noted that in

single-parent households, a woman could be regarded as the head. Being a breadwinner or financial supporter may not necessarily make one a 'head of household'. Other persons in the household may wield greater authority based on considerations such as religion, culture, influence etc. Though there are tacit power relations, most women acknowledge the legitimacy the patriarchal ideology confers on the control men have. In a relationship considered egalitarian, the 31-year-old female respondent explained that, "I see him as the head. Any decision I make I consult him first...what he thinks is right is what I do. When he refuses, then I leave it." This respondent has financial capabilities and is educated but even she still holds the man to be the head. The cultural ideology of the head of household was used by women to validate gender relations in Ghanaian households. The ideology seems to persist even under conditions where the woman's control over resources may provide her with bargaining power. This is not necessarily attributable to biology but the acceptance of a value system that sees women as inferior.

The men attributed their headship to traditional norms which they had inherited, the bride price they pay, and the roles which they play. They stated that they took the major decisions in the house and their spouses consulted them on all issues. A popular refrain goes, "If a woman buys a gun, it would be stored in a man's room". This shows the dominance of men. Women who want to exercise their rights are given names such as 'woman cock', which imply the woman is behaving like a male. Such pronouncements make it difficult for women to assert themselves. Among others, women need the husband's approval to visit friends, open an account or to further her education. This example by a 49-year-old female respondent; explains the attitude; "my husband tells me he owns me and owns everything of mine." A 51-year-old woman summed up men's superiority, noting, "I wish that when next I come into the world God should create me a man, because the men have too many advantages than us the women." Most women have resigned themselves to the fact that they should subordinate themselves. The statement below from a 34-year-old female respondent who is university-educated and a co-breadwinner in the household shows the frustration of women;

I consider him as the head because in every house there should be a head. Otherwise I see myself as more of the head... Because for me I cannot see how you can be a head when you

do not know when your children went to bed, what they eat, what happens every day in your absence.

While evidently most women encountered agreed that the man is the head, there are power currents hidden underneath. The above respondent appears to acknowledge the spouse's head of household mainly as a symbolic referent, because she exhibits self-awareness and assertiveness and has considerable control in her environment. Her self-confidence and analysis demonstrates considerable nuance in the power relations debate. This further showed among the younger generation a weakening in the significance of the head of household which is leading egalitarian relationships.

A crosscutting factor that became apparent as also responsible for the status of head of household and subordination of women is religious ideology. Most women hand over authority to men because they see themselves as Christians. A comment by a 41-year-old female respondent illustrates this:

According to the Bible he is the head and in addition he provides "*ako homa*" (housekeeping allowance). He also paid my bride price and took me away from my family. So I give him the respect and consider him as the head.

This attitude is akin to what Connell (1987) describes as compliant (or emphasised) femininity which accedes to the interests of men and in this case is underpinned by religious ideology. Bible quotations such as the creation story of Genesis 2:18 are used to show that the woman is a mere helpmate to the man. Men also derive authority from religious ideologies which confer headship on them, thereby sustaining gender inequalities.

The process of socialisation seems so internalised by Ghanaian women that most think power relations as they are, should be maintained, and changing the status quo is not priority for them. Perrons (2004) concluded that women sometimes accept men's control as a matter of course, handing over decision-making power to the men and thereby sustaining patriarchy. Sharp et al. (2003) have noted that under such conditions it is only when the women themselves find the situation unacceptable that it can be altered. Arguably therefore seeking gender equality in decision-making is a complicated process and should be seen within wider social relations and historical contexts. The women themselves need to find a

reason to critique patriarchal structures. I concur with Townsend (2009) that while women and men criticize power relations, they negotiate gender relations by emphasizing the stereotypes. This paradox makes the research findings somewhat complicated.

4.2 Gender and children

4.2.1 Socialisation of boys and girls

An essential determinant of gender relations is the socialisation process by which boys and girls learn the gender appropriate traits and behaviour of their society which inevitably determines how they comport themselves in society. Ghanaian society makes a distinction among boys and girls from the moment of birth. In all the ethnic groups studied, boys are valued more than girls, and therefore when a woman delivers, relatives who come around will ask, literally, whether she delivered a human being? Those around will respond in the affirmative if it is a boy, and negatively in a sympathetic mood if it is a girl. Acquaye-Baddoo and Tsikata (2001) corroborate that traditional ideologies reinforce the inferiority of females to males.

Apart from my observations, I asked participants what they considered to be gender roles and how they learnt such roles. Most participants said they learnt their respective roles from their parents, relatives, in the community, from school, media and some from their Church. The men pointed out that they were expected to be tough and aggressive. A 45-year-old male respondent noted,

You cannot allow yourself to be beaten. When you get involved in a brawl and you return home crying, your father will send you back that a man does not cry so go and hit back and defend yourself.

A particular saying that recurred throughout my interactions with the men was *Obemaa nsuu* literally meaning “a man does not cry”. Men try as much as possible not to express their emotions. I noticed that boys looked after their sisters and on several occasions I met boys who were ready to defend their sisters when others tried to bully them. In this sense, femininity and masculinity are socially constructed and learnt early in life based on gender stereotypes.

I observed a sexual division of labour in families I stayed with, and also through interviews. The only exception was in families where the children were the same sex type, where there could be minor variations to their tasks. Most participants confirmed this process of socialisation. The narrative of a 30-year-old female respondent epitomises childhood experiences:

We learnt from our parents; you notice your mother washes and your father does not....I was helping in the kitchen, washing bowls, cleaning the house, washing clothes and going to market with my mummy. She would say to me “you need to learn house chores by observation...if you do not observe when your mother is preparing food, when you marry your husband will divorce you because you will not know how to cook”. From such remarks we tend to know our role as women and mothers...My brothers did not do much, all they did was to sweep and dust the living room, and we were also responsible for sweeping the compound.

Amorim et al. (2004) confirm that as part of their rearing Ghanaian children are made to regularly carry out housework as a preparation for adult life. A 34-year-old female respondent also noted that “When they buy toys for us they buy a football or a car for the boys and a doll for me”. The purchase of a doll starts to introduce the girl to her nurturant roles of caring and exhibiting affection. In sibling relationships I observed that sisters were mostly involved with childcare, bathing their siblings and providing food for them. An additional observation which I made reflecting Connell’s (2000a) structure on symbolism is in relation to choice of colour in the purchase of clothes for the children: pink for girls and blue for boys.

The Ghana Education Service currently has a gender unit. However, some picture books in circulation still portray males and females in a biased manner which could contribute to gender stereotyping among children. The mass media in Ghana through improved technology also contributes to children learning values that set them apart as boys and girls. By such activities and attitudes parents and society reinforces expectations for Ghanaian boys and girls who are thereby socialised into their roles. This socialisation process is similar to *enculturation lens theory*: through institutionalised social routines and messages children are taught the values and important differences which enable them to acquire the ‘lenses of gender’ (Bem 1993). While I concur with Connell (2000a) that the sex-role approach on its own cannot enable understanding of inequalities and power relations and

that boys and girls are not mere passive recipients of the socialisation process, socialisation *per se* nevertheless differentiates the ‘genders,’ shapes behaviour and thereby reinforces traditional role expectations.

4.2.2 Management of childcare

This section analyses the allocation of tasks between Ghanaian men and women in relation to the management of childcare and the expectations placed upon them. Hakim (2003) has explained that a major role of marriage is to provide a family for the nurturing, protection, and maintenance of children. At any period of time, depending on the age of the children, an adult has to be available for their care. In managing children major tasks noted from the fieldwork included; bathing, toileting, dressing, feeding, playing with them, helping them with their homework and sending them to school. Both men and women were asked about their roles in some of these tasks. At the infant stages during the period of lactation the findings showed that it is the woman who does most of the childcare, especially till the child is weaned. Some women have their extended family relatives, almost always women such as their mothers, sisters, or aunties assisting them. Oppong and Abu (1987) confirm that Ghanaian mothers delegate a lot of child care to other women. This situation is however changing as it has become more difficult and expensive to get domestic assistance. The participants noted that kin relations are reluctant to stay in the cities which they complain are too far from their rural homes. Yet others explain that they need to spend more time pursuing their own economic activities in the rural areas. Mothers in formal sector employment in the urban areas are therefore over-burdened where there is no assistance available. As this 38-year-old female respondent remarked;

I manage the home and take care of the children. I bath them, feed them, dress them and perform all other house chores. I return earlier from work and look after the children till he returns. He provides the money and I ensure everyone is well catered for.

Significantly, I observed that most young women in the informal sector such as traders take the infants with them to their market stalls when they have no help. Some men though unemployed are unwilling to care for the child while the woman goes about her economic activities in the market. The middle class can afford to pay for the services of domestic help if there are no female relatives available. There are crèches where working mothers can

send their infants. But these are mostly privately run and are beyond the financial capabilities of working-class and some middle-class families. This remark from a 50-year-old male respondent is characteristic of the views of most men encountered during the fieldwork:

When the child is below three months, he/she is so delicate and fragile.... But after about four months..., I sometimes feed them...or play with them when they are crying.

Men normally begin to assist their wives after the children are about six months old. A majority of men declared that they help when the children reached school-going age, about age four, becoming involved in bathing them, dressing them and sending them to school. They also took them for outings, played with them, and helped them with homework when they got home early. The men also mentioned that they were constrained by societal expectations; for instance a male participant recalled that he took his daughter to hospital and women there questioned him about the whereabouts of her mother. When the daughter wanted to go to toilet he had to plead with another woman to accompany her. He has vowed not to take her there again, because the other women would have seen him as a 'soft man' who allowed his wife to control him, thereby undermining his masculinity.

The unequal gender division of labour in the production sphere appears to place most of the burden of childcare on the woman in the reproductive sphere. Brettell and Sargent (2009) note that because women bear children and lactate them it is assumed that they have natural maternal abilities and men are incapable of nurturing. In negotiating the relationship some women manoeuvre to compel their husbands to stay at home in the evenings and assist. A young couple, both below 35 years, informed me that while they stayed in Accra, every morning they had to send their children to their maternal grandmother in Tema (a distance of about 16 miles) before returning to work in Accra. Throughout the discussion the man said he had tried to convince the wife to stop working but she had refused. The woman's perception of her self-interest and 'well-being' and 'perceived contribution' to household income influenced the bargaining process, which was compounded by the lack of an adequate welfare system. The decision therefore was influenced by the interaction of cooperative and conflicting interests (Sen 1990). As mentioned in the section on housework, this scenario was typical among the under 35s and it recurred throughout the

fieldwork. This situation shows the woman asserting her position and influencing decision making and demonstrates the important differences and somewhat highlights the nuances in power relationships.

The over 35s appeared to be more traditional in their gender orientation and some women had stopped work- reluctantly- to look after their children. As Scambor et al. have corroborated this practice affects the “occupational achievement of women in the labour market” (2005: 187). It has also led to the subordination of women and the exercise of male dominance, it causes continued dependence on the man for sustenance, and his benefit from ‘patriarchal dividends’ (Connell 2000a:25). The over 35s were however not a homogenous cohort. There were some cases of negotiations and disagreements leading to conflicts over the sharing of childcare tasks. Due to the current economic constraints most women said that they would not and could not stop work, because it would be difficult to get another job and the men’s income is insufficient anyway. Unfortunately, difficulties of getting part-time work or working flexible hours put a lot of strain on mothers. Though evidence showed that most women worked in the informal sector, it was equally difficult to combine childcare with informal economic activities such as itinerant trading. Though men said they helped, women still bore ultimate responsibility for childcare, managing, organising and directing children’s activities and spending more hours on child care than men. Gender ideologies, availability of time, availability of kin relations, and parents’ work hours affect decisions on allocation of child care tasks.

4.3 Gender and the labour market

This section looks at the gendered dimensions of the labour market in Ghana, exploring the implications of the insertion of women and men into the labour market for the patriarchal gender order and intra-household relations. A majority of the participants, both male and female, were in employment. The findings also showed that though women and men now participate in all forms of employment there was still gender segregation in the labour market as more women were in jobs regarded as female-sectors, such as teaching at the basic levels, nursing, officework (secretary, typist, receptionist) and in the hospitality industry such as catering. Men on the other hand also worked in accounting, lecturing, as

managers, pharmacists, fitters, teachers etc. Though there is no vast difference in the unemployment levels for women and men, 6.2% and 6.5% respectively (Ghana Statistical Service 2008: 43), most women are in the informal sector.

My findings revealed that most households cannot afford to divide earning and caring between breadwinning men and housekeeping women. Women who were not highly educated would request loans from their husbands or family members, to trade so that they could support the household income. The explanation from this 30-year-old female respondent shows why women prefer to be in the labour market;

He wanted me to be a housewife, but I said no. If you are a housewife he will not give you sufficient money...and what he likes is what he does with you. But if you are doing your own work you can manage yourself, and have some income so if the man is not treating you well you can decide to leave him. If I am a housewife and ...something happens to him then I am also lost. Because I was working, when he decided to go for another woman I was able to manage it.

The fact that the respondent above wanted to achieve greater independence and autonomy by working, and to expand her opportunities for self-determination to 'leave him' in event she is not well treated largely implied a woman demonstrating her ability to make choices and therefore in an empowered situation. Women want to be in the labour market so that they have security in event of the death or divorce of their husbands, and to be able to control their income and purchases. A majority of men, especially those under 35 years, confirmed that they expected their women to work and not to be housewives. The men maintained that they wanted the women to work so that they could at least cater for their own 'personal needs', and also because it helped them emotionally. Informal conversations with both women and men showed that this desire for women to work is a relatively new development. This change has occurred because of severe economic constraints in the economy of Ghana. Though men agree to their wives' engagement in economic activities they are correspondingly impervious to the need to assist in housework. The ideology of breadwinner makes some women refuse to assist with their income in the house (some men also support this practice) and therefore they depend on the men for their upkeep, though they work. It is however significant that women maintain their independent incomes. This has implications for their empowerment since they can make critical decisions on their own accord. They could also gain respect from their peers and extended family and gain

increased esteem and self confidence which are essential dimensions of empowerment. Eventually its rippling effects may influence bargaining power in the household. This situation is exemplified by this 52-year-old female respondent: “my husband never expected me to help. His emphasis was on a woman who would submit to him, not somebody who will necessarily contribute because he knew it was his duty.” Correspondingly the men were reluctant to assist in the household as they claim they look after the house financially. This view was differentiated by class, as those in the working classes especially needed their wives to work as (men’s) wages were not adequate as a family wage.

A difficulty in the Ghanaian formal labour market is that it does not allow for variable or part-time work hours, as employers and employees are not able to arrange flexibility in work hours, affecting the ability of both women and men to free time to cater for housework or childcare. Women end up on average working considerably longer hours than men and sometimes have to find other means of support for childcare. Baden et al. (1994) and Arber (1999) reported similarly the constraints of childbearing on women’s labour market participation and professional attainment. There was no compatibility between paid work and unpaid work and this affected the women greatly. In the informal sector they are mostly engaged in petty trading. If women have to go to the market daily to sell then they need assistance. Some took their toddlers to the market, but for such women it was difficult to conceptualise separate public and private domains as they interchangeably wove both spheres together during the day. Some even cooked the evening meal while in the market and sent it home for their husbands, using the same market space for both productive and reproductive processes. This situation supports the position held by Arber that employment and the home are “inextricably linked” (1999:177). Both are mutually constitutive sites of gender with each dependent on the other. Labour market and social policies do not make it possible for gender relationships to be more egalitarian and to offer marital satisfaction. A 44-year-old female respondent stated,

Depending on the job, the woman may find herself wanting especially when you have to close late. I always get worried... when I am typing I tend to make mistakes. The man on the other hand would be able to concentrate at this stage because he has no responsibilities to go back to at home. Sometimes when you go on maternity leave by the time you return your schedule has been given to somebody else.

Women also felt that unacknowledged ‘unofficial’ impediments are placed to their advancement into upper-level management positions because of their gender. The Ghana Statistical Service (2003:3) pointed out that “three times as many men as women work as professional, technical or managerial staff.” They asserted that most women who are able to overcome the ‘glass ceilings’ had to be single women because married women cannot afford the long hours expected of them in such positions. The few married women who get far have to make use of the support of parents or other domestic help to make the time to advance in the labour market. In addition more female workers (43.0%) than male (27.1%) workers had not completed school (G.S.S 2008) so their progression in the formal sector was limited. Unfortunately the labour market does not provide enough opportunities for adult education and alternative skills training.

Though by law as stated in section 2.4.1 of the labour Act 651 women are to benefit from maternity leave and other social policy provisions, in reality it could be undermined by patriarchal men especially when they are an immediate superior. A 35-year-old female respondent narrated her experience; “Sometimes when the child is sick the headmaster would refuse to give me permission to go home.” Men are not entitled to paternity leave. The majority of men did not see the need for paternity leave in Ghana because as they asked; “Is it necessary? we cannot breastfeed,” persisting in their essentialised stereotypes of women by reducing childcare to breastfeeding. Men therefore reinforced the gender inequalities that saw women’s role in the public sector as workers subservient to her role in the private sphere as housewives.

The 1992 constitution of Ghana prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, ethnic origin, creed, colour, religion, social or economic status (S. 17(2)). Section 68 of the labour Act 651 of Ghana specifies that every worker should be paid equally for equal work done without any distinction. In Ghana women and men are paid equally, especially in the public formal sector; however in the private sector there were instances in which women thought they were being discriminated against because of their gender. They were not able to produce specific evidence but their account is corroborated by the Ghana Statistical Service which reports that “on average, men receive higher earnings than females across industry

sectors except for manufacturing, transport and communication, and public administration” (2008: VI).

In terms of job opportunities there was no consensus as to who had the better opportunities. A majority of the participants felt that women stood a better chance than men in the labour market if they were equally qualified. They stated that most ‘Ghanaian big men’ favour the girls because of their promiscuous intentions; so the men lose out when it comes to competing with women. A 49-year old female respondent noted that; “some of our ‘big men’ would rather employ the girls than the boys because of what they can gain from them.” Though some men agreed with this, others noted that because men were breadwinners, some employers would prefer to recruit men as they believe that women would be provided for by their husbands through a family wage or could easily engage in trading in the informal sector. These two perspectives, were therefore rationalised bringing to the fore the paradoxical nature of gender and labour market dynamics and its assessment. However available evidence indicates that there are more men in wage employment (25.0%) compared to females, who comprise 8.2%, though women are 51.5% of the population (Ghana Statistical Service 2008).

The women complained of sexual harassment from male superiors and potential employers. They stated that men would demand to have sexual relations before employing them. The men maintained that in the informal labour market women could sell anything from iced water in sachet rubber bags to foodstuffs and processed foods. While they acknowledged that the men are entering this sector because of structural adjustment programmes that has caused them to lose their formal-sector jobs, there were still areas that men felt reluctant to join due to gender roles which reserved those trading items to women. The fieldwork further revealed that though the labour market is markedly segmented based on past inequalities, at present there is less segregation as there are no restrictions to women moving into formerly masculine occupations. Overa (2007) confirms that men are gradually going into work hitherto considered reserved for females in Ghana.

Women's continued performance of most domestic work is influencing their employment opportunities and earnings; and because they earn less they are still dependent on men. This spiral relationship can only be curtailed, if as Hoyng et al. (2005) have suggested, gender hierarchy is eliminated. For that to succeed, the notion that men should work full time needs to be scrapped and women need more opportunities in the labour market. However, it is relevant to mention also that developing societies need to adopt social policies that assist women who work largely in the informal sector. In addition the formal sector needs to adopt flexible working hours which allow both women and men to be able to adapt their working periods to needs of the reproductive sector.

4.4 Household fiscal expenditure and decision-making

This section looks at the relative positions of women and men in terms of decision-making in relation to the control and management of financial resources. Money management represents power relations and underlies some of the previous issues discussed. Vogler (1998) explains that discourses of breadwinning validate gender inequalities in decision-making irrespective of the woman's earning capacity. It is important to identify how the role of women in the productive sphere impinges on financial decision-making in the domestic sphere in Ghana, relating it to the level of contribution they make to the house, and considering the implications for changing gender relations and the gender hierarchy. Women and men were asked about how financial decisions are made in relation to household expenditure, especially food expenditure, education, rent, utility bills, clothing and major decisions such as car and land purchase.

In Ghana, the majority of partners know very little about how much the other earns. The women explained that they needed more money from the men so it would not be prudent to tell them how much they earned. Additionally, Ghanaian men are polygamous. They justified financial secrecy by the inheritance practice of both matrilineal and patrilineal systems, where women may not benefit should the man die intestate. While women were reluctant to divulge income for their own reasons, men also had their particular motives. The men informed me that they provide what the women need so there is no need to reveal their income. Further, they wanted to conceal expenditure on 'mistresses'. They also maintained that women are frivolous and like spending, so if they knew their wages they

would ensure that they spent all the money. Men therefore keep their incomes from their spouses using this as leverage for male domination and reinforcing gender hierarchies because they are afraid of losing control should the women know. While the influence of extended families has been reduced, many women and men still contribute some money to look after their siblings and parents and both parties prefer to keep these transactions discreet. An interesting finding is that the good husband supports the home entirely, without the wife necessarily contributing her income to household expenditure. This was exemplified by a 54-year-old female respondent; “In our culture the man is supposed to look after the woman and children, if he is unable it is an insult.” This hegemonic image of the male breadwinner and the woman homemaker is no longer an accurate representation of gender relations in Ghana. As noted by Gartner and Hoyng (2005) the role of ‘men as breadwinners’ is an important ideological norm in gender relations: Ghanaian men relished it during my fieldwork investigations.

Through cooperation and conflict, women and men bargain and negotiate financial decision-making, power and access to financial resources. The final outcomes are summed up into a typology that draws on the resource theory of power, which equates comparable positions in the labour market to egalitarian financial arrangements, while unequal labour market positions are associated with asymmetries within households. The typologies outlined below emerged from the fieldwork investigations, and help give some order to the data. The categorisation does not imply that other financial arrangements were not noted during the fieldwork; however, they remained too insignificant to merit classification under the typology. Similar to that of Pahl (1989) who distinguishes 5 categories (section 1.4.4); here 4 ‘ideal’ types of households are distinguished, which are briefly outlined below.

4.4.1 Male contribution expenditure type (MCE)

This is the classic breadwinner-homemaker model, where the woman mostly does not work and the man provides housekeeping allowance (chop money) and ensures he pays all other bills. The ability of the man to pursue this typology defines his masculine identity. It is somewhat akin to Pahl’s (1989) *housekeeping allowance system*. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2008) food expenditure, housing, water, electricity, gas, education,

clothing and footwear together constitute roughly 71% of total household expenditure. In this study the partner who picks up these financial responsibilities is the main breadwinner. This typology may include the provision of spending money to the woman. On the other hand, the woman may have to manage her personal spending from the ‘chop money’ provided by the man. Tensions and conflicts are sometimes manifested where women use subtle means like nice cooking and sometimes withholding sex, as bargaining chips to negotiate with men to fulfil their breadwinner role.

In cases where the woman is engaged in economic activities her breakdown position is strengthened due to her own income, which she can use for her personal expenses since the man provides household allowance; therefore she wields greater power than the unemployed woman. The man does not interfere with what she does with her money, and the woman is not bothered about how much the man earns because she ensures that ‘he takes care of the house’. While the woman may have financial autonomy and independence, it is only over her own money. A 56-year-old male respondent complained that, “I cannot say what she uses her money for.... we have been married for 36 years but I do not know what she does with her money. When she does not get ‘chop money’ she complains.” A basis for the adoption of this typology is the popular discourse from women; “*wo ne wube wari me*” in Twi, meaning ‘you opted to marry me so it is your duty as ‘breadwinner’ to look after me’. Though such women participate in the labour market they do not contribute to household expenditure, so the men take full control, complying with the breadwinner role. The women invest their money in trading, use it to cater for their siblings and sometimes build houses for the extended family. I have earlier expressed the importance of the control women have over their economic resources because it influences various spheres of their lives as just demonstrated. The men, nonetheless, ensure that they cater for all expenses in the household, including those for the children. This system works because both share in the patriarchal gender ideology of male breadwinner. Nowak (2009) indicates that it is typical because patriarchal norms in Ghana recognise the man as responsible for the financial well-being of the family. A 50-year-old female respondent attested to this situation:

All my children are girls and they will not inherit any property from their father. So since my husband is looking after the family and I am making my own money I used it to build for my children. He wanted me to help him to build but I refused.

The above-mentioned respondent took this decision because she has six children who are all girls. Meanwhile she is in a polygynous relationship and the man has a son from another woman. Therefore being from a patrilineal society the boy is likely to inherit the property of the man. That is why the woman decided to use her money to build for her children. The man is also somewhat aware of the implications and therefore when she refused to undertake a joint project with her he understood. He played his breadwinning role as that is expected of him as a father to the children and husband. The intestate succession law now tries to rectify such situations. However, it appeared from my interaction with women that they were distrustful of their traditional lineages and also the court system and most would prefer to do their own thing. This however showed an empowered woman who was able to make critical choices for herself and children.

The difference between the employed and unemployed woman is that the woman who earns income is able to take independent decisions on her income. The ability to make this choice empowers her and her position is strengthened by her control over her personal income. A 40-year-old female respondent for instance wanted to buy a vehicle to use as a private hearse for hiring purposes. Though the man objected, she went ahead and bought it because according to her “it is my money”. The men are responsible for strategic and operational decisions and therefore wield power in the household, and decision-making authority is generally male-dominated. The men decide on virtually everything concerning household financial management, over which women have no authority or control. In this typology, the autonomy and independence of Ghanaian women is compromised due to financial dependency and inequalities in power are reinforced.

The male contribution expenditure type is relatively common amongst the older generation and the middle classes, especially where the man is in good employment. In some instances, women help the men to pay for household expenditure. In this case, the women are under no compulsion as they themselves decide what they think they can provide with the knowledge of the man. The woman might help with the provision of lunch for children

when they go to school, purchase of gas or school uniforms. Male respondents are always appreciative of wives who assist them because they think that it is their duty as men and not their wives'. Such men involve women more in decision-making and inequalities are reduced, though they may ultimately have the final say. However, these women are more involved in decision-making than those who do not contribute to the household budget at all. But gender inequalities are reinforced as her contributions are seen vaguely as a 'domestic supplement'.

4.4.2 Female contribution expenditure type (FCE)

In this type of expenditure arrangement the wife is the main breadwinner and caters for all the bills. Pahl (1989) does not include this group in her typology. Either the husband is unemployed due to retrenchment, 'lazy' (a recurring explanation by women), self-employed with no visible contracts, or retired. Since the man's dominance and power is demonstrated by his decisions in relation to household financing, which enables him to order the life of the family, when the woman starts to make such decisions she overturns the power relations. Anarfi and Fayorsey (1999) note that because they are economic providers women from Southern Ghana have improved domestic power and that has led to their autonomy and independent positions, which is exemplified in this typology. Two options were encountered in the field for dispensing the household income.

In most cases the female controls and is also responsible for managing the household finances. The man's opinion may be solicited, but ultimately the decision is the woman's. Though few of these cases were encountered it is likely that they would increase in the future due to the worsening economic climate and the reluctance of some Ghanaian men to take up female jobs. Anarfi and Fayorsey (1999:111) describe men without financial means as '*yakagbemei*' in Ga or 'hopeless men,' where the women take charge of decision-making. The statement below by a 42-year-old female respondent shows that this situation may be difficult even for women. Though she had higher financial power than the man and therefore had levelled gender inequities and took financial decisions, patriarchal society saw the woman as a threat to manhood. She explained,

when I said that I was the main breadwinner, it was not easy for me and his male friends came to the house and said that I was 'too known' that how could I, a woman talk in that

manner; and so though I am a breadwinner I cannot say it but the children know I am the breadwinner. They no longer ask their Daddy for anything. Since he has no money I determine what has to be done.

Since he cannot live up to the hegemonic masculinity he has to rely on his friends to let the wife understand that '*model power*' still belongs to the man, not her. Women are therefore unable to contest the normative structures and their disadvantaged position is deepened, even when decision making is female-dominated and the woman has the final say. The men are also not happy when they can no longer play their gender roles. There are therefore a lot of conflicts as the men feel emasculated and try to overturn the power relations.

Sitso, the 49-year-old female respondent in the next citation is currently a banker. According to her, when they married, she was a typist and her husband was, and is still a driver. She started to attend evening classes to improve herself but the man consistently abused her throughout the period. She says that she leaves her office early, gets home and prepares his food before leaving for classes. However, when the man returns from work he appears in the classroom and requests that she should return home and heat his food for him to eat before she can return to the lectures. At one point in time, she had to plead with the security men to stop him from coming to the school compound. She explained, "Sometimes when I get home he says that the food is cold because I prepared it too early so I have to prepare another one". She persevered, and re-wrote her 'O' levels and later her 'A' levels. She then gained employment at a bank and now has a degree.

As shown earlier, this is a situation of a man being 'lazy' who has refused to develop himself. When she started building a house he would sometimes go to the site and give instructions counter to her own. This may be either due to insecurity and unequal power relations as a result of her putting up a house which is normally seen as a man's role. She has had to negotiate the power relationship carefully so as not to undermine him and also to ensure that she built the house to her specifications. Now she is the breadwinner; according to her she earns more than three times his salary. She deliberately asks him for chop money so that he can demonstrate his masculine role but he refuses. When she asks him to pay the children's school fees he doesn't. She takes all major decisions in the house. She pays all the bills. However, she maintains that she has had her three children with him and is not ready to divorce him.

This is typical of cases I came across in my fieldwork which provided insight into the female contribution expenditure type. She maintained that;

I pay all the bills..., he just drinks. ... When I ask him for chop money we will quarrel.... I hid and bought my land and ...then I informed him I wanted to start building. But when I started we were quarrelling all the time...because he wanted to control me.... When I finished building I told him that we should move there but he refused. I moved with the

children and later he joined us. He was not happy and had inferiority complex. In the middle of the night he would wake me up and ask whether we are ‘chewing’ the house that I have built. He gave me sleepless nights. The utterances of the men are the problem, because the woman is playing the role that is expected of him which he cannot play, but he will not appreciate it. So you just take control... Anyway, as women we feel bad about this situation but he also doesn’t show remorse and he does not want to accept that he is in a lower position. He is not in charge of the house but he still wants to give orders. It is affecting the men.

This situation could sometimes lead to the breakdown of marriages. The status of men is undermined while women play a key role in structuring gender relations and take over the authority of deciding about household expenditures and the general standard of living. Such men are practically incapable of claiming the position of ‘head of household’.

In a second scenario, in contrast, the female still controls her income, but dispenses some of it to the man to manage some aspects of household finances. She allows the man to perform the gender role tasks which are regarded as masculine such as paying rent, school fees and sometimes utility bills, and also provides the man with pocket money. She continues to perform all her household tasks as a woman and is responsible for housekeeping expenses but defers to the man before taking any major decisions and the man has the final say. This illustrates Hakim’s (2003) assertion that some women continue to accept patriarchy as legitimate and therefore even where women are in employment and earning money they still defer power to men, perpetuating male dominance. The man sometimes helps in housework, especially childcare. A 49-year-old female respondent said, “I pay all the bills,...but I still see him as the head though and allow him the final say because he is the man.” Some men do appreciate the role that such women play and acknowledge it. As a refrigeration mechanic this 52-year-old male participant hardly gets enough contracts to meet the family expenses. His 48-year-old wife is a nurse and therefore initiates financial decision making and sometimes helps the man with personal spending money;

I initiate financial decisions and the payment of bills... but I seek for his agreement. If he doesn’t agree I don’t go ahead. Sometimes when he needs money I give him. He calls me ‘*se manhyiaa*,’ [in Twi meaning ‘If I had not met you’ – a compliment]...sometimes I feel ashamed but he is my husband so I should be able to assist him.

Though the woman may control financial power, because this woman’s gender orientation is ‘male dominated’, decision making generally is male-dominated. Another 54-year-old

female respondent corroborates this finding; “When I got the land to buy, he was not interested because he has no money but I waited patiently for him to go ahead before I bought it, though I was going to use my own money.” Gwagwa (1998) made similar findings among South African women, who continue to call their husbands ‘head of households’ though the women are the main breadwinners to avoid challenging gender ideologies. In this relationship the woman wields covert power and manoeuvres the relationship, so though the man is the decision-maker he does not introduce contentious issues that will ‘rock the boat’. The man recognises the woman as the primary breadwinner and respects her and therefore the woman’s power position is enhanced. Though breadwinning and control are tied together ideologically, in reality this relationship is spurious under certain conditions as illustrated. Gendered discourses of head of household and breadwinnership status influence bargaining processes and impact on authority and power relations irrespective of financial resource contributions. This situation is epitomised by this comment by a 54-year-old female respondent; “Once you accept that he should be your husband you are ready to be under him. ...though I have more money than him I give it to him He should take the decisions”. Gender inequalities are therefore minimised ingeniously where the man is made to dominate when in actual fact the woman may be instigating the financial decisions. This could be compared to the ‘compromise model’ (Hakim 2003). However, such men are looked down on in society as ‘*Salome*’, a female name given to men, who are said to be controlled or manipulated by women and succumb to their dictates.

While the first sub-type here could be regarded as a female headed household it is not always the case, because there is an adult male resident who may not take kindly to the situation. In houses where men reside, women remain cautious not to call themselves heads, though the women are in control and take financial and other decisions. It is only when the men are younger, that the women can regard themselves as a head due to cultural norms. Lloyd and Gage-Brandon (1993) confirm that female-headed households in Ghana on average do not include male adults of working age. Some of these houses however turn out to become female-headed households without adult males when the woman divorces or separates from her husband or vice versa.

Lockwood (2009) has argued that if women are able to gain access to and control over material resources through favourable gender ideologies then they will gain greater equity. I argue further that the patriarchal structures of male dominance essentially also need to be largely dismantled; otherwise as the above examples show, even with material resources, these overarching structures will tend to subjugate women, who will be obligated to acquiesce. Hakim recognises three models as “currently acceptable” and does not include the typology whereby women take control of and determine financial decision-making, because to her it is uncommon (2003:77). This I term the ‘volte-face’ model. The non-acknowledgement of power marginalises the role of women and suppresses the contribution of women to household financial arrangements.

4.4.3 Hidden contribution expenditure type (HCE)

This category is quite common in urban southern Ghana, where the man controls his own income and provides ‘chop money’ for housekeeping expenses and supposedly pays for all other bills. The woman is also employed but the man is not interested in how much she earns and she may use her income as her personal spending money. The significant difference here is that due to dwindling real incomes the ‘chop money’ is not sufficient, therefore women who are engaged in economic activities top it up with their own money when they go to buy the items, some as much as in equal amounts as the husband’s contribution. However, these contributions to household expenditure are devalued and become invisible. This has been termed ‘*silent expenses*’, because observations and informal discussions of gender norms reveal that the woman is not expected to divulge it to the husband. Men pretend not to know that the ‘chop money’ is not enough and women pretend that it is enough and add their own. This 54-year-old female respondent comments, “the chop money is never enough. But I do not tell him it is not enough, he should know the money he gives is not enough.” This practice is found especially in working-class and lower middle-class families. Decision making is consequently male dominated both financially and in other areas, because men do not know how much women contribute towards the household finances. Based on gender ideologies (breadwinnership, head of household) women defer to the men to take the decisions to the point that men determine

the day's menu. The men hardly participate in housework. Surprisingly, both men and women were of the view that there was no need for the woman to say how much she 'tops up' as 'silent expenses'. For instance this 38 year old male respondent stated that

There are certain expenses women make with their own money to keep the house running. It could be termed "silent expenses." A good woman will not ask the man for money when the items are finished and it is not yet due for the next 'chop money' and also when we receive unannounced visitors.... So for precautionary motives I allow her to keep her money so that at that point in time she uses it as "silent expenses".

But this practice tends to marginalise women because of the ignorance about the woman's contributions. Women reiterated a popular discourse whereby men continuously ask them; 'how much of your income do you spend on the household?' Men erroneously believe that they finance the whole household budget, and therefore subordinate women despite their contributions. This situation normally leads to conflicts when women then have to make their point clear to the men. A 43 year old female respondent epitomises this:

I supplement the chop money ... I use his money to buy key items like carton of fish, rice and maize bag and gallon cooking oil. I use my money to buy fresh food items like tomatoes, onions, and bread...then he said he has been paying for all expenses in the house. What infuriated me was that he said...he had to borrow to provide us 'chop money'. I did not allow him to finish, I put him right and told him in the face that his statement is false and uncalled for....Most women do not say it; after all it is just supporting the man.

The practice of not divulging how much women contribute to the household expenditure promotes the persistence of gender hierarchies. It seemed more appropriate for women to make men know what contribution they make than to mask it in secrecy. Some female participants mentioned that all their wages go into household expenditure while the men just provide a portion of theirs and use the rest for themselves, leading to inequalities in access to personal spending money. The woman is therefore deprived of personal spending money to ensure that the children have three square meals. A 46-year-old male respondent confessed that his mother-in-law fell sick and his wife went to look after her in their hometown for two months. During her absence he realised that she substantially supplemented the 'chop money' he provided. Some men are concerned about women masking what they spend and not divulging it. The statement by this 56-year-old male respondent illuminates this worry:

I have the final say... By and large I shoulder everything. ...But I think she also helps; ... it will be better for each one to know what the other is spending; ... Because women are fond of saying 'I spend a lot in this house' ..., how much do they supplement?

This statement shows the kind of conflicts which occur with this type of financial arrangement. While admittedly, women exercise some decision-making power by not disclosing their incomes and opting to spend them as they choose, in a sense they make themselves obliged. They are compelled by the insufficiency of the household allowance to be altruistic. This is especially so if, as stated by some female participants, almost all their personal incomes go into household expenses. The men think the women are using all their income only for their personal satisfaction, while in actual fact it is being used for the household. If made public this reality could enhance their decision making power in the household and reduce inequalities in financial resources. I am of the considered opinion that this popular approach to financial dispensing arrangements is the bane of Ghanaian women and reinforces the hegemonic gender order.

4.4.4 Joint contribution expenditure type (JCE)

Baden et al. (1994) have remarked that joint decision-making is not common in Ghana. However I found this practice developing among the younger generation of participants in my fieldwork in urban southern Ghana. In this arrangement the money is pooled and spent together, as indicated by Pahl (1989) in her *pooling system* typology. If the money depletes, it is 'topped up' by either party. However, these couples stated that they avoided opening joint bank accounts because they claimed that it is 'non-Ghanaian'. A 42-year-old female respondent summed up this opinion; "I have never dreamt of it and I will not think of it now. I am enlightened. I will not let somebody break my heart with my money." A 31-year-old female respondent noted, "we put the money at one place and redistribute it. He brings it into the pool just like mine so it is joint." They each have their own personal spending money which they control. The participants in the younger generation almost unanimously informed me that they took financial decisions together. Vogler (1998) confirms that this leads to joint decision-making. Either of the two can initiate expenditure and provide some explanation for discussion, as exemplified by this 33 year old male respondent;

We do it together. If an idea occurs to any of us he/she brings it forward. For instance, I had some extra money and we decided to buy some plastic house ware to sell. She added some

additional funds and also resigned her position as a typist to manage the store because it would be more profitable and I agreed. Therefore now we have a store together.

There is negotiation and bargaining and the man no longer has legitimate authority over financial transactions with decisions made in quite egalitarian circumstances. In performing housework the man provides relatively considerable input.

Akosua, the undermentioned 29-year-old respondent, is an administrator in the civil service who graduated from University about four years ago. Her husband who is 33 years old is also a graduate and teaches in a senior high school. They explained to me that they have the same level of education, and that the difference in their salary is less than 50 Ghana cedis (equivalence £3.00). They have two children aged 2 and 4. The man explained that because they both go to work in the mornings he has to assist his wife so that they can all get ready and leave on time. She stated that “Now we all go and come and are educated so we share the tasks and responsibilities. I bath the children and he dresses them and gives them food. I need also to prepare and get ready for work.” Meanwhile his salary is not enough to make him the sole breadwinner, so they have no option but to be pragmatic and choose joint expenditure patterns. In decision-making he does not see himself as the head and she explains that they have a bargaining process to determine what is best for the family. They have adopted an egalitarian gender ideology. The husband is doing a professional course in accounting; they discussed it and agreed together because he has to pay his fees in foreign currency. They have mortgaged a plot of land, which they pay for jointly.

She noted that;

We pay everything together. Anybody pays any bill that comes...There is nothing like chop money. On Saturdays we wash together and most mornings he sweeps the room while I prepare breakfast.

A lot of rationalisation occurs before financial decisions are made as partners are in an equal relationship, so gender inequalities are reduced. The woman's position is considerably improved in this fiscal distribution arrangement and in decision-making. The couples' similar occupational levels and educational qualifications are relevant because they determine their levels of financial contributions. They therefore contribute almost equal resources to the marriage. This finding confirms Awumbila (2001), who argued similarly that the status of women in household decision making in Ghana is contingent on the financial, occupational and educational resources they contribute to the household. These ongoing changes are occurring among the younger generation in the Ghanaian

gender system. Women who have become co-providers have enhanced status and there is greater gender equality. Through cooperation and conflicts, with each weighing his or her bargaining power and fallback position (Sen 1990), stability is enhanced leading to equity in the marriage relationship. However the arrangement has serious consequences for men, whose “masculinities are in tension” (Connell 2000a:13) because the dominant hegemonic masculinities inherent in the patriarchal structures are involved in “dialectics of confrontation and denial” contesting with their inner desire to transform and pursue egalitarianism. This typology therefore showed a generational effect with ideological and attitudinal changes.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, gender relations among Ghanaians were analysed by looking at what women and men do in their social relationships, and the underpinning cultural ideologies. The gender divisions of labour in the productive and reproductive sphere were interrogated and some symbolic representations discussed, to gauge if the relationships involved egalitarianism, compromise situations or are separate in nature. The discussion was further informed by the model of ‘cooperative conflicts’ in issues dealing with number of children, disciplining children, and authority in the household. The study identified certain factors in the chapter such as the educational level of the younger generation and their comparable income levels as influencing power relations. In addition it demonstrated that participants used Christian religious ideologies and traditional norms of head of household to inform their gender relationships. Though to some extent one might argue that men continued to dominate women, the power relations seemed somewhat more nuanced. There was evidence that gender ideologies and socialisation processes continued to be ingrained in the psyche of both women and men, but in practice gender relations was showing considerable transformations.

The evidence largely points to multi-dimensional processes in operation, leading to both continuity and change in gender relations. The gender hegemony appeared male-biased and driven principally by socio-cultural norms and ideologies, and somewhat subordinated women in the labour market leading to ‘patriarchal dividends’ for men. However,

ideologies of male head of household; male breadwinner; female ‘nurturer’ also responsible for housework, seemed only partially confirmed. This is because women had also become breadwinners and some have also attained educational levels which made them question the dominance of men. They remained in the minority though and the low status in the labour market and prominence in the informal sector with its attendant insecurities and low incomes seemed partially to limit their drive towards gaining substantial empowerment. Some men are also marginalised in the labour market and finding their bearings in a female-dominated informal sector, and some women have broken the glass ceiling and are economically active enough to be independent in thought and action, overall, the patriarchal structures seemed to be under threat. While women, especially in urban Southern Ghana, continued to be responsible for the reproductive sphere whilst engaging in the productive sphere, men were participating in various forms in the gender division of labour.

Men are acknowledged as breadwinners and are expected to be engaged in the public sphere, but current economic realities make it impossible for most of them to fulfil this role singlehandedly. Though it appeared that some were transforming and participating in housework, there were others who were unwilling. The data demonstrates that educated and younger women and men are sharing domestic work fairly equally, leading to egalitarianism. Though they remain a minority, there are considerable shifts. It is however suggested that gender practices should be recomposed to ‘democratic gender relations,’ that advocate equality, gender sensitivity and concern for other people irrespective of their differentiation, be it “gender, sexualities, ethnicities and generation” Connell (2000b:30). While adult masculinities and femininities are dynamic, evolving around multiple social relations and every stage of development is critical; I further argue that socialisation from childhood seemed to make marked impressions and should be considered relevant for the shifting of relations towards equality and justice. It seemed that conducive conditions including change in socio-cultural orientations, ideologies, state policies on welfare, labour and children would promote economic parity and likely help to contest social and economic differences between women, men and women and men. This is especially relevant because of the contradictory nature of some of the changes; for instance with increasing women’s employment and move towards breadwinnership and egalitarianism, tensions are still

emerging in men and women, between 'change, dissolution and persistence' (Scambor et al. 2005).

This chapter has underscored the gender discourses in the home country; the next will investigate how these are negotiated in relation to the labour market in the public sphere in London.

Chapter Five: Breadwinning and work: gendered diasporic choices and mobility in the labour market

Adjetey, a 31 year-old-male respondent, came to UK in 1999. He holds a Diploma from Ghana and is currently working in a warehouse. He came as a visitor and overstayed till he managed to legitimise his status recently. He is now pursuing a UK bachelor's degree to enable him to change employment. Norsi, 29 years old, came to London in 2001, and they met and married, but are recently separated. At the time they separated he was in the final year of his degree. She is currently a teacher, having pursued her Masters degree in UK, and has been legally resident since her arrival. I met and interviewed Norsi first, and asked if there was a possibility of talking to her ex-husband. She promised and gave me his telephone number. I later interviewed him as well. This narration combines the two interviews and discusses factors that impinge on gender ideologies and relations, which led to their separation.

From their interviews they both confirmed that the woman was earning more and therefore was the breadwinner. The man was however unhappy about the fact that she considered herself the head of the household and therefore took major decisions in the household. He explained that when she arrived in 2001, she was 21 years old and knew in Ghana the woman was not the head. He blamed the British social environment because she was not taught that attitude in Ghana. To him, in the UK environment no matter the gender whoever earns more makes the final decisions, whereas in Ghana even if she was the breadwinner, she would regard him as the head. From her interview, she explained that she was of a higher status because she was better educated and better paid, and since he was only 2 years older than her it made no sense that he wanted to be the head. She agreed that the social environment in London had made it more acceptable for her to be able to express her views strongly, and also to have more equal relationships. She was of the view that the attitudes and norms in a society have an impact on gender relations and that the Ghanaian society is not very supportive of gender equality.

Housework also became a point of contention: they both agreed that the man was reluctant to cook, and only did it on some weekends. Though they did not have children, the woman felt the housework should be shared. While he wanted children soon, the woman said she wanted to finish her PhD before having children, and was waiting for him to finish his degree before pursuing it. The man wanted her to change her name, but she refused because she said that most women abroad no longer do that and that 'even in Ghana' women had picked up the trend, so did not see why she should change her name.

He observed that women have more power in London because if you assault them the police arrest you before they start investigating. Also if you have children, most of the property goes to the mother and this makes it difficult for men to negotiate for their patriarchal authority. Therefore she had a better fall-back position and bargaining power. He explained further that his inability to fulfill his masculine role as the breadwinner made her take over the house, and he found it difficult to come to terms with it. The woman agreed that that was the 'stress' affecting their marriage. As his ex-wife explained, his illegal status in the labour market also contributed to his inability to become upwardly mobile and to fulfill his masculine role: "Without legal status, he did menial jobs for which he was overqualified, got stuck in it and this became a spiral because he could not get the work experience to get a better job." Significantly, the man supported a male-dominated gender ideology. He reflected that he envied his Ghanaian friend whose Indian girlfriend "serves him like a king". When asked why, he observed; "That is the nature of a Ghanaian man, even if he is in a hole he wants to be a king". To him men and women are not the same, so even if a woman earns more money, she should give due respect to the man as the household head and allow him to control the household. Norsi and Adjetey were faced with a situation requiring renegotiation of gender ideologies and relationships. It seemed that the educational and income level of Norsi and her position in the labour market had impacted on their power relationship. He felt that as the man, he was entitled to the ideological headship, even where he could not fulfill the ideological role of male breadwinner. Apart from that he was not ready to participate in housework, which accentuated the problem. He was finding it difficult to renegotiate the hegemonic masculine identity and alter norms which he brought to London from Ghana, thinking he should be obeyed regardless of circumstances. The sharp differences between the two became evident because the London external environment had empowered her, making it possible for her to articulate her rights and express herself more covertly. This is a typical story of a couple negotiating gender ideologies and relationships; being empowered, she made her independent choice to leave the relationship.

Men and women who constitute the working population of any society engage in productive activity in the labour market. While not all migration may be for labour reasons most migrants end up in the labour market. Espiritu (1999) has noted that a central feature to the reconfiguration of gender relations in migration is a relative change in the status and power of women and men in the destination country. It is unclear whether the engagement of migrant women in the labour market improves their social position and leads to changes in gender asymmetries (Tienda and Booth 1991; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, Espiritu 1999). The male breadwinner, conceptualized as the sole economic provider with a dependent wife and children, has been used to justify the gendering of the public and private spheres. However, the continued rise in the participation of women in the labour market and their economic contribution to the household is gradually eroding the breadwinner concept in different social spaces (Gerson 2002; White and Rogers 2000; Crompton 1999a). This has led Speakman and Marchington to conclude that “the ambiguity of the breadwinner (concept) has created role uncertainty” (1999: 94).

This chapter investigates Ghanaian migrant women and men and their location in the London labour market examining how gender ideologies and relations are negotiated in the public sphere. It explores how the new social space compels both female and male migrants to get involved in the labour market and consequently affects gender and power relations in the household. It investigates financial management and the ‘breadwinner concept’ in Ghanaian households in the diaspora, examining their effects on patterns of decision-making and power within the household and implications for egalitarianism. The typology in the last chapter will be further developed to show the transformatory effects of women’s earning power in the diasporic labour market. Additionally, this chapter examines how women and men respond to transformations in the new social space incorporating other social differences such as nationality, race/ethnicity, age, language, class, and migrant status as critical factors in shaping gendered outcomes.

Firstly, I define the factors leading to the entry of women and men into the labour market. Secondly, the dislocations constituting structures and conditions migrant women and men encounter in the labour market versus their own cultural norms are discussed (Parrenas

2001). Finally, I examine the consequences of their integration into the labour market for gender relations. Using Kabeer's concept of empowerment as a basis for the discussion, the chapter explores the agency of migrant women in making strategic choices in their new social space (1999, 2005:14), identifies the resources which allow them to exhibit their agency, and explores the outcomes. The relationship is explored between women and men's participation in the labour market and their empowerment/disempowerment in the household using Rowlands 'model of empowerment' (1998: 120). The chapter examines how the core elements of Rowland's empowerment process within close relationships, including the ability to negotiate, communicate, gain support, defend self/rights, and dignity, have been achieved by the study participants (see section 1.4.3).

Hearn et al. have suggested that "further exploration of the complex dynamics surrounding negotiations between women and men in relationships regarding housework, parenting...would be welcome...it would be important to further research couples who experience difficult labour market conditions...."(2002:399). The chapter tests the hypothesis suggesting a direct relationship between economic contributions and decision-making power (Kelson and Delaet 1999) in the context of Ghanaian migrants in London. The chapter shows that gender ideologies and relations cannot be taken for granted; they should be historically and culturally contextualised.

5.1 Decision-making on breadwinning and employment

Datta et al. (2007) have noted that migrants face many challenges in gaining access to labour markets. One strategy Ghanaians have used in response to labour market difficulties is to maximize income by ensuring that all adult household members have paid work. Almost all the women interviewed were in full-time employment; and others were doing additional part-time jobs. The few women working part-time often pestered their husbands to adjust their working schedules so they could start full-time employment. The women did not compromise with husbands who in cases tried to persuade them to stay at home, particularly where the women migrated independently. They separated from partners who wanted to maintain patriarchal structures and would not allow them to work.

Where the man is the primary migrant he is sometimes able to exercise power initially over the woman's employment. However, as soon as the woman also settles down, individual and societal influences encourage her to demand her rights and her wish to work. This explains the predominance of dual earners among Ghanaian migrants. Ghanaian migrant women continue to work full-time even after their children have grown old. Women's ability to participate in the labour market also depends upon gender ideologies, especially the attitude of men in the household. Men were reluctant to give up the breadwinning role since they themselves were willing to do two or more jobs to provide for the family so they tried to convince their wives to stay at home. In a few cases men were reluctant to let their wives enter the labour market; such women felt disempowered because they were denied the resources to be independent, make their own choices and exercise agency. Because they were financially dependent on their husbands for everything, they found it difficult to negotiate and had to rely on whatever amount their husbands provided as remittances to their (women's) family back in Ghana. The women did not trust the men, believing that the men surreptitiously sent money to their own relatives but complained that they did not have enough money to send to the wives' family. A 37-year-old female explained, "anytime my parents call me for money I am confused. My father is ill and my mother needs money to cater for him. As the first child I feel I am letting my family down". [She arrived in London in 2002 after the husband arrived three years earlier. She has two children, aged three and five. At the time of the interview the husband was a lecturer in a business school in London. He refused to let her work with the excuse that she should be at home to look after the children. Before I left the field the husband has gained a new appointment in Ghana and the wife has refused to return with the children, though the husband is gone. She explains that she has not been able to satisfy her family and herself the six years she has been in London]. Most women felt a commitment to their natal families back in Ghana and therefore their inability to work affected their sense of 'self'.

A majority of the women in this study worked for an income, and most Ghanaian men were supportive of their wives working and provided opportunities for them. Clark (1999: 719) has confirmed that 70-80% of the women in Southern Ghana are traders in the informal sector. Significantly, most of my female respondents from these areas are now working in

the formal sector. A 37-year-old female respondent said that she had been selling at the Teshie market, a suburb of Accra, and hardly contributed to the household income because she earned very little and the norm was for the husband to provide for household expenditure. However in London, she works as a gymnasium attendant and can contribute substantially to the household income since the husband who works as a factory hand cannot manage it alone. She remarked:

Because my pay is now okay and I contribute to the household expenditure, he respects me a lot. We discuss most issues together unlike in Ghana and this makes our relationship more secure. He knows he needs me more here and he accepts my suggestions.

Respondents told me that due to their illegal status they were forced to allow the women to work, and consequently to negotiate with them and listen to their opinions. A 48-year-old male respondent commented, “If your wife is contributing as much as you are to the household income, will you not listen to her views? Here, we do not have a choice, we need them and so we respect their views and they know it”.

Decision-making in employment is also dependent on state policies. The Department of Trade and Industry for instance indicated that the government policy on employment was driven by a need for flexibility (Department of Trade and Industry-UK, 2004: 2.1). Therefore one partner could choose to increase the hours worked as they wished to compensate for the other taking time off for childcare purposes. This policy resulted in choices for Ghanaian migrants, who could choose atypical hours, flexible hours, job-sharing, shift-working or part-time to enable them to manage paid work without involving a third party to assist in prohibitively costly childcare. This decision was not left to the man alone to make but agreed through negotiations since both desired to work; it also depended on whether elder siblings could assist in childcare. Increasingly women worked full-time, contributing substantially to the household income, and were empowered as co-breadwinners. They had varied reasons for working as explained by this 42-year-old female respondent who worked full-time: “I work because I have to do something and I need to pursue my own dreams, send money to my relatives and need to earn money for my own independence. I cannot go to my husband for everything”. Another reason given was the desire to have resources to be able to make personal choices. They took advantage of the

opportunities available in the UK such as their right to work. They had various work options available in the London labour market which are not available in Ghana.

5.2 The Labour Market

5.2.1 Women in the Labour Market

Knocke has suggested that female and male migrants face ‘structural subordination’ and are vulnerable in receiving countries (1999: 131). Women additionally face social subordination and gender segregation in the labour market. According to Lewis and Campbell (2007) there are still obstacles preventing the entry of women into the labour market in UK because the state regards household issues as private and therefore does not intervene. Nonetheless, most Ghanaian women participate in the labour market as much as males, because the job security of migrant men is not guaranteed and also for the reasons stated in section 5.1 above. Duncan et al. (2003) confirms that black women in UK are more likely to be in full time employment than whites.

Most Ghanaian women, like other national minority groups (from Nigeria, Caribbean, and Sierra Leone) are clustered at the lower echelons in the labour market, especially service work. They are mostly found in low-paying jobs like cleaning, care work, cooks/chefs, teaching assistants, customer service assistants, and sales assistants in Ghanaian shops, mostly family owned. Quite a number of elderly Ghanaian women in their 50s and 60s have set up grocery stores and sale of other Ghanaian goods like clothing, cassettes, shoes, textiles that they import from Ghana. Yet others have hair salons where they employ younger Ghanaian women on contract. Most of the female respondents managed two or three jobs. A major niche they had found in the labour market was care work. Most of the female migrants preferred live-in arrangements where they could earn as much as £15.00 per hour depending on experience and qualification. The women are however, now very apprehensive because possession of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in health and social care has become a requirement before they can be employed. It is becoming more difficult for those without at least a secondary education to pursue carework.

Women in Ghana are often able to have domestic workers or female relatives who take care of their homes and children while they participate in the labour market. Unfortunately in the UK these advantages are unavailable. Where a woman does not have an understanding husband who shares household chores, the woman is forced to interrupt her career or work part-time. A migrant can procure a visa for her mother to babysit for her, and other Ghanaians in the community send their children to her as a child minder. This is rare as it is difficult to obtain visas. In a few cases the man worked part-time while the woman worked full-time, because of her better job prospects. Especially partners of female nurses reported that they could not get very 'good jobs'. These decisions are arrived at through cooperative and conflicting interests, and the men mostly yield to the bargaining power of the women. However, women were able to achieve these outcomes because they were able to negotiate and gain support for their viewpoints, and make strategic choices which indicates an empowering relationship for them. This complaint from a 32-year-old male respondent shows the direction of change in power relations:

In Ghana she informs me of how much money she earns and sometimes brings the money for us to decide what it should be used for...Here, she goes to town and when she comes back she has bought items without my knowledge. She has bought a BMW car and I need permission to use it, she receives catalogues for purchases, and she even sends money to Ghana on her own. This is not how it should be; I should have some control in this house. [This respondent was a systems analyst with a reputable firm in Ghana. The wife being a nurse convinced him and they came to London. Unfortunately for him, he has not been able to get a job commensurate with his qualifications and the position he envisaged. The wife is gainfully employed in a hospital. He now works as a care assistant in the same hospital with the wife and therefore in a lower hierarchical position to her at the workplace. At the time of the interview the wife informed me she was arranging to leave that particular hospital because of the implications for both of them. She mentioned that other Ghanaian migrant staffs at the hospital have been making derogatory comments which make her husband uncomfortable. He explained that because the wife is now earning more than him, this has turned the scale in her favour his authority which he had in Ghana has waned transforming gender ideologies. He is unhappy about his labour market position and loss of control. While he was initially not contacted for an interview, he was informed by the wife before her interview. During the wife's interview he was quite snoopy and then after her interview he voluntarily elected himself to participate, as he claimed, to apprise me of the difficulties Ghanaian men are facing in London].

The men are of the opinion that the women have gained more power due to their engagement in the labour market. While the women were engaged in the labour market in Ghana, their income was inadequate and gender ideologies supported men financing household expenditure. The women pointed out that the new social space provided them

with valued opportunities and empowerment. They are aware of their rights as individuals and that their husbands need to discuss issues with them and not assume that they have the right to make decisions for them, when they are even contributing substantially to the household budget. Kabeer has noted that “resources and agency make up people’s capabilities...their potential for living the lives they want” and if they are able to exercise these capabilities, then they achieve empowerment (2005:15). Rowlands (1997) identifies the core values of empowerment as the ability to defend their rights, to communicate and to negotiate. To a large extent respondent women could be regarded as empowered from my findings because they are exhibiting these core values.

Most women however considered that they have been deskilled, because the jobs they were doing did not use the skills and abilities they possess. Revealing the contradictions in the gender-migration nexus, they feel marginalised and disempowered in the labour market and their ‘self worth’ is hurt. They utilize very few of their competencies and are underemployed. However, in contrast to Ghana the wages they earn abroad stretch further and they explained that their children also had better opportunities abroad. I talked with lawyers who were cleaning the underground and graduates with Masters degree working as shop assistants. They were unhappy in the labour market. A 36-year-old female respondent stated that:

I work in the supermarket in Sainsbury’s, how does that compare with my work as a lecturer? There is no satisfaction. Being at the till, I see that I am wasting away; my intellect is left useless. People talk to me anyhow and I feel so inwardly inferior...I ask myself why am I here? Why is this happening to me? then it gets into anxiety is this the kind of job I will be doing for the rest of my life? Only you come to the position that there is no alternative than to do something to survive.

A majority of the female respondents who possessed a higher education certificate identified the inability to use their qualifications as a barrier in the labour market. Most thought that their university degrees were irrelevant in the UK and they found that quite disheartening. Apart from nurses and doctors who had to justify their employability, others mentioned that their certificates were not recognized at all, even when their certificates were compared with UK qualifications. In some cases they were expected to do at least six months additional training (e.g. teaching) before they could apply for jobs. In most cases the courses they did were reported to be far below their competence. What was more, after

these courses, employers wanted them to have experience in the UK before they were employed. Independent migrant women found this difficult, as a 37-year-old female respondent retorted in a focus group discussion: “if one has to volunteer for that period how does one manage her bills?” They are pushed into forms of employment that they do not wish for but which have less stringent requirements, or compromise themselves with men to be looked after for the period before they gain employment.

One example was a 36-year-old female respondent who arrived in 2001 as a professional graduate teacher from Ghana. Despite ten years experience as a teacher all attempts to get employed in the education sector failed. She was advised to pursue an additional qualification in UK, undertook a Diploma course in Early Childhood Education and attained qualifying level 3 of the ASET/NVQ, based on the UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. She reduced her status from a teacher, to apply for a teaching assistant position. After over twenty applications she was called for only one interview, after which she was informed she had good qualifications but she needed work experience in the UK. She even offered to do voluntary work in the school which rejected her application for a job, but they said there was no space for voluntary work. She is now a care assistant, for which she was told experience was not as crucial. She had the option in Ghana to be a nurse or a teacher and opted for a teacher because she did not like nursing. Such stories reveal how women are subordinated and segregated to certain niches in the labour market. Their inability to gain jobs for which they are qualified and well-paid affects their livelihood strategies and power relationships as they have to negotiate household financial expenditure.

However, certain women in this study have achieved upward mobility and are working in teaching, banking, law and other non-traditional fields such as surveying. They have left the bottom of the employment hierarchy but nonetheless also reported difficulties in the labour market. The women who have been able to achieve success are in their late 20s and 30s mostly came to UK as independent migrants in the late 1990s and early 2000s to study and have subsequently remained.

Migration status plays a significant role in both employment status and occupational levels of women. Most of the illegal migrants are clustered in low occupations in the informal sector, preferring to do hairdressing, shop sales or domestic work where it is easier to integrate without fear of the immigration authorities. While some are capable of working in high-wage occupations, their undocumented status keeps them in the lower ranks of the labour market. They are frustrated and demoralized, affecting their gender relations and impacting on their bargaining power and sense of 'self'. In an informal discussion I encountered a lady whose husband has seized her passport and asked her to work and pay for her passage to the UK. Her illegal status makes it difficult for her to protest, and this diminishes her agency to act positively in her own interest. It is becoming more difficult to be employed without the requisite documents. Since 2008 employers who employ illegal immigrants are expected to pay £10,000 civil penalty (Home Office 2008; Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006: Section 15) and employers are now cautious. Migrant women pushed into jobs that may not ask for their documents may be paid as little as £3.00 per hour when the minimum wage is £5.52. This is confirmed by a 42-year-old female respondent: "ordinary jobs that you do are harder and almost impossible to get now. They will ask for passport, National Insurance number etc, which was not the situation in the past."

Employers of illegal migrants also constantly draw their attention to the fact that they are doing them a favour and therefore they cannot complain about maltreatment in the job situation. As a 36-year-old female respondent confirmed; "Women face vulnerabilities in the labour market and sometimes it is from our own men, when they are your supervisors. It is more serious when they are aware that you are illegally resident." Their vulnerabilities extend to their own ethnic group, depicting their social subordination. A 37-year-old female respondent stated that:

It is harder when illegal, and some people really die. With the medical system you have to register with a GP, and because they ask for utility bills, passport etc. most women are scared to go to hospital because they are afraid they will be arrested since that is what people tell them.

Female migrants mentioned that the new identity cards being issued to foreigners which commenced from November 2008 are also hindering their access to the labour market.

Their legal status is likely to be a factor determining their future prospects in the labour market. This problem will limit the gains they have made in the household through involvement in the labour market.

While female migrants are marginalized they are also structured into different classes. Women who are legal sometimes employ those who are illegal as domestic workers, shop assistants, or hairdressers in their shops/salons and pay them below the minimum wage. There is evidence of inequalities when women with legal status, who are better placed economically and socially, determine the pay of the less secure and exploit them without regard to minimum wage standards. A 32-year-old female respondent, who was a banker in Ghana, recounted how she was employed by a Ghanaian woman to sell in Dalston Market, London without provision for any protective gear from the weather and had to work seven days a week. She was paid £2.00 an hour, far below the minimum wage. She could not complain about her disadvantage to the woman though she felt unjustly treated because she was afraid of losing her job. Though Anthias (2000) notes that it is mainly indigenous women who oppress migrant women sometimes they can be women from their own circles, as this example illustrates. Such women were highly marginalised in the hierarchical class structure, losing their social status and being dependent on more 'successful' migrants. Berkeley et al. (2006) substantiate the fact that there is exploitation of immigrant labour in the UK by agents who control migrant casual workers. They cite the tragic deaths of 23 Chinese cockle pickers in Morecambe Bay in 2004 as an example, where the migrants worked without any safety gear.

Professional Ghanaian migrant women (nurses, lawyers, doctors, and teachers) do better in the labour market in terms of remuneration than unskilled women (care work; domestic work; cooks; cleaners; sales at supermarkets and Ghana shops). They see themselves as belonging to the middle class with a decent job, a car and a house. Professional women are also doing better in their households as they tend to have more egalitarian relations. They are capable of commuting between Ghana and the UK whereas the illegal migrants cannot leave the UK until they have their documents regularized. The non-professionals who are legal and employed in manual work also commute between Ghana and the UK but see

themselves more as belonging to the working classes or find the distinction irrelevant. The non-professionals reference their social mobility to Ghana, where they see themselves as in the upper classes; they therefore locate their class identity in Ghana. The illegal informed me that they belong to a 'classless' category. They are in shared accommodation; use the buses, buy their groceries at the cheapest supermarkets and struggle with their bills.

A 42-year-female respondent in a focus group discussion held a different opinion. To her, the issue did not have to do with being disempowered or classless. In Ghana she could not build a house or look after her children as a single parent, but now she has started building a home in Ghana. She therefore thinks that the important thing is that she can afford to look after her children and play a central role in her family. This woman was teaching in a secondary school in Ghana but is now working as a valet in a car dealership. She sees herself in a male-dominated profession but she is not worried about that. In relation to Rowlands' (1997) model of personal empowerment, this woman has gained self-confidence and believes she is respected by her family and can negotiate her own terms, therefore feels more empowered than in Ghana. Throughout my observations I encountered several women with a similar view.

In comparing their chances to those of men to show differences in opportunities and constraints, it seemed that women stood a better chance than men in the labour market, at least initially. In the first place the major jobs available such as caring, cleaning, and shop assistants were service jobs which favoured women. Informal discussions and observations showed that most Ghanaian men were unwilling to do some of the above-mentioned jobs as they are gender-segregated and would impinge on their 'masculine identity'. Notwithstanding their advantages, women as well compete with men over jobs considered to be men's jobs, such as working in factories and driving. Additionally, women mentioned to me that for some reason employers preferred them to men. Migrant men attributed this situation to stereotyping of 'the black man' as aggressive, a gangster and other negative images so employers felt more threatened with black men than black women. Women were of the view that this enhanced their chances compared to those of men. These assertions were corroborated through observations and interactions in the community: women did

seem to obtain jobs much more easily than men. Valentine and McDonald (2004) confirm that in a survey in the UK it was observed that white men and women are more prejudiced against ethnic minority men than against women. The women were therefore able to gain support in the labour market, enabling them to negotiate more strongly with their men in the households. The women did face other vulnerabilities. However, individual characteristics could also influence their roles in the labour market. As a 37-year-old female respondent narrated;

It also depends on your own initiative and drive. Here women and men can do a lot of things especially in the low skilled jobs; care, cleaning, security, drive buses and therefore one cannot say a woman is that much marginalized at least between Ghanaians.

5.2.2 Men in the labour market

Most Ghanaian men migrate to the UK for economic reasons. The study's interviewees arrived mostly in the 1980s and 1990s due to economic problems in Ghana (cf. Herbst 1993). Most men expected that they would integrate into the UK labour market, make enough money to look after their families, and remit home to their non-migrant wives and relatives. However, as was the case for women, men realized quite early that their university degree certificates often could not help them to gain employment in such sectors as education and industry. Most were therefore forced into low-paid and low-status jobs, not due to their lack of human capital skills but because their qualifications did not lead to the same opportunities for them as migrants. Parrenas (2001) refers to this as contradictory class mobility dislocations in the labour market. There were other men who had migrated with no educational attainment and just basic education, who were willing to do any job for wages. The most popular jobs for the men were security, bakery, hotels, mini-cab, laundry, driving, barber shops, working at warehouses and factories, cleaning, and caring. They used friends, employment agencies, media and other networks like old school mates and references from the Ghanaian community to gain employment.

As noted previously, most men I interviewed mentioned that initially they avoided care and cleaning jobs because they were gender segregated as women's jobs in Ghana. A 35-year-old male respondent noted: "Can you imagine me, "*Obarima okatakyie*" (a Ghanaian man with high status) cleaning after a woman who has gone to toilet, bath her, dress her and feed her?" My observations however confirm that a lot of Ghanaian men, especially those

in illegal situations, are compelled to work in care and cleaning and now they even own cleaning agencies. The UK labour market therefore seems to be a space that is shared without emphasising the 'separate spheres' of jobs done by ethnic minorities. Men and women are clustered in the female unskilled sector, especially illegal migrant men. Consequently there is disempowerment, a perceived loss of 'manhood', self confidence and identity as men engage in supposedly feminized work with low pay.

The reluctance of men to do certain types of jobs due to the ideology that they are women's jobs and that it undermines their masculinity affects gender relations and also tends to impact power relations. Because women will negotiate to do any job, very early in their settlement women begin to earn income while men continue to scout for the 'ideal' job. Women then start contributing to the household income, paying bills and taking decisions while the men take their time to look for better or 'masculine' jobs. Before long, due to their financial power, women gain a sense of confidence and are able to negotiate with men since they control most of the household income. The gender ideology of 'women's job' therefore works against the men and leads to women gaining empowerment. This statement by a 35-year-old female respondent epitomizes the problems that can arise from this attitude:

My Dad will never do anything apart from the jobs he felt were appropriate.... So he will sit at home, sending application after application. There are bills to pay; the house needs to be kept warm. The woman is running 2/3 jobs ...thinking of the welfare of the family... the roles have been reversed and the woman now takes the upper hand, she starts doing anything she gets and earning, and she is now doing the things a man is supposed to be doing and starts gaining the power gradually and the control starts. So in a sense psychologically it puts you in a lower position now you are looking like a houseboy. And that is what is affecting a lot of Ghanaian men in this country. If I know that my partner is a road sweeper in London, who cares? At the end of the day money comes home you support your family and everybody is happy. And your children will even respect you that though Daddy has his certificate, London is so hard that he is willing to do anything and work hard.

The men preferred what they considered to be 'masculine jobs' like working in construction, security or driving a mini-cab. However, the jobs they did basically just paid a minimum wage which made it difficult to make ends meet, and therefore they could not regard themselves as 'sole providers' or 'breadwinners'. For married couples it was essential that the wife also worked so that they could put together their income to look after the children. A majority of men also engaged in double employment. I observed that just as

in the case of women, where men did not have a qualification from the UK it was quite difficult in the labour market. A similar finding was made by Hawthorne (2002) and Foroutan (2008) among migrants in Australia which affected their labour force participation. Among the barriers they identified included lack of counseling, skepticism about 'outside' qualifications and inadequate knowledge of the labour market. These factors are relevant to this study as well. Many Ghanaians in this study possess degrees but face downward mobility and are doing low skilled jobs, and therefore 'dislocated' in the migrant space. Others are compelled to change careers. As one participant explained, he migrated with a degree in business management and it was difficult to get a job, so he did an MBA, but it was still difficult to gain employment in industry. Eventually he retrained and is now a teacher though he has never liked the profession.

Another major barrier the men identified is the fact that they are asked to show evidence of their work experience in UK. Since they are only able to do menial jobs while studying for their UK qualification they do not have the requisite experience at the level where they want to be employed. A 55-year-old male respondent informed me that because he did not have experience he had to take any alternative job: "You could see that you are more intelligent than your superior and you know better than him/her but they just talk down to you anyhow. The first job I did, the only qualification needed was somebody who could read and write, that is all." They face difficult labour market situations and this makes their employment unstable. To cope they need to negotiate and bargain with their women altering gender and power relations in the households.

Ghanaians in the study explained that they are compelled to do additional courses to move up the social ladder as a strategy to survive in the labour market. They claimed that those who refuse to move up will be marginalized. The professional Ghanaian men I spoke with informed me that they combined their work with further studies in the long term, sometimes by doing one course module a year to achieve upward mobility. While the women and men work 'atypical hours' by running a shift system, the men tend to study alongside work to improve their circumstances, as they think they should do better than their spouses. Eventually the female may remain at the lower occupational grades and may

fail to pursue a career, being satisfied as a co-breadwinner. The Ghanaian women mentioned during focus group discussions that after the men gain upward mobility through this strategy they tend to leave their partners for others in their own educational class, so they are now reluctant to consent to the men pursuing further studies. While men's further studies are popular among those who migrated in the 1970s and early 1980s, the migrants in this study who arrived in the late 1990s and early 2000s did not follow this pattern. Both the men and women combined work and education, also contributing to more egalitarian relationships in the households as the women are able to negotiate their terms and defend their rights. The majority of the male interviewees had not achieved this status because not all were as ambitious. Even with the men who strategize by working and studying, the majority have not yet attained their ambitions because even with new qualifications it is still difficult to find commensurate jobs. A 46-year-old man informed me that he has finished his law degree and for three years he has not found a job with any law firm, so he works as a security man because his family has to survive.

Age is another important differential that affects Ghanaian migrants; most of the men arrived in London in their late 20s or early 30s and are already advanced in age. The men I interviewed informed me that by the time they graduate with the requisite degrees they are well past 40 years. They have to compete with others who are younger and this affects their employment prospects. This sentiment was aptly expressed by a 55-year-old male respondent:

An important issue is age; in this country by 18/19 years they have completed University. You are 40 something years, with the same degree that a 19 year old has and looking for the same job, it is difficult for them to employ you. And by the time you get your papers (legal status) after all the hustling you are well past your employment age.

While this differential may not be restricted to migrants, this disadvantage does impinge on their life experiences. For instance as I have explained earlier they find it difficult to gain employment with their qualifications from Ghana which they believe is not recognised in the job market. So they trust that they can only gain good employment by educational attainment in UK. Invariably, this influences their inability to invite their spouses.

This point is illustrated by this male participant;

Kofi arrived in London in 1995 as a graduate at age 27, as a visitor. He started work as a factory hand and then changed to care work, using other people's documents. Because he was using other people's documents they sometimes restricted him from doing certain jobs and also took a percentage of his income. In 2002, through an immigration lawyer he legalised his stay; by then he was 34 years old. He then decided to pursue a masters' degree in business administration, which took four years to complete. According to him he was doing the course by 'installments,' paying his own school fees and working at the same time. He completed the degree in 2006 when he was 38. At the time he was interviewed he was over 40 years and noted, "They give you the impression you are old, though they do not say it directly. And I have noticed that for two years most of those I attend interviews with are far younger than I am. Since my masters in 2006 I am still pursuing the job of my dreams. I know my age is a factor".

Others cannot earn incomes that could make them sole breadwinners in the households as they are restricted to low-paying, low-status jobs. This eventually impinges on their gender relationships, as they have to re-adjust ideological norms to cope with practical life situations.

A number of the men I spoke with also faced problems as illegal migrants. They were unable to access sections of the labour market to participate in jobs that they were qualified for or competent to do. As in the case of women, I found lawyers and accountants who were cleaning, in the underground station and others working as retail clerks, mostly using false documents. While they were at work, they were always looking over their shoulder because at any time there could be a swoop on illegals. They were unable to save in the bank and when others assisted they stole their money. Unfortunately without documents they could not move up the social ladder because they could not enrol in any courses or take advantage of government social services. These migrants belong to the 'underclass' since they cannot work legitimately.

The men like the women belong to different social classes in urban southern Ghana and UK, and most consider themselves underprivileged. The legal residents stated that the areas where they stay, the council flats they mostly occupy, their salary levels, the schools their children attend, and the work they do put them in the working class. The illegals on the

other hand maintained that they belonged to no class, they were 'classless'. Their social class restricted their mobility and affected their placement in the labour market. However, they noted, when they get to Ghana they belong to the upper classes, because of the property they own and the assistance they can provide to their relations. Most thought that their social status had reduced in UK though a few, especially the uneducated, felt that before they migrated they had no status in Ghana. But they reported, like this 41-year-old elementary school male respondent that; "When I go to Ghana now they respect me that I am abroad..., everybody respects you". Their class identity is therefore constructed transnationally based on different classes depending on their location. Parrenas (2001) refers to this 'dislocation' as conflicting class mobility. Migrant class status therefore has transnational implications.

The perceptions migrants had of their class identity influenced the way they characterised themselves and their attitudes. Those who branded themselves as classless perceived themselves as 'non-belonging' and this affected their ability to integrate and eventually to become socially mobile. Those who identified themselves in the middle class strove to do better as they developed themselves, and were educated and tried to encourage their children to do better. Because they had better occupations and good incomes they found themselves in the middle class and they had influence which enabled them to set up businesses and employed those in the working classes, and marginalised them by for instance paying them salaries below minimum wage as stated above. The inequalities among the migrants themselves were highlighted. The hierarchical position they characterised themselves as belonging to, working classes, affected their life experiences and appeared to impact on them as they preferred to rather reference themselves to a class identity in Ghana, and therefore they did not strive to improve in the migrant space. In certain cases it affected their self-esteem and sense of self and therefore impacted their relationships.

5.2.3 Racialized labor market

This section explores discrimination in the labour market or workplace when migrants are accorded inferior treatment due to their nationality, race or ethnicity relative to white UK nationals. One issue identified by participants in the study was that they were discriminated

against because of their national origin. Male respondents said this could potentially affect their labour market integration, affecting their status and power in their new social space and influencing their relations with women. Most Ghanaian men believe they are being excluded from the labour market because of the opening up of the European Union. Most migrants, especially men, were concerned that nationals from Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania and others are taking up employment in their traditional niches. They have taken over the cleaning jobs and the construction industry and are prepared to take less than the minimum wage for such jobs. I noted the perception that Eastern Europeans work better at the cleaning and construction industries than Africans. Eade (2007) explains that the British public sees the Polish for instance as having a strong 'work ethic'. Eastern Europeans who are part of the European Union are also less likely to have problems with their migration status (Wills et al. 2009). According to the male respondents, when they apply for job openings the jobs are given to Polish, Romanians and other persons from the European Union. For example a 30-year-old male respondent mentioned that when he applied for a job at a bank the job was given to a Polish man though he could speak better English than the Polish man, and he thought they were equally qualified. A 56-year-old chef insisted that he would not again teach anyone the 'hidden skills' in his cuisine again. He said an Eastern European was made his supervisor after he had trained him and so he left his job in protest. These personal stories reflect the respondents' perception of the position of Ghanaian men in the labour market. A report for the Mayor of London (2004) corroborates the stories, stating that discrimination in the labour market is a persistent problem for minority blacks.

Interestingly, the study found that while Ghanaian men complained about the treatment to them they also considered that Ghanaians were seen in a better light than other nationals like the Black Caribbeans and Nigerians, having a reputation as honest, hardworking, trustworthy, hospitable and responsible people. Jamaicans are perceived to be linked to drugs, violence, guns and Nigerians associated with fraud and 419 (internet fraud), or as lazy and aggressive. Ghanaians may be marginalized yet they enjoy a higher social status than other nationals. This parallels the findings of Karjanen (2008) among Mexican migrants and Blacks in the US. They did not see this characterization as influencing their

access to resources; however it will be worthwhile for further research to find out how this segmentation affects different ethnic groups.

Ghanaians in this study maintained that apart from discrimination by national origin, there is also institutional racism. It is covert and embedded into processes, procedures and ethos of organisations and consequently it is difficult to hold anybody responsible because it is subtle. A 52-year-old male respondent who is a chef commented,

In the 60s, Ghanaians faced the overt approach, 'No Blacks, No Irish, No dogs'. It still happens and it is subtle. In my industry, I am registered with other friends in an agency and they would get certain jobs that I wouldn't hear about. I introduced my friend who is Chinese to this agency but they will call him and they do not call me. There is another agency I was going to register with and I was told that with that agency some of their clients have said that black chefs should not be sent to them. What the agency should do is to tell them that we will send you anyone so far as they are qualified to do the job. But they agreed that they we will not give them any black chefs. So I just did not join that agency. You can join the agency and you just will not get any work so what I chose to do was not to join the agency, that is all.

Weller (2007) has noted that labour market segmentations construct obstacles to access that hinder certain groups and the study finds that this seems to affect ethnic minorities like Ghanaians. From the study it appeared that apart from age, qualifications, and experience other factors such as race/ethnicity and state recognition intersect with gender to simultaneously restrict migrants to particular job areas. A 42-year-old male respondent indicated that:

I think there is discrimination. I have been hunting for a job for 3 years now since I did my Masters in 2005. When you go they ask you, are you British citizen, EU citizen? When you say no, you cannot go to the next stage of the application procedure. And then there are other cases that they will list or specify that they are looking for British people. But in most cases... even Gordon Brown recently said "British jobs for British people". The jobs are there but they will want to give it to British people but not those who have just migrated into the country from far away.

While this may be illegal because of equal opportunities legislation requiring that racial discrimination should be avoided and equal opportunities created, the experiences and views of respondents portray a different reality. They complained that promotion is based more on familiarity and who they can get along with, than on merit. This statement by a 32-year-old female respondent summarises the situation.

Sometimes you will be in a position whereby there is no person ahead of you then when it comes to progression they will promote “the blue-eyed blonde” over you. You will be the one in position to train them but they will go ahead of you.

Wrench et al. have noted that “equal opportunity policies are designed to facilitate equal treatment in recruitment and selection, work allocation and promotion, training and development... as well as dealing with discrimination” (1999: 12). However implementation may not be achieving these objectives, as a 54-year-old male respondent revealed to the researcher:

When I was a cleaner before I became a train driver they advertised two positions and I was acting as the team leader, and my Gambian friend was a cleaner. We both applied and passed the interview. Meanwhile they had made it clear to us that if you have not finished your probation you cannot change your department when a vacancy comes up. You cannot even then apply. Two white people came behind us in the interview they were not even three months in the job. We had passed the interviews and we were given letters but we do not know what happened they were given the jobs and not us, just because of our colour and they said they did not have any job for us.

Most of my respondents confirmed, especially in the focus groups, that they believe there is discrimination. According to them, to be able to achieve your objective in the labour market for both women and men you need to prove yourself twice as good as the white person. Eade (2007) confirms in his study of the Polish in London that they viewed “whiteness” as an asset because whites are treated better than non-white people. The respondents in my study also mentioned that employment in the labour market was sometimes tokenistic to satisfy legal requirements of equal opportunities and diversity. So whenever there is an opening for a percentage of ethnic minorities to fill certain positions and you happen to be in the right place at the right time you would make up the number. A 29-year-old female respondent noted that she was working in a company with about 100 employees and there were only four blacks. What the company does is “to showcase us that they believe in diversity, and we have become like what they call ‘tokenism’”.

To understand the forms of relationally constituted identity in the context of migration, it is essential to analyse the labour market and how differentials like race, ethnicity, and nationality intersect with gender, to gain a nuanced view of how these differentials influence gender relations. Women explained to me how discrimination in the labour market is affecting their relationship with their partners, and this is critical in understanding

the centrality of social differentials to gender relations. Because the opportunities are shrinking for their men they seem to withdraw in their homes and become 'laid back'. They claim that this is because they can no longer play the "breadwinner role" that they used to play. Though the women gain some autonomy and decision-making powers from this situation they are not happy, because their men are not happy. They would prefer that their men have jobs commensurate with their qualifications. So though there is change and women have more decision-making power, can exercise their opinion and have almost equal powers, they are not happy because they expect their men to become more responsible. This evidently also affects the way they are able to integrate into society. The interaction between gender, race/ethnicity and class produces hierarchies in the labour market which redefine gender ideologies and relations, eventually impacting on gender relations in both the private and public spheres, among Ghanaian migrants.

5.2.4 Language

Ghanaian migrants informed me that their first advantage in UK was that they could communicate in the English language due to their colonial heritage. I found out that migrants who had a better command of the language could access better job prospects than those who could not. Ghanaians who are uneducated find it difficult to speak fluent English and employers want to be able to communicate with their employees. In addition, for front-line customer jobs, employers usually require persons with a good command of English language. Therefore the uneducated migrate to London concentrate in cleaning jobs where the supervisor may be a Ghanaian. Those in cleaning and similar menial jobs in addition do not have much interaction with clients. Men without English proficiency are pushed into low-status jobs, end up being marginalised and vulnerable, and cannot exercise their agency to pursue jobs of their own choice. The comment below from a 32-year-old male respondent summarizes the situation

The illiterates are the problem and it is amazing how they survive. If you are doing a job as a cleaner or washing cars you do not interact much. But if you are in a profession like nursing and you will meet with people everyday it is difficult.

Both men and women mentioned that though they thought language was a barrier they have re-evaluated this position, because in the case of Eastern Europeans, who are lumped

together as a homogenous unit, language did not seem to be a barrier to their participation in the labour market. While other research has found that language has a positive effect on employment (Kler 2006; Chiswick et al. 2006) most of my participants think that it may not necessarily be so now. They think that nationality and race may disadvantage some ethnic groups far more, while making other ethnic minorities more successful in the labour market. They provided instances when they thought that they were equally qualified as other nationals who were employed, and English was essential for such positions. As a 42-year-old female respondent summarized, “language helps but there are other factors at play, which are usually subtle.”

5.3 Consequences of entering the labour market

5.3.1 Breadwinning: responsibility for household expenditure

Responsibility for expenditure among Ghanaians interviewed was not based on altruistic principles but on bargaining and negotiations. Unlike in Ghana, expenditure was usually a shared responsibility, with each person required to contribute a portion. Most of my respondents are income earners and contribute to the household income as ‘dual breadwinners.’ These findings confirm the suggestion by Brewster and Padavic (2000) that men’s gender ideologies are changing due to economic realities. Warren (2007) also states that couples in UK are more likely to be dual workers. My observations, informal discussions and focus group discussions revealed that the man often pays rent/mortgage, electricity, council tax and water, and sometimes buys food items from African shops, whilst the woman pays for the supermarket shopping (buying ‘European’ food items), telephone, TV license, gas and the childminder if there is one. The above represents a general summary. Each family decided on how the bills would be shared depending on their own preferences. There were some gendered overtones though, where for instance women were made to pay for the telephone because the discourse was that ‘women are always on the phone’. Many women in focus group discussions confirmed that they preferred to be in constant touch with the families back home and around the world. The ‘telephone space’ is therefore gendered. In the case of a childminder the men claimed women should “pay the childminders since they are now working and not at home to look after the children”. In the negotiation process women agree to take up this expenditure to

enable them to exercise their right to work in the labour market. The sharing of the expenditure in the house is therefore sometimes a gendered phenomenon with bills divided based on whether expenses are considered to be feminine or masculine. For instance, men mostly paid for the mortgage/rent and council tax, expressing the patriarchal norm that the man should provide shelter for the family, as in Ghana. Generally, men were responsible for overall household expenses, while women paid for food, luxuries and children but this mainly depended on families. In non-gendered sharing the amount of the bills is shared equally; what they termed '50%-50%'. A bone of contention was that children's clothing was not shared so it always led to conflict. This was bought at random by each partner and it ended up being the woman's responsibility.

The men were upset because it was important for them to be breadwinners, which they noted was their situation in Ghana before migrating. They left Ghana aware that this responsibility conferred their masculine identity on them. Connell (1995) has noted that breadwinning is a powerful device for structuring an individual's self identity. For Ghanaian men therefore, their sense of self, dignity and identity is dented as they find themselves in a position of having to share the household expenditure with their partner. In these ways the men are also seen to be disempowered based on Rowlands' (1998) model of empowerment; if the core values of empowerment are self-esteem, sense of 'self' and self confidence, then the men seem to have lost these attributes. Kabeer (1999) also explains that to be disempowered is to be denied choices, therefore to a large extent Ghanaian men had been denied their choices, because most men wanted to choose breadwinning but the dislocations in the contextual environment had denied them these choices. A number of men avoided directly asking their wives to contribute, allowing the women themselves to choose what items they would contribute to. A 43-year-old male respondent remarked that;

We have our independent incomes, and we do not share like most Ghanaians do, we put our resources together. When there is a bill we decide on what each will pay. We have not had problems because I never asked her to share with me. I mostly ensured I paid the rent, now mortgage.

The quotation below from a 36-year-old female respondent shows that men are compelling: "They ask you to share the very moment the money gets into your hands. They actually share. To me such husbands are imposing." During one of my interviews in the house of a

participant, the lights went out and the wife had gone out. We had to wait till she was called on the phone and she came back from town with the prepaid key before we had electricity. Because it was her duty to pay for the electricity the man did not even know where the prepaid key is located. Sometimes in deciding what to pay there are conflicts as each is of the view that the other wants to gain undue advantage. These arrangements tend to be contested. A 28 year old female respondent conveyed her disapproval of the practice as follows:

You pay half of the rent or mortgage and I will also pay half. If the other partner does not pay his/her part and the 'red letter' comes he/she puts it on the table, there is no togetherness. You turn a blind eye if there is no electricity in the house. 'Do groceries, I pay the bills'. When we were in Ghana did you tell me to buy groceries? You came to marry me, now you are telling me 'you buy groceries' or 'you pay that or this'. No, you married me because you can take care of me. Whatever I come into the marriage with is a bonus. You do not shift responsibility to me, and still expect that you are in control?

Due to lineage attachments some participants in this study were against the practice of joint accounts, though they practiced joint expenditure. Parents in Ghana asked their daughters to put up houses for their family and therefore it was difficult for the women to stay at home and not work. If they had to fulfil this, then when they got their incomes they could not pool them. The women further explained that some men when they return to Ghana decide to marry other women, and then the wife loses the property that they jointly worked together abroad to build. For this reason, they were now cautious and wanted to invest individually and maintain their independent incomes.

Financial investment decision-making

I sought also to determine who had the final say in investment and long-term financial decisions, to further assess the impact of entering the labour market on women and men and determine whether men's power over women is legitimated, either through patriarchal ideology (Walby 1989; Chafetz 1990) or through the ownership of resources in this case. I found highly equitable relations since most couple were both working and were co-breadwinners. They saw it as a shared responsibility among partners to discuss and find common ground. The men contended that they make decisions with their wives, as described by a 52-year-old male respondent: "Well I respect my wife in everything I do. I do not get up and do things on my own, because sometimes you do it on your own and it

might not be the right decision”. This statement is corroborated by most women, as the statement below from a 42-year-old female respondent shows:

Everything goes perfectly, he would bring the idea and I would suggest mine and the one that is best we go with it. Well here we both work full time and have money in our account and we decided to buy a house and we bought it.

There seemed to be more egalitarianism among Ghanaians in decision-making in the UK, though sometimes women decide against joint ownership, thereby challenging power relations. Women attribute their independent decisions to extended family pressure, mistrust of men and the inheritance system which usually favours men. Men are not allowed to take unilateral decisions on finances, since any attempt will lead to resistance from the women. Though they point out that even in Ghana the situation is changing where women are assisting men, they concede that in UK they are far ahead of Ghanaian men and women in terms of egalitarian relationships. That is not to say that there are no negotiations but each believes in their independence. For instance, a 41-year-old female respondent told me because they could not decide where to put up their house in Ghana she and her partner built separate houses. As Barot et al. (1999) asserts when women become more independent and gain self-worth, they demand greater participation in decision-making, leading to empowerment for women, who can express their own opinions and control their own resources.

5.3.2 Household fiscal expenditure and decision-making

A new typology is needed to describe gender and fiscal decision making that accurately represents Ghanaian gender relations in London. The typology below is drawn from my ethnographic material from fieldwork in London. In urban southern Ghana, I identified four expenditure types (see section 4.4), whereas in London the most popular expenditure types identified were the distinct contribution expenditure type (DCE) and again the joint contribution expenditure type (JCE).

Distinct contribution expenditure type (DCE)

This is the main typology identified in London and it draws on Pahl's (1989) typology of the independent management system. Both partners are employed, most probably in the

lower echelons of the formal labour market. Each individual controls and manages his or her income independently, and does not allow any partner access to all the money. The household expenditure is shared, decision-making is egalitarian and housework is also relatively shared, corresponding to Hakim's egalitarian model. Both partners have their own spending money. They cooperate and come to agreement, and the man rarely takes any financial decision without the input of the woman and vice versa. Because women have become co-providers their status is enhanced and their greater gender equality leads to empowerment.

Joint contribution expenditure type (JCE)

This typology, which was found mostly among the younger generation in urban southern Ghana, was also observed in London though it did not correspond to any generational effect there (see section 4.4.4). This category represented the pooling system depicted by Pahl (1989), where both partners have access and responsibility for the management and expenditure of all the money in a common kitty. Both control and manage it jointly with either partner responsible for any expenditure based on who is available or free to spend the funds. There is negotiation and bargaining and the man does not have legitimate authority over financial transactions. In a few cases, a joint account is opened and a specific amount is put in by each partner for instance, £300.00 total each month, which is used for all household expenses. Each partner could go shopping (sometimes arranged fortnightly) and each could pay any bills that come up, out of the pool. If the money runs out, it is 'topped up'. In performing housework the man provides relatively a large considerable input. In the joint scenario, the partners are discontinuing the age old practice of the provision of housekeeping allowances. There is a lot of rationalisation before financial decisions are made as partners are in an equal relationship, so gender inequalities are reduced considerably. The woman's position is considerably improved in this fiscal distribution arrangement and in decision-making. Decision-making is quite egalitarian and cooperation is enhanced at the expense of conflict and leads to equity and stability in the marriage relationship. This expenditure type reinforces the resource theory of power, emphasising that employment should be backed by almost equal contributions to household expenditure.

It also affirms that change in gender orientations are required to lead to equality in decision making and empowerment.

There was also a variation in this typology in London. In the variant scenario, the women also contributed though their contribution was less than that of the men (see section 4.4.1). The women assisted the men in paying for household expenditure. Decision-making was still jointly made and the men accepted that the women should contribute less. This type mostly occurred in the few cases where I met women who had given birth, but would still keep for instance their early morning cleaning jobs. Some might also work two hours each day, taking advantage of the flexible hour's policy. Fieldwork observations show that this typology in London is mainly during a transitional period, where there is an understanding that for a period the woman should do part-time work. This changes subsequently, especially when the child is weaned. The couple maintain joint decision-making because the woman will soon return fully to the labour market. In this way she can continue to meet her own personal expenditures.

Arber (1999:175) argues that "gender inequality in earnings in the private sphere of the household is a critical factor in maintaining women's disadvantaged position in [British] society". Migrant women in Britain, using my participants as a point of reference, seem to have overcome this disadvantage. This is because the migrant men are marginalised in the labour market and clustered in low-status jobs with the women. Apart from the low levels of wages earned, the disparities in their incomes have become insignificant. The economic situation also makes it difficult for the men to be sole providers, so the women have to assist them as 'dual breadwinners' to meet household finances. While the couple may not necessarily have a joint account, financial arrangements do change as the women contribute substantially to the household. Since the dominance of the men is partly derived from their breadwinning role they have to cede some decision-making authority and renegotiate the power relations. Kabeer has maintained that for a woman to earn money is in itself a "challenge to male authority within the household" (1997:298). The situation I have found may be likened to what Kibria (1990) found among the Vietnamese immigrant community in the US: the shift in resources because the women are now in formal employment and

contributing substantially to the household budget enabled a renegotiation of the patriarchal bargain. My findings concur with others who critique the notion that migration and wage earning does not influence gender relations. It therefore provides modest support to the assertion by Sen (1990) that earnings can give a woman a better breakdown position, and the bargaining power of household members could be enhanced based on their perceived contribution and a better understanding of their well-being.

The study also revealed that in the new social space migrants are refashioning their identities, adjusting their ideologies and shaping relationships to wider social, cultural and economic realities of the labour market. The economic situation of Ghanaian men as migrants had made them alter their *gender orientation* and perception of being the breadwinner; they now accepted their partners as co-breadwinners. For instance couples informed me that they had to service mortgages, sometimes for up to twenty five years, so both parties could not stop working at any stage. This point echoes the argument of Zuo (2004) that harsh labour markets limit the capability of men to be the sole providers. The women gain empowerment by maintaining their independent incomes and exercising control over their usage. A 43-year-old female respondent noted:

Marriage here is more rewarding than in Ghana. Where you negotiate with your husband and work and contribute to the household income, he accepts your views and regards you as equal. Because we also have some extra pounds we also send money to our relatives in Ghana and they also respect us. I am happier here also because he is also always at home when he returns from work. Where else will he go...?

The evidence also showed that men appreciated the new circumstances as well. This 49-year-old male respondent stated:

In Ghana, she was a typist and though I was able to cater for the family without her assistance it was very difficult, that is why we migrated. Now, we all share the costs, this helps, life here is also tough but better. Look, our two children are graduates and the last is also performing well.

The male breadwinner model is eroded and transformed, with more dual breadwinners in diasporic gender relations. The shift in gender ideologies in London facilitates the recognition of the women's role as breadwinners and plays a significant part in these transformations. Practices of egalitarianism that they observe in the host country and the 'dislocations' they encounter both influence them to cooperate. The transformations in

gender ideologies for both women and men then provide the leverage to alter power relations. The significance of choice is quite important because women are working and sharing breadwinning leading to their empowerment⁷. In trying to overcome gender inequalities women and men therefore have to transform their everyday life and personal conduct (Connell 2005).

5.3.3 Diasporic masculinities – boys/ men or women?

Donaldson et al. (2009) have noted the dearth of literature on how men renegotiate gender relations in the diaspora. They state that men do not arrive in destination countries with 'blank minds' but carry with them ideas of masculinities from home countries. How are the notions they carry with them renegotiated in a different socio-cultural setting? An emerging trend I found throughout the fieldwork is that men are insecure and confused by the disempowering state of affairs they find themselves in, in the labour market. Men were reluctant to refer to themselves as men or called themselves useless men, as the quotations below will demonstrate. A 29-year-old male respondent stated, "the little that I was earning was just enough to pay my part of the rent and a little bit of the grocery. She will take other bills...at times I really felt like a little boy." A 48-year-old male respondent remarked, "The women respect us in Ghana, but here they do not respect us at all...if you are not working then you are a useless man". Finally, a 50-year-old male respondent noted, "We do not give anybody advice here, if you say it she will quarrel with you. Here, the man becomes the woman." These remarks indicate that men in the study are insecure, unconfident and uncertain about their masculinity. They feel a loss of self-worth, regret and sometimes humiliation. There are different ideas on the construction of masculinity in terms of how men perceive their position and define themselves in the new social space, drawing attention to diversities in masculinities noted by Beasley (2008). The gender relations following women's increased choices and agency to participate in the labour market, and their desire to be economically independent, combine with the crushing socio-economic conditions prevalent in the new setting to impact on the masculinities of migrant men.

⁷ This differs from the Ghanaian situation, where both continue to observe a male-dominated gender ideology despite women's involvement in the labour market. In comparison, in Ghana though women may work they insist that the man should be the breadwinner because that is his patriarchal role (section 4.4.1). Also the mainly informal economic activities of women in Ghana give them lower incomes than those of men, which influence their level of contributions.

The term hegemonic masculinity is contested (Beasley 2008; Howson 2008). Ghanaian men in UK reference their masculinity more to what they consider a hegemonic masculinity in Ghana. This single “culturally idealized form” of masculinity (Fuller 1996:228) which Connell refers to as the dominant form of masculinity in the ‘relations of hierarchy’ (2000a:10-11) is unattainable for Ghanaian male migrants in London. Miescher (2005) disagrees that there is a hegemonic masculinity in Ghana, but identifies four notions of masculinity there: senior, adult, ‘big man’ and Presbyterian masculinity. My fieldwork suggests certain desired ideals that the Ghanaian migrants sought after, which I consider hegemonic in this social context. They desired to be capable economic providers for their household; to be able to share their wealth with the extended family; to have authority and control in their household, and in a sense to be ‘big men.’ However, the inadequacies in the labour market made it impossible for these men to attain these ideals. Their situation could therefore be equated to marginalised masculinity, which in a sense is subordinate to the hegemonic masculinity. Their perceived inadequacies have consequences which are aptly explained by a 36-year-old female respondent:

The men either take to drinking or going after other women. They sow ‘wild oats’ everywhere... others become laid back and allow the women to do everything. They would not even work again or discipline their children.

The above patterns also demonstrate forms of ‘protest masculinity’ as Ghanaian men experiencing marginalised masculinity in the diaspora due to experiences of discrimination and other dislocations, find other means of expressing their masculinity. A 54-year-old male respondent who has left his marital home expressed his view that “Ghanaian men who die regularly in this town most of them are due to such familial problems. Before I left the house, one day I was sleeping and before I knew ‘*miti mu shishi me*’ (literally, serious throbbing of the head and a painful migraine), I could have got a heart attack, then I knew it was time to leave.” A 42-year-old female noted, “women can also expand the problem, instead of pointing things out subtly to the men, they do not do that. They meet the men upfront, and are aggressive, and confrontational; and this does not help.” Hauari et al. (2009) found out in their study in UK that a more encouraging and supportive role from wives facilitates paternal involvement. However, the above comment shows this is not

forthcoming from Ghanaian women, serving to exacerbate the experience of transformations in masculinity by Ghanaian men.

The chapter demonstrates that for instance, Ghanaian men in UK often perform jobs far below their qualification levels, which undermines their masculinity. Because the jobs are low-paid, they are forced to recognise their wives as co-breadwinners in their 'powerlessness'. Since breadwinning is considered foundational to masculinity the men feel disempowered and leading to their feeling that they have lost authority and control in the household. Through migration women have gained knowledge of their rights and begin to demonstrate their agency as they have noted; 'in London, we rule'. Masculinities of their partners are therefore challenged and there is a struggle for hegemony as the norms recognised by Ghanaian men begin to alter in the migration space. The new forms of masculinity recognised in the UK begin to take centre stage, but unfortunately a number of men do not agree to the changes and exhibit protest masculinities as a sign of resistance. They find that reconstructing their masculinities is a complicated task in diverse multicultural London, which they are unprepared for. They are nostalgic about a Ghanaian 'hegemonic masculinity' portraying strength and authority and depicting 'big man' masculinity, through which they can continue to control women and other men. Ghanaian men adapt and try to emulate a hegemonic masculinity in UK, which has also seen transformations due to social and economic circumstances, changes in cultural norms towards egalitarianism as well as practical life circumstances which demand that both parents work to ensure financial provision for the family. The emerging norm in the UK is 'complementary parenting' as a consequence of both parents now working (Hauari et al. 2009:5-7). The concept of 'good fathering' (Williams 2009) involves not only breadwinning, family protection, disciplining and instilling values, which remain a core of masculinity, but also participation in housework, involvement with child care, providing 'emotional stability' as well as ensuring harmonious family relationships for their families and sharing 'quality time'. A majority of Ghanaian men have picked up these traits of hegemonic masculinity in London. Chua and Fujino call this 'flexible masculinity' with male involvement in female tasks and this promotes egalitarianism (1999:407). These additional conceptions of masculinity impact on migrants who find it difficult to integrate

into the host society. The responses of migrant men are therefore diverse: some prefer to lay back and take advantage of patriarchal dividends reflected in ‘complicit’ masculinity and share in the benefits of a gendered society; others resist, exhibiting ‘protest masculinity’, while the majority accept the social transformations leading to egalitarianism. Men are able to adjust to the new ways of masculinity such as playing ‘good father’ roles. Women on the other hand have promoted the persistence of dominant masculinities as they have relied on their religious and cultural norms to dictate their relationship to the hegemonic masculinities. To them men should be heads of households, breadwinners and should dominate/control the household, so they exhibit ‘emphasised femininity’, being compliant to patriarchy, reflecting the theorisation of Connell (2005).

There is evidence of multiple masculinities, with some aspiring to hegemonic masculinities, others exhibiting marginalised masculinities and yet others in a quagmire due to the difficulties they find themselves in as they cannot sustain the ‘good provider’ role which they consider a foundation of their masculinity. They therefore see themselves as vulnerable referring to themselves as boys, while others have become frustrated. For instance, a 49-year-old male respondent described his situation: “my wife just decided that since the council flat is in her name I should no longer pay the rent. I therefore became a ‘lodger’ and rather paid for the shopping and my portion of the bills.” He was disturbed by this turn of events because in Ghana it is the man who provides shelter and takes the woman into ‘his house’. A situation where they are both ‘equalized’ in the labour market and the house they live in also belongs to the woman, further deepens the man’s undesirable situation. Ghanaian men who resort to violence are divorced by women, who have a better fallback position because of welfare and legal provisions, such as payment of child support to women. Certain men therefore report that they end up being worse off. But the majority appreciate the circumstances and this leads to gender empowerment for women and egalitarian relationships. I use the term ‘paradoxical transnational masculinity’ to refer to the minority group of men who identify themselves in reference to the transnational social space, staying in London, but aspiring for masculinity in a different cultural environment in Ghana. This minority group of men feel emasculated, since one of the hegemonic principles of masculinity is to be the main breadwinner (Howson 2008).

Since masculinity is a relational concept, gains and losses made by both women and men in the migration trajectories need to be accorded greater attention. Because changes in women's lives affect men's lives and power configurations, issues of men as well have to be brought to the forefront in addressing gender inequalities. The male migrants have been rendered passive and almost dependent, with a loss of identity and cultural disillusionment creating confusion within them about their 'masculinity' in the new social space. Future research should aim at increasing understanding of the contradictions migrant men experience, in a bid to enable them re-adjust to the new roles and expectations thrust on them after migrating, the renegotiations which emerge, and the influences of new social differentials.

5.4 Welfare

While paid and unpaid work is being negotiated by migrants, the welfare state also interacts with these factors to advance or challenge the gender division of labour. The engagement of migrants in the labour market is not their only source of finance; the existence of welfare resources of various kinds such as council flat allocation and child benefits etc. complicates the issues. The study argues that the likelihood of a married woman being offered income support and a council house strengthens her "breakdown position," which improves her bargaining power in the household. Crompton has argued that feminists have been "highly critical of the part played by state welfare in the reproduction of masculine dominance" (1999b:11). She maintains that male dominance is not necessarily reproduced in circumstances where benefits are paid directly to women. This study supports this assertion. Indeed, it is argued that states may suppress masculine domination through the development of 'women friendly policies' (Hernes 1988 cited from Crompton 1999b:12). Welfare provision adds to the overall family income and impacts on power relations in the household, showing the significance of different institutions in shaping gender relations. The involvement of men and women in the labour market may be predicated on welfare services available to them. The UK has been changing some of its policies to reflect a work and family balance since 1997 (Lewis and Campbell 2007) and this may create genuine choices for men and women in gender relations. Gender ideologies and relations are shaped

by and in turn shape welfare states and thereby “impact on the nature and distribution of resources, social roles and power relations” (Daly and Rake 2003:2).

The illustration above on the payment of rent for council flat depicts the popular discourse among migrant men that they are disempowered by the policy of ‘the council flat’ which has changed women from respecting and honouring them. Because the woman is deemed to ‘own’ the property, the man’s position as the breadwinner, which enabled him to provide such facilities to the family and therefore endowed him with power, is curtailed. This curtailment affects power relations in the household and influences the way men and women lead their lives, impacting on relations of authority and control. The UK social welfare scheme pays child benefits monthly to parents who have children less than 16 years. From available evidence in most cases the child income support is given to the woman as the principal carer, who is regarded as the mother. The intention is meant to ensure that the woman has an independent income that can be spent on the child. The women therefore tend to have a double income, from their earnings in the labour market and this additional income, albeit for their children. This additional resource for the woman enables her to meet the immediate needs of the children and sways the allegiance of children to mothers. The women mentioned that the amount, which is now £18.80 a week for the oldest child and £12.55 for each other child (HM Revenue and Customs 2008), is insufficient. Conflicts ensue; the study observed that fathers are reluctant to cater (buy clothes or make any provision) for their children because of this benefit so the mothers have become the *de facto* providers for the children’s personal needs. While social policy is meant to cushion those who may be poor it can create tensions in gender relations.

Women do take advantage of state provisions to gain control and influence in the household and are able to use these powers to equalize gender relations. The benefits therefore put restraints on men and act as a bargaining chip for women. The UK welfare system is very present in women’s lives (Daly and Rake 2003) as well as men’s lives. Several commentaries portrayed women as deliberately creating difficult marital situations in order for the men to be removed from the council flats and the women granted independence and income support. Focus group discussions I held confirm that women have been able to use

their incomes and increased access to state benefits (e.g. Council flats), and social policies against domestic violence to gain power and influence in the household. The women commented that “we share the power, the respect and we share everything”. Men asserted that women laid claim to the council property and threaten to call the Police for any minor misunderstanding. They are therefore of the view that the women wield even greater power than the men and it is not a question of equality. Griffiths (2002) made similar findings among the Somalians in London who do not work, that the welfare state had stripped the men of their breadwinner role and therefore emasculated them. My findings echoed this as Ghanaian men thought that certain provisions of the welfare system had given women power over them, stripping them of authority over the women.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the degree of change in Ghanaians’ attitude to gender ideologies and relations as a result of engagement in the UK labour market. The evidence reveals that having moved to London certain factors that they encounter in the labour market and the socio-economic system influence their life experiences. For instance, because they arrive in London at a relatively advanced age, by the time they obtain their legal status and complete school, ready to be employed in high status occupations they have grown older. Competing with younger applicants therefore affects their employment chances and the ripple effects affect their gender relationships. Similarly, as shown in the chapter, their ethnicity influences the kind of jobs they get and even their promotion opportunities and subsequently the level of income they could benefit from. It was further shown that a requirement in the labour market is having the relevant experience in UK. Consequently, migrants are relegated to low-status jobs because they do not have the experience deemed appropriate for jobs they qualify for. Finally, the status of the migrant is relevant for accessing certain segments of the labour market and being illegal reduces the opportunities which then seem to influence gender relationships.

The male can no longer profess to being the main breadwinner; the labour market and the welfare system by providing additional resources to women, has steered them to a better bargaining position which restrains men from exercising ‘undue power’ as breadwinners.

The gender ideologies of the breadwinner have been challenged. Women are able to participate in formal employment and contribute substantially to the household economy. Both women and men also exercise financial decision-making authority through their dual breadwinnership roles. While the process of men changing their dominant ideologies and practices takes time, as noted by the ‘lagged adaptation’ model, migrant men, whose ideas begin to alter lead to more egalitarian activities and equal sharing. Evidence from the study confirms as suggested by Crompton that “the dual earner/dual carer model is most likely to generate less traditional gender relations” (1999a:205). The position of women has been enhanced as most of them are working in the market sphere, albeit in low-status jobs, their marital roles have been enhanced and there is opportunity for joint decision-making and therefore empowerment. The study also finds that they are able to benefit from the resources generated by partners. There seems to be a more egalitarian relationship in expenditure patterns and independent incomes, undermining male dominance. My findings agree with those of Warren (2007) and Nyberg (2002) that paid work appears to enable women to exercise control over resources and gain power in the households. This chapter has demonstrated that transformations in gender ideologies could contribute to leveraging power relations in the household. However this situation is not all-encompassing because it seems that the social differences of ethnicity, migration status, experience, class, and nationality influence migrant women’s circumstances in the labour market. As explained in the chapter because of these influences women may not be able to benefit fully from their new environment as it limits their advancement in job or pay opportunities.

Ghanaian women have always been engaged in some form of work, though mostly in the informal sector. It appears that the conditions in their new social space in London which enable them to participate in the formal sector and the constraints that men face in this same sector no longer provide a rationale for the continued legitimacy of the dominance of the male (patriarchy). The study contends that the segregated labour market has somewhat contributed to the shaping of gender relations and the reconceptualization of gender ideologies in the migrant space. This empirical study demonstrates that largely there is discrimination in the labour market despite equal opportunity principles, which has led to empowerment and disempowerment in the labour market for women and men. While it

seemed that women are expressing their opinions more freely, initiating activities, finding themselves more capable and gaining in self esteem, core elements of Rowlands (1998) model of empowerment, men on the other hand perceive themselves as emasculated and losing their dignity and sense of agency. Men feel inadequate as providers, potentially straining their marital relationships. The redefinition of roles, norms and power relations among migrants seems to have resulted to more egalitarian relationships, though there are important nuances. Not all men have been able to come to terms with renegotiating gender ideologies and relationships. O'Donnel and Sharpe (2000) have made similar comments about the gender order in Britain. Men also express insecurities about their relationship with women and the fact that Ghanaian cultural norms have been turned 'upside down' by women. Men also feel they have been devalued to a subordinate position of a 'boy', attempt to resist the new expectations that are thrust on them, and therefore have a problem in redefining their masculinities. The study further confirms the assertion by McKie et al. that "differences in income have implications for gendered power relations in relation to decision making, the domestic division of labour and the potential for personal independence" (1999:16).

The next chapter focuses on the private realm, by investigating the domestic division of labour in the households of Ghanaian female and male migrants in London.

Chapter Six: Diasporic Gender Relations

Yoofi, a 39 year-old-male migrant arrived in London in 2000. He is a graduate in accounting and was working in a bank in Ghana; at the time he was earning approximately five (5) million cedis (equivalence of £250.00) a month. According to him he earned perks from customers so he could relatively easily provide for the family. He arrived as a visitor and was able to acquire a fake National Insurance number and indefinite residence permit. Using these documents he was able to gain employment through a network of friends. He explained that with such documents it is important that you have a network of relatives or friends to assist you to gain employment. According to him he tried to obtain a job on his own without contacts and was lucky not to be arrested. The manager only told him that he should go and look for a genuine document and come back for employment. He finally got employed in a small shop doing their accounts for them part-time, till an agency employed him as a cleaner in a shopping centre. He said that it is difficult to get a better job because the good establishments have security checks and they can arrest you with fake documents. He worked hard and after four years he paid another migrant to invite his wife to Britain, she arrived in 2004. She was 36 at the time of the interview. Their first child is still in Ghana, though they now have two additional children. She was a graduate teacher at the basic level of education in Ghana, earning about 1.5million cedis. She now works as a shop floor assistant. Both were interviewed.

According to him in Ghana, because he was at the bank and he was earning far more than his wife and was making perks, he was the main breadwinner. He noted "When we were in Ghana I was not interested in knowing her salary. At the end of the month I paid rent, utilities and also gave money for feeding". Though sometimes the wife would supplement her housekeeping allowance it was not substantial and he could relatively easily manage household expenditure. He was recognised as the head because he took the final decisions in most situations. However they desired to travel because they thought they could do better abroad. Because, though he could manage, at the end of the month he could not save any money. At the moment he earns £900.00 a month from his work, which runs a shift system. He has registered with another agency, which sometimes calls him for 2 hours' cleaning in the evenings normally from 7pm to 9pm, but this is not regular, so the money cannot be computed into household expenditure. His wife also earns about £850.00 from her work, which she does using somebody's documents. She pays the person £50.00 because she is a relative. In all, they make approximately £1700 a month. Their rent for a two-bedroom is £1230 per month including council tax. They have shared the bills and each knows what to pay for. But at the end of the month they are aware of what is left in each other's accounts. They use their ATM cards interchangeably where necessary. After paying all bills they said that they are normally left with a maximum of £150.00 most months, which they have to save and then send part of it home for the upkeep of their son, who is with his grandmother. His major problem is that there is news that a new company will be taking over the services where they work. If this happens they would ask them to reapply, and he knows that things are becoming more difficult and if he has to re-apply for his job he may be found out. He cannot attend school because he does not earn enough to pay school fees, he is also afraid that the school authorities may ask for his documents which will give him away. It is under these circumstances that they both have to work. First, what he earns is not enough. Secondly, his job could be terminated at any time. They both have to cater for the extended family and their child at home.

Therefore Yoofi explained that in decision making, there is nothing like 'I am the household head' or 'I have the final say'. Though he confidently said that in Ghana he was the breadwinner, under the circumstances he cannot call himself a breadwinner and it no longer crosses his mind. The wife mentioned that they compromise and that they have egalitarian decision-making. The man said initially he found it difficult to accept when the wife countered his suggestions; he said he was not brought up to be listening and accepting women's decisions, so sometimes they argued. He explained now that there are negotiations and bargaining, and then they compromise and arrive at a consensus. With time he has realized that it works and he said this is something they have learnt from here. In hindsight he has found that some of his decisions may not have been the best. The ideologies of breadwinner and head of household are undermined. When it comes to childcare and housework, they both participate. They explained that the advantage they have is that their jobs are shift systems, so they are able to arrange for an adult to be in the house to look after the children, at most times. They have taken advantage of the family/work life balance policy which appeared unavailable in Ghana. He does all the house chores, especially when he is in the house with the two children. They used to send them to unregistered nannies, since they were cheaper, even though they also charged £50.00 a week. But then a lot of people send their children to them so the children end up not getting individual attention. He recalls that sometimes when they went for the child he had defecated and no one had cleaned him and you had to take your child home and clean him yourself. They therefore agreed that they should look after their own children. Due to undocumented status migrants cannot gain jobs using their requisite qualifications despite their skill levels. Their life experiences are therefore structured by their subject location as illegal migrants, preventing their flexible employment, and this impacts on their gender ideologies and relations.

Gender relations are “context dependent, relational, complex and variable” (McDowell and Sharp 1997:6). As previously discussed, men’s power over women is legitimated through patriarchal ideology. However, a fundamental issue in understanding the interaction of migration and gender is the influence migration has on the changing nature of patriarchal structures (King et al. 2006). Jolly (2005) and Martin (2005) have noted that gender roles and relations influence migration decision-making and affect the migrant in both country of origin and destination. At the same time migration can also open up opportunities for both men and women and change gender relations, either by liberating women or reinforcing inequalities (Whitehead 1984; Kabeer 1994; de los Reyes 2001, Anthias 2000, Manuh 2003).

This chapter examines the relationship between gender and migration within the context of changing configurations caused by spatial mobility. It investigates the impact of gender ideologies and relations on the livelihood activities of Ghanaian female and male migrants in London, noting how their social and economic activities become reconstructed and represented across space and time. Menjivar suggests that “gender ideologies permeate the entire migration process” (2005:307). The main objective of this chapter is to investigate the degree to which gender ideologies and relations among Ghanaian migrants in London is defined in terms of continuity and change. It answers the question: how are gendered ideologies and relations influenced by the new gendered environment? The chapter explores the domestic division of labour to determine how the new socio-economic environment provides opportunities and challenges to the gender ideologies and relations of Ghanaian migrants. McKie et al. argue that “men have been slow to demand change in domestic labour...as this requires their increased physical labour and psychological investment in responsibility for household and other tasks” (1999:4). The domestic space of the household is examined to explore the extent of change in obligations and responsibilities of the actors. The analysis further investigates the degree of jointness in decision making in Ghanaian households in London. Because Ghana is known to be a patriarchal society (Tsikata 1997:406), a study of this nature should highlight the transformations that are taking place. It underscores the negotiations and contestations in intra-household relations, looking at household decision making processes.

Hakim (2003) has identified three models of the sexual division of labour which are useful to this investigation (see section 1.2). It is important to note that couples could fall between the different types and also move between them. This chapter engages with this model, ascertaining how the new environment of the study participants influences their particular household division of labour. In addition it critiques the unitary model of decision-making that assumes that all members of the household share the same preferences or that a single decision maker acts as a 'benevolent dictator' (Kabeer 1994) in the collective interest of the whole family. It argues that decision-making is an area of conflict and bargaining leading to 'cooperative conflicts' (Sen 1990; Quisumbing and Maluccio 2003). The investigation addresses issues such as decisions on the number of children, discipline and authority in the household. Findings from this chapter contribute to the debate on the significance of gender ideologies and relations in understanding the gender and migration dynamics, by exploring how housework and childcare are organised and the bargaining processes involved in decision-making.

6.1 Housework

The increased involvement of women in the labour force has led to debates over whether the household division of unpaid domestic work is changing correspondingly. Though some scholars think it is changing albeit slowly, others like Gershuny (2000) maintain that in the developed world in the twentieth century women still perform most of the housework. This section investigates whether equal or symmetrical relationships are emerging as a result of this phenomenon by investigating the scope and degree of household work done by female and male Ghanaian migrants in London in relation to household tasks: preparing meals; washing dishes; ironing; washing clothes; vacuuming; dusting and cleaning and household maintenance and repair.

I asked male respondents about the household work they participated in, and requested the women to confirm what housework their husbands did. In most cases there was continuity in the traditional male roles performed in Ghana such as; washing the car, going to the gas station, ironing and seeing to general maintenance and repair in the home. The new tasks

that Ghanaian men had assumed were washing; cleaning; vacuuming; clearing the table; washing dishes; dusting and cleaning; sweeping floors; disposing of rubbish, making beds; and sometimes cooking. Parents who had children in their teens remarked that they make them do their fair share of the house work. This referred to especially the '1.5 generation' who are older and brought from Ghana through family reunion. When the woman was asked to remain a housewife it led to disagreements as most women were reluctant to stay at home (see Chapter 5). When both partners were in full time employment they managed to distribute the housework and the men performed their duties when they were at home. In most cases migrant women and men were dual-earners and both shared the housework. I also met women and men who were on their own because they had left their spouses behind in Ghana, either by choice or because they could not arrange for family reunion due to dislocations in the host country. These single partners abroad⁸ mostly carried out their own housework. A 48-year-old male respondent remarked,

Personally I clean, I iron, I wash dishes, I Hoover, and I wash my pants myself. I cook also. All she does is to occasionally prepare the soup, and she says if I am lucky and she has done that and I will not prepare the added dish to it then it is my problem. Can she tell me this in Ghana? Things have really changed. Of course I think that here the men have to help, I do not see why the men should leave the housework for the women alone to do.

A 32-year-old male respondent complained that: "No, I never did housework in Ghana, but you know in Ghana we had a lot of nieces and nephews who also assisted in household chores so there was no problem". The participation of men in housework was also confirmed by a 37-year-old female respondent who testified about her partner that:

He does everything. He is just amazing, he will do the laundry, he will do the dishes, and he will Hoover the house. He is not great at cooking so he doesn't do that often. He will clean the house, load the dishwasher, he will mow the garden, take the bins out, and he will take the kids out. In my relationship, I think I am lucky.

This was corroborated by a 35-year-old female respondent, also about her husband; "He is very helpful; he sweeps, cleans, washes dishes, lays the bed, he used to cook but he does not cook often again because he says he enjoys my food more than his own." Men attested that the most difficult task for them was cooking. Most men said that in Ghana they never cooked. A few learnt cooking in their new environment and were enjoying it. The women

⁸ The single partners abroad whose spouses live across national borders in Ghana constitute split transnational marriages and are the subject of Chapter 7.

maintained that the circumstances required that men assisted them and most men were willing to help.

Women explicitly drew the attention of men to the need for them to perform their fair share of housework. In urban southern Ghana it appeared that women could not openly confront men because they were in a 'less powerful position,' as they depended on the men. Women in Ghana mostly had relatives and nannies to help them but the situation was quite different in London. However, not all men participated in housework, as attested to by this 57-year-old female respondent, (who arrived in the early 80s);

My husband never did anything. He has to sit down and you lay table for him. Maybe the whole year my husband might Hoover this house two or three times. He is just lazy, because I am always all over, even his shirt will not be washed in a machine, I have to use my hands. You see he is not a helping type, one day I asked whether he can't even do simple washing of plates; he got angry with me and would not talk to me for two to three days. I had to go and beg him, so if you do not want those things to bother you, you have to carry on regardless. [Incidentally, the respondent's husband moved back to Ghana some years back, ostensibly at the time as reported by the wife, because of his inability to come to terms with the types of jobs he was doing in London and the changing gender ideologies and relationships. She maintains that she will only leave after her daughters have completed their education, married and settled down. She insists the husband came first so there is nothing wrong that he went first. She visits the husband every other year. Interestingly, the daughters are 30; 22; and 20 years old].

Because men refused to adjust their attitude in their new circumstances, women demonstrated their frustrations and unsuccessful attempts to renegotiate the performance of domestic tasks. The man in this illustration left all the housework and childcare to the woman. Apart from expressing their frustration as shown by the respondent above, the illustration below also epitomized another attitude identified where the women felt it was their feminine duty based on gender ideologies they had been socialized with. In a few of such situations women were not willing to allow men to assist them to do house chores. A 36-year-old female respondent indicated,

He will do it if I give him the chance but I do not. Where I feel he can help he does it, but if I have the strength I do it, only exceptional cases that he cooks. I do not want him to do it that is my job. I know men do it here, but I do not mind.

It was apparent from my interaction with the youth and my observations that such situations are no longer common among Ghanaian migrants. The passage below from a 29-

year-old female respondent demonstrates the contestations and negotiations that underline sharing housework in the households in recent times;

He washed his own clothes really because he didn't think I washed his clothes cleanly enough. He would occasionally cook and not always, I did most of that, but he always did the hoovering. It was an interesting sharing, it was his choice to do the hoovering but he would say that it was because I didn't do it well. At the same time we had conversations where he would say that the hoovering is his and the kitchen is mine. And I would say what makes you think that I like the kitchen, I do not like it, and he would say, 'you are such a feminist this is not an argument', so the hoovering was his and the kitchen mine according to him.

Most young women I talked to said that they will not condone men who would not assist, and said that in the present age if there is a man who is not ready to help at home it would be a 'massive problem'. As a 31-year-old female respondent stated:

when it comes to chores and helping we are in a different culture altogether, we do not want to adopt other people's culture but while in Rome do what Romans do as it makes life easier for all of us.

There seemed to be more egalitarian relationship among the youth, particularly the second generation, and in middle class families. Women also maintained that they were unwilling to be 'domesticated' because they intended to pursue their careers and their spouses had to assist them so that they could maintain their positions in the labour market. A popular discourse about housework, the "Honey to do list" was leading to contestations in households. This, according to respondents was a British practice that Ghanaian women were picking up. It was a list of chores to be performed which a woman prepared for her husband mostly over the weekend. While this was not very widespread the men pointed out that they did not like this practice.

I learned that on occasions men decided what they wanted to do, echoing the finding made by Daly and Rake (2003) that men selected the most desirable household tasks. On other occasions women asked men to assist in particular areas, though on other occasions these were shared and everybody knew his or her role. In the families who depicted the compromise model, there was flexibility and everybody did what he or she thought was convenient at any time. The study found in a few instances where men were breadwinners and the women housewives but the men participated substantially in housework. Situations also occurred where both were full-time employees but the greater part of the burden fell on

the woman, who occasionally had to do a 'double shift'. Though there were variations and relationships could not be strictly categorised into the three models, I found mainly egalitarian relationships. Notwithstanding, there was evidence of parents perpetuating the cultural ideal of the gender ideology where the male child is not equally involved in house work. In-home observations revealed that while girls were made to participate in housework this was not the case for boys. These childhood experiences could reinforce gender stereotyping. The values and attitudes of the migrants however largely determined the choices they made, and this was influenced both by ideologies and practical life situations which necessitates that they assist their partners. In this way they tended to transform known gender arrangements to conform to their new social environment. Observations suggested that when men were socialised to accept certain kinds of behaviour they are able to adjust themselves to the new situation.

There were contradictions in the attitude of men. They would say that "*Abrokyere dea obia ye edwuma*" meaning that 'whilst abroad, everybody is expected to work'. They then turned round and said that "*Ghana koraa, mmaa na ehwe nkoraa, ena efi edwuma nsoo mmaa na eye*" meaning 'in Ghana it is women who look after children and that housework is for women'. Men thereby placed the responsibility on the women to do 'double work' or the 'second shift' (Hochschild and Machung 2003). This led to disagreements, as women always drew the attention of men to the fact that they had agreed women needed to work, the type of work they did would make it difficult to combine childcare and housework. However, most of my interviewees felt that there was on the whole a sense of sharing. This was pointed out to me by both women and men. I found very few families exhibiting the separate roles model with men playing only supporting/helping roles and women engaged mainly as housewives. Referring to Hakim's (2003) categorisation of household types, there was a movement away from the traditional home-maker/breadwinner type, and compromise models to a more egalitarian type; where both male and female partners have equally absorbing work, and household tasks and looking after the children are shared almost equally. Men were playing quite significant roles in the households.

In sum, Ghanaian migrant women exercise agency in determining whether they want to participate in work or not for caring reasons, despite men's behaviour which tries to promote patriarchal structures by challenging their choices. The men participate in housework and concur that the situation should change, and this is attested to by women as well. While the process of 'lagged adaptation' predicts that the involvement of men in housework will only improve but only over a long period of participation of women in paid work, this is not echoed by my findings (Gershuny et al. 1994). In the case of migrants the process is accelerated because of the 'survival' situation in which migrants find themselves.

6.1.1 Shopping

Changing social values, economic circumstances and power relations affect what men as well as women do. One significant observation I made was that men were regularly shopping for the household for durables as well as groceries. The shopping centre was being reconstructed as a male space and becoming gendered as masculine. As a 42-year-old male respondent stated, "I go for shopping and also do the cooking. We rotate it, it is not something that one person does all through". It is therefore the man's task on the basis of shared chores. In contrast, in urban southern Ghana most men would not shop (section 4.1.2). The men informed me that they preferred shopping in London rather than in Ghana, firstly because the infrastructures at shopping centres are well designed to enable shopping to be more convenient, and secondly, because British society does not frown on men shopping. Thirdly, in London, prices of goods are fixed while in Ghana one has to be adept at haggling over prices, a skill which most Ghanaian men lack.

An observation I made, confirmed by a 44-year-old male respondent in a focus group discussion, was the fact that men were looking for some space to exert their lost power in the household. They therefore took advantage of going to the market to control household expenditure and also to prevent their women from buying frivolous items from the shops. Though this assertion raised counter-arguments in the focus group discussion, the consensus was that men may go shopping as a way of checking their wives, who they said were in the habit of impulsive purchases and patronising sales promotions such as 'buy one get one free' items even when they did not need them. Most men apparently enjoyed

shopping and a 56-year-old man remarked that he had been shopping for the ‘past 17 years’ [He is one of the participants who took part in both the focus group and in-depth-interviews and he explained that he has benefitted ‘immensely’ from an egalitarian relationship, where they both worked and shared breadwinning, decision-making and housework. According to him because of that they did not have to send their children to Ghana like others, and their children are a pride in the community; a medical officer, an architect and their daughter; a lawyer].

In Ghana most men frequented bars on Sundays for ‘*Omo Tuo*’ (ground rice) and also ‘drinking spots’ after work to drink and socialise. However in UK most Ghanaian men were unable to socialize in pubs or attend football matches, which are more recognized as British spaces in London. This lack of opportunity affected their self-image and ability to exchange problems and talk over ‘masculine’ issues. In UK, they said it is only ‘home to work and work to home’. They further mentioned that they are afraid of visiting other Ghanaians who may be illegal residents in case one ended up being caught up in a swoop. Spouses would also not approve of the men going out as they are expected to help in the house. In contrast in Ghana, it appeared most men are not expected to perform any chores at home. Going shopping is one acceptable way of ‘male bonding’ for Ghanaian men in the diaspora. Men are able to meet up to share their interests, chat and deliberate on issues and ideas and share experiences away from the spouse and family. I observed that women found it helpful that men are participating in the shopping space because it allows them time to perform both paid and other unpaid work. Miller (1998) has also noted that shopping is increasingly recognised as contributing to the creation of self-identity and self-realization for both women and men, and as it is acceptable in London this is leading to the identity construction of Ghanaian men. In explaining their motivation, Otnes and McGrath (2001) have argued that male shopping is both a consequence of ‘gender role transcendence,’ – as a result of men adapting to flexible gender ideologies and roles, and also a means for men to display their pervasive masculine ideal of achievement and control. Men are therefore capitalizing on this new space to gain power and control of consumption in the household as it increases their self-esteem. The domain of male shopping and its relationship to power dynamics needs to be further explored.

6.2 Management of Childcare

One of the major areas of domestic division of labour is the management of children or 'gendered division of parenting work' (Windebank 2001). The study investigated the childcare strategies of Ghanaian migrant men and women to elicit information on how childcare is practiced, noting who takes what decisions and who does what. The study probed both daily routines and emergency situations. It should be noted that gender ideologies underpin these practices as they determine who does what, and therefore respondents' attitudes and beliefs would be reflected in what they tend to do.

It became apparent through the interviews and observations that both women and men participated in the management of children. The situation in London differed from what I found in urban southern Ghana. Daily social reproduction among Ghanaian migrants was always a site open for negotiation, with partners often discussing responsibility for taking the children to school or picking them up in my presence. The men explained that it was important they assisted their wives who also became tired after their equally tasking jobs. I observed that the men had adjusted their male dominated gender ideologies to more egalitarian orientations. The majority of them had become accustomed to their childcare responsibilities and did not see them as undermining their masculinity. The tasks identified included bathing the children, dressing and undressing them, nappy changing, preparing their food, feeding them, tidying up after them and putting them to bed, which was categorised as personal care. The initial infant personal care services involved mostly the women. The men tended to be more involved at the latter stages of the child's development, from six months onward. Sometimes during church services I observed men taking up caring responsibilities for children. They also participated fully in social activities; besides taking children to and from school, taking them out for recreational activities - swimming lessons, music lessons, football, and accompanying them to educational events and cultural activities. They ensured children learned and did their homework when they were at home. The men were identified by gender norms to be responsible for discipline and character development of the children. Men therefore tried to establish a positive relationship with the children by involving themselves in their social activities so that they could guide the

children to proper maturity and to help them overcome negative pressures. The case history below demonstrates negotiations around childcare.

Yahyaa, a 41-year-old female migrant, arrived in UK in 1999, before her 46 year-old-husband, Ekow, who arrived in 2000. They are both nurses, the man being a graduate nurse. [He asked that I acknowledge the difference]. While in Ghana he may have earned a bit more than his wife; upon investigation it did not matter much in London, as their salaries revealed. At the time of my fieldwork they had 3 children, aged 6 years, 3 years and 9 months. From observations it was noted that while they both work at the same hospital, they work on different days of the week. The man works for 4 days, from Monday to Thursday and the woman works 3 days from Friday to Sunday. I sought to find out the basis of this arrangement. They explained that first, it was costly to use nannies, secondly, from stories they had heard nannies did not necessarily look well after the children because they looked after too many children and therefore were unable to give individual attention to them. They further explained that when they decided to send the first girl to a private nursery, they were paying £40.00 a day. Currently, the second boy is entitled to attend public nursery from 9.15am – 12.45pm for 3 days. Yahyaa has made an arrangement to extend his attendance from 9.15am to 3.30pm for 2 days instead, and still pays £9.00 a week for the top-up. But this covers just a short period of the week, and the youngest child needs regular attention, so one of them needs to be at home.

They explained that the man earns about £1,700.00; she also earns £1, 700.00 as she gains extra by working over the week-end. Their rent at present for a 2-bedroom flat is £1,000.00, and by the end of the month all their expenses amount to £2,300 with their 3 children. They found out that if the man was to be working alone he could earn about £2000.00, but even with child benefits they would not earn more than £2,500.00. They realised that they could earn more by both working, also look after their own children, and be able to send money to their extended family, and invest at home. Yayhaa stated that the decision was not an easy one because initially the husband found it difficult, especially looking after the first child, who is a girl. The man mentioned that in Ghana they would have had relatives to help them but under the circumstances he had no choice, but he did mention that as a nurse it made it easier for him. The woman however expressed her worries, she said that; “sometimes your mind is divided at the workplace, especially [pointing to the last child who is just 9 months old]. I feel that if I was at home, I would give them better attention than their father.” [Her fears are actually not unfounded; on a visit to the family with my wife, the man was feeding the last baby and was literally pushing the food into the baby’s mouth even when she had not finished eating the last bit. The baby was crying. My wife suggested continuing the feeding for him, to which he agreed. This brought to the fore the difficulties that this arrangement has for child rearing, and parenting]. But then Yahyaa reiterated that they needed the money for a good standard of living, to help the extended family and as well to invest at home. The gender division of labour is therefore transformed in the migrant space, but this is made possible because of the flexibility in working arrangements. The man expressed the view that though it was tedious he enjoyed it and that he has been able to develop intimacy with his children. He felt the closeness was very important in the migrant environment as they grow up, due to issues of discrimination, ‘non-belonging’, and peer pressure which he feels they might encounter and to which he could relate with them and help them surmount. They were co-breadwinners and also practised joint decision-making, as a result of earning similar salaries and also being in the same job. Additionally, they mentioned that complementary parenting was quite acceptable in London and therefore the man did not find himself doing something out of the ordinary. The ideological norms regarding gender stereotypes and biological differences which dictate the roles of women and men are therefore undermined in the migrant situation. It could be argued that their similar wage rates and the opportunities available in the London labour market have combined leading to a fairly equal gender division of labour.

Both women and men through negotiations had come to a realization that as ‘dislocated’ marginalised members in the host social setting they needed to cooperate to benefit from their marginalised status. While Windebank found that among his dual earner participants

in Britain a ‘vast majority’ had to call on others to assist in child care (2001:281), in this study most of them fashioned other strategies. Most often either the man or the woman worked flexible hours, to ensure that at any time the children are home there is an adult available. They explained that as migrants they were financially constrained and could not pay for the high services of child minders. Apart from paying their own bills, they needed to send remittances home and to make investments in their home country towards their return. They therefore needed to be innovative in order to save as much as they could.

On occasions when children fell ill and the parents had to remain at home, it was mostly the women who remained, because the men tended to see their job as playing the ‘breadwinning role’ and therefore gave it precedence. However, I observed that men sometimes asked for days off to stay at home. A male participant was interviewed while he was on paternity leave. I also interviewed male participants whose turn it was to look after the children at home while the wife was at work. A 42-year-old male respondent informed me, “I am actively involved, I drop kids off before coming to work, and she picks them up. I do flexible hours during school recess, Thursdays and Fridays are taken off for childcare reasons”.

Significantly, where they both worked full time both parents ran a shift system so that one parent was at home either in the night or in the day, working ‘atypical hours’. Barnes et al. (2006) made similar findings about family life in the UK. Another strategy was for the parents to share the days of the week and ensure the family is together most evenings. For instance, a 40 year old male respondent explained that he works from Monday to Thursday and the wife works from Friday through Sunday. They have three children aged 5, 3 and six months and he single-handedly looks after them in the absence of the partner. The social policy of flexi-time (Dex and Smith 2002) makes this possible, enabling both parents to participate in most aspects of childcare depending on who was available. Where there is financial provision or an alternative arrangement by the welfare state to provide for child care it opens up opportunities and choices for both men and women and affects their relative power. Daly and Rake (2003) have stated that the welfare state is an active site for contestations because it underpins the family and contributes to the classification and

location of care in the family. For instance the fact that the UK welfare system provides one of the most limited child care services in Europe (Daly and Rake 2003) has implications for gender relations, because invariably Ghanaian women and men are forced to fashion workable arrangements before they can participate in the labour market. This system however has consequences, as a 32-year-old male respondent told me:

I do night so that she will do day. We meet only once every three weeks as a family. It affected our daughter because we send her to a friend for the short period in-between when I leave before she arrives. You realise that she has a cold, nobody picked it up, and a rash nobody sees. Once she put an object in the ear and nobody noticed it till after a week. I sent her to the surgery and they removed it. My wife said when she comes back she is tired and she goes to sleep so she did not see it. That is when I decided that our daughter should go home to Ghana. [This respondent is a practising medical officer in London. The wife is a professional nurse. He indicated to me that several attempts to get the wife to reduce hours and stay home and look after the child have led to conflicts. The fact that they are both medical staff made it more difficult for them to accept the consequences of their actions. However, it demonstrates the implications of the inability to reconcile caring and earning effectively, and the extent to which the labour market and social circumstances impact on the gender division of labour and depicts a rationale for the use of transnational fosterage as a strategy, which is discussed in chapter 8].

Therefore, despite the advantages of flexibility that ‘shift-parenting’ provides, this study argues differently from Crompton et al. (2003) that there is a downside, in that there is both a financial cost, in terms of lower earning, as well as emotional costs, in terms of less companionship and quality time.

While the women doing part-time were in the minority, it was mostly in this situation that women tended to participate more in childcare than men. Nevertheless, men used the weekends to help the women by devoting their time to personal services for the children while the women concentrated on preparing meals for the ensuing week. Orloff (1996) argues that Britain pursues a ‘familist’ social policy which places the primary responsibility for child care with the family (see section 5.4). This undermines the ability of women to participate in paid work, and therefore if migrants desire that women should work an option is the fostering strategy. When neither parent is ready to forgo her career for the upkeep of the children, they choose the option to send the children to Ghana. This was a popular

practice; Grillo and Mazzucato (2008) testify that about half of their participants sent their children for fostering in Ghana⁹.

Daly and Rake (2003) have noted that there are two possible implications for caring for children. One is a substitution effect, where time is devoted to informal care leading to a reduction in labour market participation, or, an income effect where money is invested in care. Emerging evidence points to a third, which I call the '*paucity effect*', where a shift system is run during 'atypical hours' to avoid giving up work or paying for childcare. For migrants it is difficult to afford 'au pairs' or 'child minders'. Where childcare is available, Lewis and Campbell have noted that the poor qualification of the childcare workforce and the high cost make it unattractive (2007:13) (see section 2.6.2). The British public system does not make childcare services available for children especially under three years because it is seen as the responsibility of the private sphere (Clarke et al. 2001). Without the advantage of other relatives to support them migrants need to make hard choices between work and care. As respondents stated; "unlike Ghana, you have to tag the child behind you wherever you go".

6.3 Participation in decision-making

Since migrating to the UK Ghanaians' experiences might have affected their attitudes and practices. Chapman notes that "domestic practices are fluid and require constant renegotiation" (2004:1) and evidence from empirical studies shows that the model of decision-making which prioritises the demands of the husband is being challenged. This section examines the impact migration has on gendered participation in household decision-making, analysing intra-household decision making from a relational standpoint, to gain a sense of gender interactions in everyday exchanges. The research found heterogeneity in decision-making among respondents. Most major decisions were egalitarian and jointly made but sometimes made by women independently, indicating that Ghanaian migration seems to undermine male authority leading to the male ceding some powers in the household. This situation may be due to the improved bargaining position of women within

⁹ Transnational child fostering of Ghanaian children from London will be extensively discussed in chapter 8.

the households due to their changed circumstances. The next section focuses on decisions about number of children to be had.

6.3.1 Number of children

One important issue to gauge power relations in household decision-making is the number of children a couple wish to have, how the decision is reached or should be handled, and who has the final say. On this issue if the decision was not jointly made, it was usually the woman's choice. While men believed it should be a joint decision, women implied that it was their inalienable right; the statements below, will serve to illustrate this point: A 48-year-old female respondent:

Ultimately, if I am going to have the children and he says I should have five and I say I can't, what will he do about it? The final say rests with the woman. Labour ward it is me and my God, if any body will die it is me, he is unlikely to die.

Another female respondent, 38 years commented that "I will be quite happy with just two. Who is going to carry the child for nine months"? It is therefore not surprising that a 32-year-old man remarked:

She wants four children and I want two, what she will say I will hear... Only I try to convince her that life is not easy here ... and we may need to go back home therefore the four might be a bit too much.

One of the limiting factors was the fact that the women were engaged in the labour market. While women in Ghana were also engaged in the labour market, they could more easily get help there and also the Ghanaian social environment emphasised the 'woman as mother' ideology. The conditions in which they found themselves in the UK made the women unwilling to have too many children. Through cooperation and conflicting interests couples decided on the best option to take. For instance the 32-year-old man above said he was ready to compromise for three children. A 43-year-old male respondent complained, "I want to have children but she has been injecting contraceptives. Before I came we had discussed this, but now she says no". This is echoed by a 29-year-old male respondent: "it was a difficult situation, the majority of my friends had kids ... and I told my wife I wanted kids, but she said, until I finish my education I am not going to have kids. It is part of the relationship problem."

This is a decision that most women felt strongly about and they made their point quite clear to me. They were able to succeed in their negotiations due to their improved bargaining position abroad. This contrasted sharply with the situation in Ghana, where the extended family could also exert their influence (Bour 1995). I learned that in Ghana in-laws could pester their daughter-in-law and son to have children. Participants in urban southern Ghana reported that their mother-in-laws even went to the extent of seeking another woman for their son even though they did not know why his partner had not yet had a child. The transnational space makes this practice difficult; allowing partners to plan and decide when to have children or not to have them at all. Women abroad have a significant element of control so far as the number of children is concerned. Another observed contrast was that while in urban southern Ghana women generally wanted more children than men, in London women wanted less. Apart from their improved bargaining power, their attitude to life has also transformed whereby they now desire fewer children.

6.3.2 Discipline

Discipline is another contentious area in household decision-making because it is essential for socializing children to become responsible adults in society. Different societies have different methods of instilling proper behaviour. Most respondents indicated that they jointly decided on disciplinary issues. A 32 year old female respondent indicated, “I do not think it should be a final say. It is both of us. We are raising the children together, so we need to agree. I do not want to be undermined in front of the child and vice versa.” Most were concerned that the larger society did not participate in disciplining children as it does in Ghana. According to them, children are not disciplined in the UK. The male respondents believed that men needed to have the final say on this issue as they do in Ghana (cf. Section 4.1.3). Members of a household have to choose its social arrangements for “who does what, who gets to consume what and takes what decisions” (Sen 1990:129). In decision-making on disciplining children the Ghanaian families are constantly confronted with the choice between cooperation and conflict. As Boni notes, in Ghana the father had “privileged rights over the youngster” (2001:28). Mensa-Bonsu comments that the Ghanaian male adult family member is a “law unto himself, and his word is law for all members of the nuclear family” (1995:223). Most men have been brought up in Ghana with such notions. They are

unable to comprehend when their children tell them that they also have rights or even report them to social welfare. Many men felt they were in an unfortunate situation, and were frustrated and disappointed with themselves. The fact that they cannot smack their children is a major concern to them, since they think that is one way of instilling discipline. A popular discourse is “*Abrokyire die yen tia tia nkoraa*”, literally, ‘children are not scolded abroad’. Manuh (1998) confirmed that among Ghanaians in Toronto there was a similar understanding that children born abroad are superior to children in Ghana and therefore should be treated differently. Women mainly promoted this discourse. The men lamented the over-protective attitude of their wives to the children which has undermined their patriarchal power over their children. I observed that women made it quite difficult for men to control the children and so though most women explained that it was joint decision-making my observations proved otherwise. Because the women prevented men from ‘disciplining’ children the way the men thought they ought to, as they were brought up to do in Ghana, most stayed quiet and just watched the children. The explanation given was that mothers go through hardships and loneliness during pregnancy and immediately after, without the support of extended family help as would have been the case in Ghana. Coupled with that they were aware their UK-born children would soon become British citizens, and therefore mothers held such children in particular esteem and pampered them. They mentioned that the schools have also contributed to the situation by being over-protective of children, teaching them rights unheard of in Ghana, and advising them to call social services if they had a problem at home.

The men explained that they were the head of the household and it was important that the children know that, as exemplified by this quotation from a 57-year-old male respondent:

When they do something and I say it is not good sometimes she [wife] will say it is alright. When I say things are not right she thinks that is what is done here so it is acceptable. I only forget. In Ghana I would have had the final say. I keep on telling them especially the children that if we were to be in Ghana there are certain things they would never be able to do... I cannot claim I have the final say.

The point was raised at a focus group discussion that men lack the conviction to discipline their children, showing that men’s normative role as the head is undermined, a 42-year-old female respondent remarked that:

Men feel helpless and have lost control over the house...and the man has become a stooge and the children lose out on discipline as the woman may not allow the man to discipline the children.

Cole et al. (2007) have noted that seniority is an important social stratification for identity in Ghana. Most adults informed me that the youth abroad do not respect their elders. The youth also think the elders are too old-fashioned and desire to wield too much power. A 36-year-old lady respondent informed me that she sat at the head of the table and carved the Christmas turkey because she did not see why the father always did it. A few elderly respondents I told this story to were happy that I had heard an illustration of the lack of discipline and respect on the part of the youth. Skelton and Valentine (2005) indicate that for most men fatherhood is an essential symbol of masculine identity. When fathers cannot play the roles they deem appropriate, they think their dignity and self-worth is affected (see section 5.3.3). A minority though, had been able to train their children the way they wanted them to grow. These respondents stated that where the women allowed the men to exercise control, the children had turned out well with Ghanaian discipline, as they were always reminded of their cultural heritage. Respondents attested to their own children and those of their friends who have been brought up in the UK, turned out very positively, and are leading exemplary lives in the British society.

6.3.3 *Remittances*

Migrants are linked to Ghana through family networks of responsibility and obligations and shared understandings of marriage, kinship and friendship. They therefore see it as important that they send money home, and this is expected for men as well as women. Anecdotal evidence suggests that women who work sometimes send money clandestinely without their husband's knowledge, a popular discourse is that most women go to the extent of building houses and this has led to a lot of break-up of marriages when the husbands find out. Remittances therefore are one area where migrants have to negotiate decision-making in terms of how and who to send money to.

Mame is 50 years old and the husband is 56 years. She joined her husband in 1999, after he was able to acquire indefinite residence. She currently works as a teaching assistant and her husband is a head chef. Their negotiations for sending remittances illustrate the power dynamics that go into decision-making as migrants. She explains that it is important to send remittances because, firstly, there is no care home in Ghana so you cannot ignore your parents who looked after you. Additionally, there are funerals at home and the extended family expects you to also contribute to enable the family to fulfil their role of burying kinsmen. They also have siblings there who are not gainfully employed and who look up to you. When Mame arrived, her husband sometimes gave her money to send to her mother, until she got a job and she realised that he was no longer giving her money for remittances. When she asked, he told her that he had helped her to acquire her migrant status and did not collect any money from her, so she should at least look after her family, while he would also look after his own. What she found surprising was that in Ghana they sent remittances from Accra to the village and he readily did that without any complaint. So she decided that if her family had not looked after her she would not be abroad today, so even if he refuses to give her money or let him know how much he sends, then she would play her part in her family. Sometimes she sent remittances to his family without his knowledge. Then an aunty of his died, who had looked after him in school after the death of his father. Mame explained that she was sure he did not have money at the time, so he informed her that the aunty had died and she replied that she had heard. After a few days he complained that she had received the news with a lukewarm attitude because she knew she had to help him with some money. She said she was surprised; she informed him that she thought apart from household expenditure which they had shared, each person would look after their family, in life and in death. He got annoyed.

I had the opportunity to talk to the man and he explained that as soon as she earned her first pay she started sending money without informing him, even though he had brought her abroad, and that is why he decided that she should go ahead and handle it her way. The man explained that it was painful that he had struggled for over eight (8) years before he was able to get his 'papers' and then invite her. When she came she realised that they were struggling here, but as soon as she got a job she started to send money home secretly. He was disturbed that he did not know how much she was sending, what for, how often and to whom. Mame however stood her ground and did not help him, explaining to me that though she looked after him after the death of the father, she was not the real father. The man eventually had to contact some of his siblings who were in UK to assist him. He was more directly concerned by this death because she had taken him up as a son; the other siblings were also in the family but did not have that extra-special relationship with the aunty who had no child of her own. They would also contribute their share but according to him he had the onerous responsibility. His siblings and friends helped him through.

This situation nearly marred the relationship between Mame and her husband, and eventually after the funeral they had to come to an understanding. They both agreed that it was essential that they help their family members. One problem was that while the man had few siblings abroad and therefore was not burdened from home regularly, the woman did not have any, so she felt that the demands on her were quite high and that is why he stopped helping. He disagreed with this, explaining he would not have given her money when she first arrived if that was the case. The woman explained that though they have shared the household expenditure she doesn't know how much he earns; that is not transparent. She sometimes gives him her cash card to withdraw money for her, but has never seen his own. Mame initiated the negotiations and explained her situation and informed him they needed to discuss the issue. Now they have agreed that each person should send money independently. The man informed me that he knows she is the only one abroad and there is a lot of pressure on her in her family. They agreed the individual could send money to whoever he or she wishes in his/her family, but when there is a major event such as a funeral they would contribute together towards it. However, they send provisions during Easter and Christmas to both sides of the family. This also shows the influence of the extended family in gender relations.

A 49 year-old male respondent explained that relatives helped them when they were growing up, especially if one lived in a family house. For instance, when he was going to

secondary school the aunty gave him her trunk, and his uncles also gave him money. Because of that one also needs to reciprocate, and help other younger ones, and therefore one cannot neglect the family. Much more, they are always not sure on when one might end up back at the family house due to a misfortune. Therefore they need to prepare themselves for that eventuality by assisting the extended family, so that when it gets to their turn others will assist them. There did not seem to be a consensus in decision making on the sending of remittances. Only a few agreed that it was and should be a joint decision. Both men and women were of the opinion that every partner should have his/her discretion in this matter, as a male respondent remarked jokingly, “you can send, and I can send”. This summarized the contention of both parties. A 42 year-old- female respondent highlighted that “When my mother was alive, I decide, as it was my mother I was sending money to. He is sometimes aware and at times he is not, I did not have to tell him”. The decision making pattern portrayed that the allocation of resources so far as remittances was concerned was mostly left to individuals and on a few occasions joint decision. This was an area where women had gained independence due to the fact that they mostly controlled their own income and therefore they were able to assist their families. Migrant households are therefore embedded in kinship ties across the transnational space through remittance sending. However, there are negotiations and contestations before decisions are finally arrived at as depicted in the case history below.

6.3.4 Authority and control of household head

This section explores whether the authority and control vested in the man as the head of the household changes due to migration vis-à-vis their experiences in Ghana, and examines some current manifestations of this phenomenon. I tried to unpack the designation ‘head of household’ to find out how women and men understood and mediated this role. Most respondents indicated that the head of household is supposed to be the man and is expected to be the decision maker; leader; give emotional support; financial provider; disciplinarian; take charge of the family; be somebody the family can look up to; the figurehead and protector. These were similar to the descriptions I had from Ghana (see section 4.1.3). The major difference was their opinion that in London the title is just symbolic. As they noted

in the Ewe language; “*Nkor ko wonye*”, literally meaning, “It is just a mere title”. They indicated that nobody upholds the title in London.

Transformations in authority

There was unanimity among both male and female respondents that the man no longer has a ‘superior attitude’ and that there is more equality in London. A 59-year-old male respondent said,

Yes, there has been a change in my authority, in Ghana I was the head of the family, but here I am still the head but not with the same authority. Now we all have equal authority in the house. Even the children ...can sometimes take their own decisions.

The quotation demonstrates that though men still regarded themselves as heads, it was only a symbolic title as they had been stripped of all the authority that went with it. He emphasised that even his children took independent decisions. The point was again pungently declared in a focus group discussion by a 53-year-old female respondent:

In fact here, we rule... the man’s authority is eroded! We rock here, till I got to Ghana and I couldn’t rock any more...when I got to Ghana in fact I had a cultural shock and you know I had to bow small because I was a feminist I spoke a lot, but I learned to keep my mouth shut. [She moved to Ghana with her husband but the marriage broke down and they divorced. She had to return to London with her two children. The husband is currently in Ghana].

This participant demonstrates that the man’s authority is eroded in London, proving the difference in power relations between women and men in Ghana and in London. Though she was able to ‘rule’ in London, she could not maintain her dominance in Ghana since the husband, backed by the patriarchal order made that impossible. There were irreconcilable differences: the man wanted to control her and she had no social support, so she sought divorce and returned to London. The men clearly feel a loss of power and authority in London, as explained by this 57-year-old male respondent:

Our women can be very overbearing. The man’s masculinity is eroded. ...you can’t give in a lot, share things with the woman equally and still retain your masculinity. ...But somehow you have to let the woman know that you are the head of the family. Ehm, it cannot be said sweepingly that the man loses authority, but it is the truth. The truth is very difficult to swallow [Though a graduate in accounting from Ghana and a senior accountant before coming to London, he is now a cab driver. The wife has recently relocated with their three children to the US because as he told me, she says there are more opportunities there for the children. He visits yearly but says he cannot go and start life there all over again. This

demonstrates the ability of women to negotiate, exercise agency and take control of their own life].

Men found it very difficult to accept the truth that they had lost their authority. Men were in a confused state, unable to understand the new state of affairs or to adjust. McDowell has rightly suggested,

There has been a notable lack of attention to the formation of masculine identities and spaces.... Masculinity, too, is also an uncertain and provisional project subject to change and redefinition....Geographers have... been slow to accept this challenge ...relying too heavily on a singular masculinity, defined as the unchanging 'one' against which multiple and contested femininities are constructed(2001: 182).

O'Donnell and Sharpe (2000) confirm that gender relations in the UK are changing very quickly, leading to considerable adaptation and uneasiness for men. Men and women agreed that changes have caused men to give up authority to women; women also state that the new-found power is being misused by certain women. Unable to adjust to the loss of power and authority due to measuring themselves against a Ghanaian hegemonic masculinity, men became frustrated and disillusioned (see section 5.3.3). Meanwhile, as Connell (2000a) notes men's socialization to refrain from showing emotions or displaying vulnerability further undermines their gender identity. A 54 year old male respondent noted:

The women are in control because there is the issue of 'rights'... As soon as she starts working the problem starts... here it is the women who are the bosses. If you are not happy you become a drunkard...or otherwise you just sit down quietly like me and when you think enough is enough you just leave. ... As you see me I am in a single room sharing facilities with others. Can I be happy as it is... how do I like this place at my age?

Financial independence

The factors influencing the relative bargaining power of women and men included their contributions to the households. As women's contributions to the household increased their bargaining power increased until they wielded greater power than they had before their migration. Women participants informed me that in Ghana their husbands did not ask their opinion before undertaking projects, but in UK few issues occur in the household without their knowledge and consent, and they said the reason was that they were now contributing substantially. The migrant women confirmed that financial independence or 'sterling power' plays a major part in the change in gender relations. Men at a focus group

discussion stated that although in Ghana the woman works, her contribution to household income is minimal and is voluntary, so the man dominates most, if not all, the household provisioning; and although women worked they at times declined to contribute to household finances (see section 4.3). Because gender ideologies supported men being the main breadwinners, they struggled to fulfill their masculine roles.

But in London the situation differs; although the financial situation compelled most migrant men to work '24/7' to make ends meet, they could not be their families' sole breadwinners. If the man earned £7.00 an hour the woman earned the same; the woman contributed to the household income, on occasions in equal or even greater proportions. Ghanaians also marry in UK as a strategy to manage the high cost of living. Marriage in London is therefore for convenience, and based on economics rather than love as happens in Ghana. Both partners come into the relationship with some resources and both have relative bargaining power in the process. Where men migrate for further studies their partners work full-time to support them, since they are not permitted to work full time. The women end up being responsible for most of the household expenditure. This affects family dynamics and relationships. Therefore it was crucial that in the management of households' men cede some authority and power to the women.

A 29-year-old male respondent confirmed that in London, financial independence mediates decision-making and authority in the household:

My wife has the final say in all that we do. She was earning more than I was, it was not right but it comes to living in the west there is so much pressure on you. Whoever earns more regardless of being the male or female has the most control and say in most decisions.

Women's formal labour-market participation has affected the power balance within households as the women now participate actively in decision-making. As women have gained in empowerment, men have had to adjust their gender orientations to accept the change in power relationships and submit to joint decision-making in their households. Without a change in gender orientation which accepts that men too can participate in housework and women too can contribute to decision making it is difficult for either to

attain equality. Gender inequalities are evened out as both parties accept that they should cooperate to gain synergy in their migration trajectory.

Other explanations

Apart from finance, other factors contributed to changing gender dynamics. For instance, women knew the government will support them so at the least misunderstanding they could call for separation. In a sense therefore, women have become more empowered as they contribute to decision-making and their self-worth is improved due to greater recognition in their households. Due to social policy most men can no longer control or discipline their children as they would like because they are protected by the state. This point is reiterated by a 58-year-old male:

Here the women have power, it is the British law...you cannot touch your wife. If you have a small argument and she calls the Police they will kick you from the house. If she is creating the problem they do not care... in this town there are a lot of men who have stress and depression due to these problems caused by these relationships... men and women are not equal, not even in marriage. I fear my wife because she can kick me from the house...in this country you are the man but you should give respect. The man being a boss in Ghana is different.

A reconfiguration of power relations is clear and the men seem concerned at their inability to exercise control over the women. The men also attributed the change in authority to culture: the practices of egalitarianism they found all around them. The women also attested to the fact that they saw much equality between the genders and egalitarian practices around them in London, which have contributed to the modification of their lifestyles. For instance, they saw men always taking their children to school and playgrounds, they saw them shopping and pushing baby buggies. The women further stated that in London the kitchen has become a 'dual space' for the man and woman, which is uncommon in Ghana. It is not implied that there are no patriarchal relations in London, but the circumstances help in facilitating egalitarianism among migrants. Majority of women were in similar jobs as their husbands and stated that "we all get equally tired". It was also advanced that Ghanaian migrant men marry to acquire legal status. If the woman is legally resident she tends to dominate the relationship; this happens the other way round as well. Women explicitly stated that if they were operating on the level of shared responsibilities they did not see why authority and control should not also be shared. They therefore advocated for partnership

rather than one partner being the 'head'. Ghanaian women were not merely passive but exercised active agency and made choices in determining gender relations in their households.

What is striking is that religion crosscut gender relations. Among Ghanaians there were 'liberal Christians' who could be categorised as Christians by default, whose parents were Christians. There were also 'born-again Christians' who demanded that all should acknowledge Jesus Christ as their personal saviour and confess their sins before they could be true Christians. Most born-again Christians reinforced gender inequalities as they believed there is no need for a change in gender relations. For them the man continued to be the head of household and his duty was to ensure that he provided for the woman as the Bible stipulated. They quoted copiously from Ephesians 5: 21-33; Genesis 2:15; 3:16-20 to buttress their point. For instance; Ephesians 5:22 reads "wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church...." Genesis 3: 16 also states; "to the woman he said ... your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." They consistently re-echoed the discourse that the British laws favoured women but as Christians they understood that the man was the head and authority of the house. Religion was therefore seen as mediating in the process of male dominance. This point is supported by a 39-year-old male respondent:

There has not been much change in my authority; I married a good Christian woman who understands the Biblical point of view so it has made it easier for me. If I had not married a Christian it might have been a different thing. I do not have a problem with control of the house, I am accepted as the head of the house, and I know other people in London struggle to have that status.

A 42-year-old female respondent had this to say:

If I were not Christian my views about head of household would be different.... Paul said husbands' should love and respect their wives' just as Christ loved the Church and that the wives should also be submissive to their husbands... There can't be two heads, but I know there are two heads in Ghanaian houses in London.

Not all women agreed with this view and liberal Christians felt the woman should have equal partnership. A 29-year-old female respondent noted:

Though I am a Christian, I do not like the way Christianity says that you should support the man; I think the man and woman should be seen as equal and they should be working

together. I think that some try to explain this away that the man is the head and the woman is supporting...it still implies a hierarchy... no matter how it is explained.

In a focus group discussion a 69-year-old female participant mentioned that the men should continue with their traditional role as the sole providers. Significantly, the younger women disagreed with her, refusing to return to the situation where the man takes charge of affairs and controls them. In this instance intra-gender relations and age crosscut gender relations regarding the appropriate gender ideology. While younger women see the changes as emancipatory, the older women do not agree. It is obvious that renegotiations take place in a different social space, to realign power relations and improve women's position in the households. Manuh (2003) and Herbert (2008) found similar patterns among Ghanaian migrants in Toronto and Asian migrants in Leicester respectively. The women are therefore of the view that increased economic contributions and changes in gender orientations provide the leverage for increased participation in decision-making and more egalitarian relationships.

Most of the women thought that while their mothers back home did not have an opinion they now have opinions. Ghanaian women are experiencing an increase in power in their households since migrating; the men even refer to them as the 'bosses' occasionally. The men indicate that they oblige in situations when they want peace to prevail. Others have contested such situations, leading to friction and marital conflicts when the man thinks his masculinity is being eroded, but the women leave the relationship if they are abused. They indicated that as far as they are concerned 'migration is a leveller'. Most women concluded that if the man should be the head of the household with the same authority and level of control then he should be the sole financial provider. They commented that the men need to shed their 'colonial mentalities' and move with contemporary times. A 29-year-old female respondent summarized the issue thus: "I think it is an interesting trap for the man where he is not the main breadwinner but then he feels he should be the head of the household and in control". There is a general consensus among both women and men that in the long run, women gain more than men from migration.

6.4 Conclusion

The domestic division of labour is being transformed causing the renegotiation of power and control within gender relations among Ghanaian migrants (women and men) in London. Women no longer bore most of the responsibility for domestic tasks since they shared the tasks, allowing them to combine domestic tasks with paid work conveniently. Both appeared to have adjusted their traditional gender ideologies to egalitarian orientations which favoured sharing over the gender division of paid and unpaid labour. Hakim's egalitarian model of sexual division of labour was most popular. However, there were instances of the compromise model where couples strove to attain an egalitarian model. Most women rejected the separate roles model, though there were a few who moved between these models under different circumstances, depending on their relative positions in the labour market. Hakim's categorisation has been a useful device in helping to interrogate the empirical data. 'Cooperative conflicts' also determined most of the decision-making processes as spouses negotiated decision-making based on their bargaining positions, and the bargaining power of women was enhanced by their earning power.

Certain factors influence the bargaining process, including whether one partner has legal status; gender orientations, whether both partners earn an income and the capacity to acquire information. Though I encountered only one person who claimed he had had this experience, the general assumption which is widespread in the Ghanaian community is that if a woman were abused by her husband and she called 999 the husband would be barred from the marital home. Additionally, women could also have access to a council flat in case of divorce. These provisions provide a better bargaining position for women. Castells (1997) claims that there is a persistent influence of feminism in Europe with pressures, claims and information on women's issues prevalent in the society. The evidence seems to point out that having moved to a different social space and time, the socio-economic and political system and some of the egalitarian influences in the host country impinge and shape the life experiences of Ghanaian migrants. The study agrees with Hondagneu-Sotelo (1999) and Menjivar (1999) that the participation of women in the labour market (see Chapter 5) does appear to influence authority and control in the household (Chapter 6) but such changes in gender relations are a complex process, with subtle differences.

The analysis presented in this chapter highlights the degree of change in Ghanaians' attitudes regarding gender ideologies and relations. Migration may challenge the gender ideologies and open up opportunities for migrant women to play egalitarian roles in decision-making in the household. Additionally, dislocations in the environment, and at times social policies like flexible-time, helped to determine the sharing of domestic tasks: women and men could work different periods and free up time for domestic tasks. The chapter showed that in some measure, gender inequalities are socially constructed as the new cultural space provided avenues for the migrants to readjust inequalities and their differences in the gender system. Ghanaian men have taken on a considerable share of domestic work; family life has become more egalitarian in its attitudes towards decision making. The social policy system has partly provided women with a better bargaining position which restrains the men from exercising 'undue power' as household heads. This finding contrasts with the findings of Ankomah (1996), Aryee and Forson (2005) that in Ghana male dominance and superiority is expressed in all spheres of life, particularly in domestic relationships.

Through the 'patriarchal bargain' (Kandiyoti 1988), women have been relatively able to exercise agency recomposing gender relations, contesting and renegotiating the power relationships in new socio-economic and cultural contexts. The effects of migration are felt differently by the two genders: while men feel emasculated, women feel empowered as they have gained independence in the households and increased participation of men in housework. The number of joint decision makers suggests that attitudes and preferences are largely becoming more equitable. The study concurs with Delaet (1999) that there seems to some ambivalence: Ghanaian migrant women do not constitute a vulnerable, dominated class, but they are not necessarily totally released from restrictive patriarchal structures in their host societies, showing complexities. Male identity appears to be much more threatened than female identity. For instance Ghanaian women are experiencing an increase in power since migrating, because divorce is seen as an option; there are other ways women and their children can manage financially in London. The men express insecurities about their relationship with the women and the fact that 'hegemonic masculinity', the perceived

Ghanaian way of being a man, can no longer be performed in London. Placed along a continuum ranging from traditional to egalitarian it is somewhat evident that the younger migrants who arrived in the late 1980s and Ghanaian youth born in London seem to have stronger egalitarian tendencies. This reaffirms Chapman's (2004) finding that traditions are challenged to a greater extent by migrants' second or third generation offspring. Most of these families are connected to a time dimension in the sense that their marriage life cycle is in the early stages with younger children and therefore they need to collaborate to be able to survive. While Brewster and Padavic (2000) have noted that they are not confident that this trend will continue, this study argues that in the case of disadvantaged groups such as Ghanaian migrants, the process may well continue in the new social space. The next chapter, 7, looks at transnational split families exploring how transnational processes are gendered.

Chapter Seven: “*Bürger awariε*” (Bürger marriages) - negotiating gender relations in transnationalism

The livelihood activities of Ghanaian women and men in the diaspora have not been restricted to London but extend back to Ghana. Ghanaians have been noted to be ‘transnational’ (Mohan 2006; Van Hear et al. 2004). While a vast literature enhances our understanding of transnationalism (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Faist 2000), fewer studies theorize how gender relations are enacted and negotiated across the transnational social space. Pessar and Mahler (2003) and Piper (2005) suggest that transnational studies remain incomplete by excluding gender, because it is a central organizing principle of migrant life. Toyota et al. (2007) and the DRC (2009) have highlighted the inadequate attention to the ‘left-behind,’ emphasising the need to bring them into focus to advance knowledge in migration studies.

Transnationalism has been proclaimed by some scholars as empowering and ‘liberating’ (Levitt et al. 2003). Others argue otherwise (Guarnizo and Smith 1998). This contradictory situation requires an investigation into its effects on “existing hierarchies of power” (George 2005:36): who benefits from the phenomenon and under what conditions. ‘Split households’ by their nature have their reproduction and production functions separated (Glenn 1983 cited from Yamanaka 2005), challenging the traditional nuclear family arrangements. In such situations, who decides and what determines who stays at one end, how are resources shared and gender relations negotiated? What are the repercussions and consequences for patriarchy, traditional gender divisions of labour, and communication across borders? This chapter looks at the formation of transnational ‘split households’ among Ghanaians, paying particular attention to those left-behind, and investigates how different members of the family end up located in different countries. It explores how transnational ‘split households’ define and negotiate gender ideologies, power relations and family relationships, engage with the challenges and opportunities of transnationalism and retransform gender relations across national borders, between urban southern Ghana and London. Recent studies on gender and transnationalism have focused on women (Parrenas 2001). This has led scholars such as Bannon and Correia (2006) to declare that little attention has been paid to the men who stay behind. This chapter looks at both women and

men, examining the social processes and dynamics of ‘split households’ to strike an essential balance in gender relations. In particular, it investigates the assertion that transnational families pose “a challenge to the maintenance of the ideology of separate spheres” (Parrenas 2005:6).

“Transnationalism” will be used as a guiding concept to explore the linkages between sending and receiving countries in the transnational social fields. Since transnational practices are embedded in social relations, this chapter investigates how Ghanaian women and men negotiate socialisation, sexuality, production, reproduction and consumption functions in ‘split households,’ and explores how these activities impact women and men differentially. The idealized expectations and shared imaginations of economic prosperity and social mobility of both migrants and left-behinds in the ‘time-space compression’ may not be met due to the socio-economic, legal and political situations migrants encounter in the receiving country. Borrowing from the conceptualization of Parrenas, this chapter interrogates the consequences of the international division of productive and reproductive labour on Ghanaian migrants and especially the families they have left behind. It discusses the “dislocations”, underscoring the responses, shared roles and different experiences of split households in the transnational context to gauge how these affect gender relations and vice versa (2001:82).

7.1 Decision to separate in split households

This section looks at the decision-making processes that lead to the formation of split households, exploring the negotiations and gendered implications. The decision to separate is initiated at the premigration stage. Global capitalism has organised the world system into a single market economy (Parrenas 2000) with unequal relations. The post-industrial countries are regarded as the core and developing countries as part of the periphery. According to Sassen (2008), a significant feature of the global labour market is the demand for both high-level manpower at the top of the labour market structure, and low-wage workers at the base who mainly travel from the global south to the global cities. The economic reform programmes spearheaded by the Bretton Woods institutions resulted in retrenchments, removal of subsidies and increased government debt (Sassen 2008) in

developing countries like Ghana. This subsequently led to a decline in family wages, which coincided with drought and political instability leading to migration becoming recognised as a survival strategy. The globalization of the world market economy therefore provides the rationale for most Ghanaians to migrate to London. As a 41-year-old male respondent noted; “I took the decision in the interest of the family to migrate because it was difficult to be able to save or build a house in Ghana. It was only from ‘hand to mouth’”. A 43-year-old female respondent also stated about her husband; “It was an economic situation, he was doing his own business but it was tough for him as a man.” This decision to migrate involved bargaining and negotiations resulting in one partner taking the lead and the formation of a ‘split household’.

The study sought to learn whether in addition to economic reasons, gender ideologies also influenced this decision, based on male presumption of patriarchal authority. Men discussed the decision to separate with their wives though they retained the final say. A 57-year-old female respondent recollected how her husband refused her suggestion to wait for a scholarship opportunity, and migrated. She then added that:

So after two years he realised that he couldn’t achieve his objective alone, so he had to convince me to join him ... I had my own business I was running in Ghana and it was doing well but I decided to come because I wanted to keep my marriage.

Because patriarchal norms regarded the man as the breadwinner, in the immediate past the man always elected to take the lead and send for the family subsequently. A 47-year-old female respondent recounted, “He said he wanted to travel and I asked him why? He said if he does not travel we cannot make it in life.... I asked him whether he could not make it here, and he said no. So he left.” Most women mentioned that they agreed that their husbands should travel because they thought that as breadwinners they had to find means of supporting the family. Men were also disturbed that they were failing in their masculine duties and took the step to fulfill their ‘breadwinner’ obligations, intending for the women to follow later. Overa (2007) confirms that Ghanaian men lose their social position when they are unemployed, and therefore it is likely they could be motivated to migrate.

While historically it was the case that men mostly took the lead, due to the ‘feminization of migration’ the situation is changing. Some women are now taking the lead, while others are travelling independently with the support of parents and family. The participants explained that now anybody who has the opportunity is permitted to travel. They cited professional nurses who are leaving their husbands behind and migrating because their husbands are unable to meet their familial obligations. A 41-year-old female respondent informed me that at the time she left Ghana her husband had lost his job and they were finding it difficult to make ends meet economically, so she decided to travel abroad to assist the family. The 45-year-old husband confirmed this in Ghana;

Two of us sat down to take the decision. She started the discussion though, that things are difficult economically so if she gets the opportunity she would like to travel abroad to seek greener pastures. ... I agreed to take care of the children. And my brother invited her and she had the visa and left.

Most often where women wanted to travel, the men gave their consent. Men who were left behind comprised all classes, as did women left behind. The women normally left their domestic tasks for other female relatives to do, although sometimes their husbands performed them, thereby challenging the norm of separate spheres. Women were able to leave because they were confident that their extended female kin could be relied on; therefore cultural traditions also informed the decision to separate. Patriarchal gender norms were pivotal in the decision to separate.

Migrants are referred to as ‘burgers’. Therefore a marriage between someone who is left behind and a migrant is termed as “burger marriage”. This does not refer to a marriage between two migrants because they are both abroad, the significance is in the perception that the left-behind person has ‘married up’. In some cases, the migrant having travelled independently returns to Ghana to marry a non-migrant and proceeds abroad promising to return for the partner in the future, or they decide that the non-migrant should continue to reside in Ghana. A 29 year old female respondent commented that; “I agreed initially because I thought I would stay back and look after his projects for him..., but I have changed my mind...I no longer like it that he is staying somewhere else.”

7.2 Communication in split households

This section examines the impact of dislocations on transnational communication and the gendered implications for split households and ‘transnational intimacy’ (Parrenas 2005). For most migrants I interviewed, communication is regular between spouses, enabling the maintenance of links and transnational negotiation between split households. Most of the study participants indicated that in the past they used to write letters but now they usually communicate through telephone, e-mail and SMS messages. A minority used the internet as well. Min (1998) and Asis et al. (2004) made similar findings. Because they were communicating regularly, migrants were able to build ‘transnational intimacy’ across the social spaces. According to some participants, they talked in the morning before either spouse started the day’s activities and in the evening when each returned. Others communicated once a day in the evening, others weekly, at the weekend, or when major issues arose. A 29-year-old female respondent confirmed,

My husband calls everyday in the morning and when I do not hear from him ... I also call. When any of the children are sick he calls at anytime of the day, to confirm if we have been to the hospital and the outcome.

Migrants are often actively involved transnationally in the day-to-day organization of households. Most of my participants used mobile phones, though the migrant men preferred to call their left-behind wives on their home lines. A 43-year-old female respondent learned from her husband that men used the home lines to determine the whereabouts of their spouse. She remarked that:

Men call us on the house phone to ensure that we are in the house. They will sometimes call at odd times. Once he called the mobile and asked where I was, when I said I was in the house, while he was on that phone he used another phone to call the home line and asked that I pick it. Then I did and just smiled to myself.

Women therefore find themselves in difficult situations when it comes to communication and their purported freedom in the absence of men is only superficial. Although not mentioned, it was cheaper to call the home phone, which could also explain the preference. Apart from that, it was usually migrants who called since sometimes the telecommunication networks were so bad that calls from Ghana almost never went through; it was also quite expensive to call from Ghana. Since a majority of migrants were men and transnational communication was easier for those in the destination country, communications were not

‘gender neutral’ (Mahler 2001). For example, men controlled the communication space due to their easier access to the technology and the financial means to call more often. Power hierarchies are therefore promoted while couples are in different geographical places. Observations during fieldwork confirmed that communication was a means for reinforcing power relations. However, class also mediated this process, because some migrant men were unable to live up to their masculine roles and remit money regularly for their children’s upkeep. Therefore they tended to call less frequently. Migrant men who were subordinated based on ‘dislocations’ they encounter in the host country explained that due to financial difficulties they could not call often. This led to frustrations; their social and class location therefore undermined their hierarchical power and transnational communication.

Women left behind may not have had the means to purchase credit to call their spouses. Where they had the means the man may refuse to pick up the call or pick it up and say that he is at work and will call later. Women were compelled to negotiate when they should call their men even when sometimes there was an urgent reason or emotional urge for which they would wish to communicate. The participants mentioned that some migrant men even changed their telephone numbers without their knowledge, so spouses left behind became powerless, undermining transnational communication. Their agency was therefore constrained as a ‘power-geometry’ was being created in transnational split marriages where the left-behind (mostly women) were almost powerless when it came to communication across the geographic space. This situation was similar for female migrants, who also benefited from their geographical location, though men benefited more as a result of their greater numbers. The opposite was therefore the situation for left-behind men, who relied mainly on the female migrant and had to communicate on her terms. Ghana liberalised its telecommunications sector in 1995 and access especially to cell phones has improved tremendously, but geographical positioning limits reception (Overa 2006). Throughout the urban areas where I conducted my fieldwork, access to network coverage was difficult due to inappropriate infrastructure, such as inadequate mobile phone masts (base stations) and such spatial barriers led men to sometimes get frustrated and end calls abruptly. These problems were not observed as much in London and this affected effective communication,

deepening social inequalities between couples, especially the Ghanaian partner, who could not gain access to the communication resources and information in times of need. Parrenas (2005) confirms that the time and space compression of transnational communication could translate into unequal power relations shaped by gender, class and geographical location.”

7.3 Gendered division of labour in split households

Gardner and Grillo (2002) have hinted at the inadequacy of research into the transnational domestic sphere. Curan et al. (2006) have also requested that scholars should shift attention to other migration streams which may provide variations in how gender dynamics is exhibited in transnational social space. The migration of a partner is expected to lead to renegotiations of the household division of labour, with the left-behind adjusting his/her roles. However, studies are still inconclusive as to whether there are changes in the traditional division of labour in patriarchal households, particularly, whether fathers nurture children placed in their care by migrant mothers. Oppong et al. (2006) have argued that relationships and roles among men and women are prone to change over time, and are socially constructed as more men are willing to look after their children in the absence of their wives rather than send them to female relatives. Parrenas (2000), however, argued that in the Philippines, fathers hardly take care of their children, but rather migrant women have to hire domestic workers or seek other female relatives to perform domestic tasks. This section examines these issues in the Ghanaian context to determine whether there are transformations in the performance of reproductive labour by those left behind.

7.3.1 Housework:

My findings showed that the women left behind assumed household roles usually performed by migrant men, leading to a redefinition of traditional roles. Most of the women were obliged to perform additional tasks and were overwhelmed by the workload after the men left. Toyota et al. (2007) confirm that ‘leaving behind’ often means a reorganization of significant facets of daily life. The women participants indicated that in addition to their traditional housekeeping activities like cooking, fetching water, washing, cleaning, bathing, sweeping, and shopping; they had to add the man’s jobs, such as supervising building projects and maintaining furnishings and appliances. The situation therefore demanded

greater sacrifices as they were responsible for reproduction, socializing the children and managing the finances of the entire household. A 33-year-old female respondent said,

As we talk all the responsibility of the house has become my own. Now I have to wake up earlier than before. When he was around I will wash and he will hang and iron the clothes. He was very helpful, he would pound *fufu*; polish my shoe, and would carry the kids after I have fed them. Now I have to do all the woman's chores and go to project site, and look for artisans.

Though some women thought their husbands' contribution was very minimal even when they were around, a majority stated that they relied greatly on the men for specific tasks; so it was a strenuous undertaking for them. Some participants used domestic help and relatives, reducing some of the pressures of gender role negotiation and the impact of the responsibilities to be performed. This echoes Parrenas' (2000) international division of reproductive labour, where Filipina domestic workers use the services of poorer women in the Philippines while they perform the same reproductive labour for richer women abroad. On the other hand the migrant men only took up breadwinning as their main responsibility across the social space, but they managed to take care of their own domestic tasks abroad. A 45-year-old male respondent informed me, "I do my laundry every two weeks and cook my soups and stew every Sunday and store in the freezer".

Though it was established that some men left-behind sent their children to their mother or sister or any female relatives of their migrant wife, a number of them took up housework and childcare which they hitherto did not perform. They took up household responsibilities and lived with their children in their residence after the wife had migrated. A 36-year-old female respondent in London maintained that, "I have no problem with my husband, he can look after the children well, he knows how to cook and he is a caring father." The men left-behind admit that when their wives were around they did not do anything; a 38-year-old male respondent mentioned that; "it has made me know her value; in the past all I did was to sit down and she does everything for me. I perform all her tasks myself now, before it was only on Saturdays that I helped in the house, washing with her." Evidently, migration provides the opportunity for changing gender relations as the absence of the women in the destination country compels men to do 'gender work'. My findings illustrate a redistribution of the traditional gender division of labour in the family, as men take on

women roles and women as well take up male roles. The men also complained of losing the services of their wives as demonstrated by this statement from a 39-year-old male respondent;

I am here alone with our boy and two girls in the house. When it comes to feeding it is a problem. Who cooks the food and who cleans the house? Fortunately I now have a washing machine for washing and drying and so I am coping.

The men were using technology to aid them to overcome the problems associated with 'gender work' in the home country and the transnational space. My findings revealed that it was only men who mentioned that they were using technology. I did not find washing machines in the homes of women left-behind and they did not state that they used them. I can only surmise that their migrant husbands, aware they have been washing from time immemorial, did not find it relevant to provide them with the technology. On the other hand since men do not laundry traditionally, it would be easier for the men to cope with domestic tasks if the technology were available. Men found it difficult to adjust initially, as this 56-year-old male respondent recounted;

Sometimes I forget myself, I will be busy in the office thinking that my wife is in the house I get home before I remember that she has travelled. Then I decide on what to cook and realise that there are no ingredients. I do not like the market too, when these market women see you as a man with a basket, all of them would be calling you.

Transnational families therefore pose a challenge to the maintenance of the ideology of separate spheres as well as the traditional gender division of labour in the household. Transnational migration is accentuating the process whereby men are getting more involved in the female space and taking over female functions, and therefore transforming social relations in the absence of their migrant wives. These findings contrast with Mahler (1999) who stated that females mostly leave their children with other female kin when they migrate. A 50-year-old male respondent noted that:

She did the cooking, after she left I started to do the cooking. The day I agreed that she could go, I told myself to accept the consequences, so I immediately met the challenge and adjusted myself to it with the children.

The observations and informal conversations indicated that Ghanaian men took charge of their households in all dimensions.

7.3.2 Childcare

The women left-behind indicated that they had to look after the household and take care of children as well. They took up additional childcare tasks that the men performed, like sending children to school, ensuring that they did their home work and disciplining them.

This is evident in the remarks of this 47-year-old female respondent;

I was initially confused because it was my husband who sent the children to school and handled the school issues. Would you believe it, one of the children I did not even know the class he was in, either class 3 or 4? When I went to pick him for the first time I had to go and look for his class, I had never attended PTA meeting, but I had to attend now. I asked for transfer to another department...so that I would be able to manage the responsibilities.

In situations where the migrant men were helpful to the women left-behind, the transnational social space provided avenues for them to negotiate childcare responsibilities, as noted by a 39-year-old female respondent; “With the children’s homework sometimes we would call him and discuss it on the phone with the children.” They stated that this was expensive but there were very few options and it was a means of remaining united as a family, and the children were glad that their father was still involved in their upbringing. Because the responsibility of disciplining children is ascribed to fathers, men try to negotiate the spatial distance and try to sustain this masculine duty through regular communication across national boundaries. A 49-year-old male respondent in London noted that “Sometimes I would call and reprimand them. I talk to them often about the kind of friends they should have, their learning attitudes, and respect for their mother”. Fortunately women left-behind with elder daughters confirmed they were assisted by them to reduce the workload.

The men left-behind took up the nurturing responsibilities as well as the housework, though in most cases migrant women continued to nurture their girls from abroad. They would call asking them questions about the friends they keep, personal and good grooming, and their daily meals. The observations during fieldwork showed that fathers were nurturing their children, participating in domestic tasks and child care. In contrast to Parrenas (2001) conclusions on the ‘international transnational caretaking’, I found role-reversals where men left-behind were involved in nurturing their children after the migration of their wives. My findings therefore challenge this theory because while Ghanaian migrants are in

London as care workers, their role in Ghana is not necessarily taken over by other women but in a considerable number of cases their husbands have taken over the reproductive roles. The chain of the three-tier transfer of reproductive labour with women situated at the three levels is therefore broken by men as one level is performed by fathers in respect of my findings. The structure of transnational households therefore leads to a reconfiguration of cultural norms and gender ideologies.

7.4 Decision-making in split households

Decision-making across the geographical distance was somewhat complex. There were important differences as left-behind women could make decisions in the absence of the migrant men based on their subject location. Migrant women were also independent in many respects and could also make decisions in the destination country without necessarily informing the left-behind men. While patriarchal norms such as household head were reified and left-behind women still regarded the men as household heads, there was more joint decision-making and considerable involvement of left-behind women in the decision-making process. There appeared therefore to be a partial shift from the male dominant decision-making practices especially in respect to operational decisions. The women left-behind deferred to the men across the transnational social fields for largely strategic decisions. A 29-year-old female respondent confirmed, “He is the head, for women no matter your qualification or your work you should be submissive.... Though he is abroad, in making decisions I bring my point, but as the head when he says no...I stop arguing.” Though the women left-behind become responsible for the everyday decisions and some strategic decisions, they did not see themselves as household heads but maintained that they had some relatively increased autonomy and independence. Decision-making was therefore possible at both geographic places. The extent of the woman’s decision-making power is exemplified in the comment by a 43-year-old female respondent:

Now that he is not here some decisions I can take. For instance the carpet in the room is worn out; I do not have to ask him before I change it... When the children are sick, I send them to hospital and inform him. I decide on which school they should go because I know which schools are good in the area, he is not here, so I just inform him. But then his decision is important as to whether they should be day or boarding students. If he says he cannot pay the bill for boarding facility they will become day students.

Women therefore tended to preserve hegemonic normative structures despite the opportunities provided by the spatial barriers to alter social relations to their own advantage. Especially if the migrant man was able to remit money regularly, the woman looked up to him to provide strategic direction. Such migrant men informed me that since they were the breadwinners they needed to determine what went on even in their absence. The migrant men therefore had the final say in determining strategic decisions. Nonetheless, since it was the women left-behind who are on the ground, their spatial location made them conversant with the issues and therefore able to provide better informed input for good decision-making. Transnational practices and discourses influence existing social identities and power relationships, and women thereby improve their decision-making capabilities; their husbands respect them more due to the roles they play for the family independently at home. As a 39-year-old female respondent remarked; “When he wanted to buy land he called me and informed me. I suggested two areas and he wanted a particular location. But after going round to check I realised that the other option was better, and I informed him and he accepted my choice.” These finding corresponds to the study by (Kaspar 2005) who noted that wives act as ‘gatekeepers’ as they are able to understand issues and provide appropriate information from home. Though the decision-making process may not have been regarded as fully egalitarian because the men had the final say, the woman’s input was sought based on her ‘left behind’ position in the origin space, where the man may no longer have had an experiential knowledge.

On significant decisions such as joining the spouse abroad, women appeared less influential. Due to the patriarchal hierarchical relationship, the higher social status migrants acquire, and employment in the new geographical scale, the migrant men had to agree before the women could join them abroad. As this 30-year-old female respondent noted; “I do not want to remain here, and he could have invited me for at least a visit. But he refuses. Anytime I say it he says he is coming back home. Sometimes when I raise it he will intentionally get annoyed”. Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) suggest that power permeates social relations in the transnational social field. Some Ghanaian men are marginalising their wives because of their personal gains which are impacting on gender hierarchies. It seems it is easier for women to take the lead in migration when both partners are in Ghana and the

economic situation is difficult for both parties but she stands a better chance to settle abroad. However, when the man gets abroad first, it requires a lot of negotiation for family reunion. Women sometimes exercise their agency and respond by forcing the men to come for them with threats of divorce if they do not react positively. Class however mediates this process, when the woman is abroad. Where the men left-behind are in the upper middle class and employed they object to migrating because they do not want to be affected by the conflicting class mobility dislocation. However, unemployed men try to pressurize the migrant women to assist them to join them. The dislocations that the migrants encounter in the host country play a part in this difficult process of decision-making, and gendered differences in power and status contributes to the outcomes.

Though the decision making power tended to be more open because men listened to the women and sometimes accepted their opinions, because patriarchal ideologies persisted men were still recognised as household heads. Therefore where women were abroad as breadwinners and the men left-behind as care-givers, men still had the final say. Fieldwork observations and informal discussions showed that though migrant women decided how much to remit, it was the men left-behind who decided how to spend the money. This demonstrated the resilience of gender ideologies and practices across geographical distances even where the subject position of the female migrant had increased her class status in Ghana and placed her at a financial advantage. Because men were reluctant to relinquish their masculine identity they worked extra hard to fulfill their obligations. There were certain factors in Ghana like the extended family structures and norms that accentuated this phenomenon. Even though many women left-behind saw their decision-making power expand relatively when their husbands migrated, the men left-behind held on to decision-making power even though they asserted that they listened more to their migrant wives. There is therefore not a complete shift in negotiating decision-making due to both staying at different geographical places across the transnational social field. While the dislocation of conflicting class mobility enables the migrant man to reinforce the patriarchal hierarchical position, the migrant woman on the other hand cannot exert the same pressures on the man left-behind. Even where the migrant woman provides most of

the household finance, at best the decision-making is a joint venture, as men noted they ‘respect her views’.

The study also found out that though some women left-behind gained autonomy, others did not. Some men left-behind also maintained that they gained autonomy from migrant women, which is quite significant. The findings challenge earlier studies noted, which state that most women gain independence and autonomy. The women participants explained that they felt as if “half of themselves have left them”. As a 31-year-old female respondent told me,

I have not had autonomy. When I sleep I am thinking of the children’s education and other things which the man would have done... When you have children, they could also affect your freedom...so I do not see any independence.

The research findings showed that where the migrant men were domineering before migration, the women left-behind found some autonomy and independence in decision-making. However where the man was liberal and assisted her wife and the relationship was quite egalitarian there was no joy that the man had left, no matter how much he remitted. Such women left-behind would prefer that the migrant men be with them than be abroad. Some migrant men also set spies to monitor the women left-behind. Some women explained that such attitudes do not provide independence; this 30-year-old female respondent noted that;

If I say I have independence then I am lying. If I want to go somewhere I call him and tell him. He always knows where I am going. I have noticed that when your husband is abroad people tend to tell him a lot of things. People can call from Ghana and inform him they saw me here or there. So I always tell him so that if anybody should call him and inform him, he would already be aware.

They were of the view that they had not gained full independence because they still informed the spouse of their movements. Again they expressed the view that they were not happy, and therefore they could not be termed independent because independence goes with happiness. This remark by a 43-year-old female respondent illustrates the point;

I am not happy, the independence what does it mean, that you are free and happy? But I am not, all the time you feel that your other half is gone; apart from sex, even sleep is affected I have grown lean and often I cannot sleep soundly, well, sometimes you are expecting calls and it does not come. Sometimes when I get food and it is palatable, I wonder why he is not here to enjoy the nice food, and then I end up not enjoying the food any longer.

The women who mentioned that they had some independence also commented that their workload had reduced to some extent because they decided when to cook, so that was a burden reduced. There was less food to prepare and fewer clothes to wash. When the man was around they were compelled to cook at scheduled times and also to tidy up more often. The reduced burden gave them some freedom and therefore autonomy: they had more time to rest and also could plan their schedules independently of the husband.

Some of the men left-behind felt they did not have independence or autonomy. For instance, this 36-year-old male respondent stated;

I felt more independence and autonomy when she was here, I was happier. When I am out she knows where I am and when I would come home. Now I am not free, I have to do my own cooking and clean the house. When her family also needs certain things they call me, they would have dealt with her directly.

Other men left-behind felt they had some independence as remarked by this 50-year-old male respondent;

I have more time to concentrate on my work and projects. I control my going out and coming in, sometimes I can decide to stay home and do housekeeping. If she were here, for instance, today is a Saturday; she will say I should drive her to the market though she can also drive herself. These things give me some autonomy.

Despite the above, like the women he continued that; “No, I wouldn’t say I am happier because family life has its beauty and has its excitement and I am losing out on that. I miss her very much; the way to overcome it is to be on the phone for hours. It is quite expensive.” It was observed that sometimes the men wanted the woman by their side when they were attending social events and also sometimes to reassure them of their plans but this was not possible. They noted that even when they wanted to call she might be at work. The situation is ambivalent because though they feel some independence, in other ways they felt disadvantaged by their partners’ absence.

Independent incomes could reduce gender inequalities in split households and influence the balance of power in the transnational social field. Some women had not been working before the men left and they had been sent remittances to engage in trade, so they were happy. Other women left-behind had been asked to stay at home and they were adequately

catered for through remittances. They therefore had full time for the children but the economic advantage the migrant men possessed reinforced the patriarchal ideology and women's disadvantage. In terms of income therefore, the male economic advantage persisted when they went abroad and he remitted regularly, with patriarchal relations being deepened and male dominance perpetuated. With the men left-behind, those who were in gainful employment felt they had less pressure on their income and could take up any projects they wanted to pursue. For instance a 50-year-old male respondent explains that; "It is easier for me because I have absolute control over my finances as I do not give her 'household allowance.'" However, men left-behind who had to rely somewhat on remittances from their partners seemed to maintain joint decision making.

7.5 Remittances in split households

To sustain the transnational social space ties are needed to link the two geographical locations, and remitting money is one of the transnational practices that fulfill this function. In Ghana the migration decision is sometimes at the household level and enables families to diversify risks, and migrants have an obligation to remit to improve the livelihood of the family (Konadu-Agyeman 1999; Higazi 2005). Remittances are the basis of an economic and emotional relationship between migrants and the families they leave behind. They are essential transnational flows that migrants use to establish their commitment and bonding to family members. Meant for the maintenance of family members, they usually cover the cost of food and clothing; medical bills, school fees and building projects and are central in the transnational social space. Remittances to Ghana can be sent and received in a matter of minutes, through money transfer agencies and banks. Sometimes couriers are used when friends and relatives are travelling and they are sent to hand-deliver informally. The level of remittances to Ghana has risen to US\$105m in 2007 (World Bank 2008). While remittances are useful for household sustenance they can lead to inequalities in the transnational social space. The study explores the gendered implications of remittance flows for split households. I investigate who sends and receives them, what power they possess in relation to frequency and amount, and their effect on gender relations.

Findings from my empirical study in urban southern Ghana, which confirms the patriarchal traditional norms, revealed that while the woman looks after the house, the man provides the housekeeping allowance and she supplements it, if it is insufficient (see section 4.4). In line with this practice, migrant men mostly sent remittances fortnightly, monthly, or quarterly and the women left-behind used it for household expenditure. As the breadwinner, most men see this as an obligation, and it reinforces the attachment of the migrants to those left-behind. Men had the final say in deciding what should be done with the money, mainly if it was long-term expenditure such as payment of school fees, purchase of land, projects, start-up capital for the woman to engage in trading, and remittances to the extended family through the wife. Faist (2000) refers to this as reciprocity, where migrants send money to members of his or her family as part of a strategy to improve their economic status. It is also used to maintain intimate relationships. Apart from the above, it is generally meant for the upkeep of the house, and women use it for day-to-day purchases. The men know generally what the money would be used for. A 48-year-old female respondent noted that;

He remits us about £100.00 every 2 weeks. The money is used for house upkeep and he sends school fees every 3 months. He sends lump sums for the building project and when it is time for school fees, we suspend the project and continue the following month. It is quite sufficient and because I work it is not a problem sometimes I add my own money to it. After all he is building for us.

The remittances sent are sometimes based on estimates that the man asks to be made for him, though he usually arbitrarily decides on the amount. For some women it is an opportunity to have a regular income and therefore to enable them to plan their life, which provides them some leverage in the relationship. They therefore engage in petty trade or invest some of the money and get returns to improve their own circumstances. As this 33-year-old female respondent explained; “he made me estimate how much we spend every month and he sends the exact amount, so he knows what I will use the money for. It makes it difficult... because I cannot estimate to the minutest details.” As inferred from the statement above, at times remittances are inadequate and therefore it is difficult for women to vary the expenditure. Women do not exercise much power in this case because the money is just enough to meet expenses. To spend more than the stipulated amount a woman would have to justify it. Some men could be reluctant to increase the amount. It means that the women could not spend above their budget. The women left-behind did not

know how much the men earned in the UK, and this affected their bargaining position. The household depended heavily on the migrant who could release or withhold funds from the family. Ghanaian women in London seem to have greater flexibility in the use of money. Remittances have become a means through which migrant men are able to respond to the dislocation of contradictory class mobility as they try to maintain a hierarchical relationship, using financial means to gain increased social status. Other methods men use to maintain the power inequalities are to send the money to their relations to ensure that the women are monitored in terms of how much they get and what they use it for. If the unequal relations in the global economy persists, though migrants will continue to move to global cities, due to the dislocations they encounter the sending of remittances could be gravely affected if their subject position deteriorates in the host countries. This could ultimately affect gender relations as migrants would be unable to fulfill their breadwinning roles, deepening the precarious positions of women left-behind.

Sometimes, the remittances did not come on time which could affect women greatly. Female respondents noted that the remittances were not very regular and at times the men gave excuses and did not send agreed amounts, so they felt handicapped. Some resorted to using some of the money to engage in trade or resort to employment activities if they were unemployed and used the returns to look after their family. This worsened their situation when they had also to cater for housework and childcare on their own. Though some kin assisted by providing credit in the market against the next remittance flow, it was normally a disgrace for the woman if her husband was abroad and she had to borrow items. Some storekeepers also charged exorbitant interest when the money arrived. Some storekeepers were reluctant to help them because they thought as wives of 'burgers' they should be better off, and did not believe them. The women were therefore disadvantaged in the transnational social space by their spatial location. The women whose husbands had not been remitting regularly believed that the men were dodging their responsibilities as fathers. This created a lot of resentment and some were willing to divorce them after waiting for so many years. Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) confirm that kin networks maintained between remittance senders and receivers could lead to a lot of conflicts, especially where the dependants are unemployed, and this affects gender relations.

Sometimes the family of the man back home aggravated the situation by blaming the woman for the turn of affairs. Chant (1992) made similar observations that women are marginalised in developing countries, where the males were unable to remit regularly to enable them look after the family. Though Parrenas (2001) states that the formation of transnational families is to help households maximize resources, this may not always be achievable as some tend to be worse off.

Migrant men on the other hand explained to me in London that it was not their fault. Though their motivation to migrate is to maximize resources and provide a better quality of life for the household, they find out after migrating that the situation is quite different. A 50-year-old man informed me in London;

It is difficult here, we did not know that. After paying all your bills you are left with barely £100.00, how much can you send home? I had been sending money regularly but these days it has become difficult. I was doing two jobs but now I have lost the second job. My bills have also gone up. So we do our best and we hope the women will also look after it well.

The migrant men were marginalised in their social space due to the dislocations they encountered, such as partial citizenship vis-à-vis the host nation state, contradictory class mobility and sometimes social exclusion, which in turn affected the women left-behind. This was a cyclical relationship, which saddled the woman with the children and increased her responsibility to ensure the survival of the family.

For the men left-behind, they mostly did not rely on the women for remittances. They found it difficult to request money from the women in the transnational space. This attitude was based on the gender ideology of the male being the breadwinner, and some men tried to preserve this norm. They therefore allowed the migrant women to determine how much to remit. A 39-year-old male respondent noted, “She decided and remits about £150.00 every month when she has it, but I decide on what to use the money for”. This contrasts with women left-behind to whom the migrant men usually decide how much money to send, as well as what it should be used for. While the migrant women sent remittances, it was usually either a joint decision between the two parties or the man left the decision up to the woman. This situation bothered the women, who informed me in London that their husbands would always give them the option to send whatever they wanted. However, there

was a reconfiguration of the power relationships as it was evident that the women now had greater say in discussions. A 46-year-old man stated “I do not demand, she does it when necessary. In terms of remittances she hardly sends. I still pay my children’s education bills here”. While it was not evident that women left-behind sent money to migrant men in London, left-behind men do send money to their wives in London, and this was a recurrent feature in a significant number of cases; a 56-year-old male respondent noted, “I send money to the children because I believe she is suffering there.” Most men who had the financial means felt that it was their duty to look after the family as breadwinners. A 50-year-old male respondent said, “I would not say she sends me remittances, no. I do not ask her. In fact even though our son is in school there now, I gave the money to him”. On the other hand a male participant had actually stopped working to take up the household and childcare roles. It was observed that men who were unemployed relied very much on the women and it shifted the power relations slightly across the transnational space where the location of the women made them have relatively increased power, nonetheless, they still regarded the men as household heads. The individual men occupy different class positions and the multiple loci determine the power relationships and therefore the dependency levels.

Transnational flows are not limited to remittances but also involve multiple exchanges of other non-monetary goods and services, symbolic objects and commodities. When asked what they also do for their spouses across the transnational social space, they also indicated that they sometimes send them Ghanaian-designed clothes; food and beverages, photographs of the family, and medicine, and attend funerals on their behalf. They also send them video tapes of Ghanaian films and cassettes of Ghanaian music. For instance non-migrants regularly visited churches in Ghana to pray for their migrant husbands to be able to gain employment so that they could remit more often and fulfil their obligations to their families. In addition they prayed for their immigration status to be regularized so that they could join them. While their everyday activities were in UK they sought spiritual cover from religious institutions in another state. Prayer was an important tool of survival for most men and women in the home country, as stated by this 48-year-old female respondent; “Basic thing is prayers, every early morning we pray and now I have become a

pastor. We always pray for God's guidance; so that he would get work and make money. We also pray for his safety to enable him come back one day." By and large the remittances sustained the transnational families across the national borders, and to some extent reconfigured gender relations but mostly reinforced patriarchal gender ideologies.

7.6 Impact of the 'social imaginary' in split households

The social imaginary involves social expectations and norms, based on which individuals imagine how their relationships with others should work out and this shapes their attitudes and behaviour (Botting 2006). Pessar and Mahler ask; "how do men and women who relate across borders imagine the other? Imagine the other's activities...? How are these imaginings translated into actions and what are their consequences" (2001:18). Through "social imaginary or mind work" (Pessar and Mahler 2003:817) non-migrants envision that the only solution to their situation is to migrate; therefore spouses plan migration as a survival strategy. Their imaginings cause families to lead their lives in a 'transnational cognitive space,' aware of the migration and transnational practices of other families, and decide that a partner should travel abroad.

The left-behind continues to imagine life across the transnational social field believing that they will be liberated from poverty and hardship when their own opportunity to migrate occurs. Through observation of other returnees and their spouses and from the media, they imagine their own circumstances. The left-behind strive for their opportunity, waiting patiently in the transnational social space for their spouse to apply for a visa on their behalf. The non-migrants passive role impacts gender relations as they may react negatively to the perceived level of support, or non-support from the partner abroad. The women and men who remain in urban southern Ghana waiting for their turn to join their spouse remain in an unequal partnership. Though they remain located in one geographical place they engage in transnational practices with their spouse and dream of their eventual lucky break. The performance of the social imaginary by partners is sustained through transnational communication. Their relationship is enhanced and the imaginary expressed in both material (e.g. phone communication, letters, photographs), imagined (what life is like there), and symbolic ways (prayers). These connections become signs to assure each other

that their desire and expectation to be together will eventually materialise. However, as Vertovec (2004a) confirms, aspirations that are developed before migration may be influenced by post-migration circumstances, such as dislocations migrants encounter. For most of them this 'good fortune' may remain only in their imaginations as their embeddedness in the transnational social field is constrained by structural and immigration regulations which hinder their migration.

Apart from these dislocations, some husbands are also indecisive in translating imaginings into action. For instance, the men informed me in London that they were hesitant to bring the women in case when they come they would 'Lord it over them' and become assertive. They explained this by gendered discourses in the Ghanaian community in London and pointed out experiences of their friends and relations. They feared that if their wives rejoined them it would lead to a breakdown of their marital relationship, so they preferred the split relationship, despite its shortcomings. As a result even where men could help their spouses to migrate they were reluctant, based on their comparative perspective of what they claim to have seen abroad, anecdotes, and anticipation of what might happen if their spouses joined them. The migration of the spouse therefore undermined gender relations as 'split households' were maintained in defiance of their own plans. An imagined problem could eventually lead to the break-up of marriages where the spouse at home could find no means to join the partner.

The imaginary of left-behind spouses was revealed by the attitude of respondents who wanted to migrate to help their spouses by preparing food for them and caring for their homes as they did in urban southern Ghana. Grandiose images of success and emotional denial therefore drove them to manoeuvre to travel by any means using any resources available, sometimes through trafficking networks using 'connection men' (human traffickers) to enable them to join their spouses. A 48-year-old female respondent explained;

I have tried several times but have not succeeded. On one occasion, I joined a group of musicians going to London to participate in a festival as a guitarist, though I am not a musician. We paid a huge sum of money to the connection man but I was arrested at the international airport in Accra. Only God knows what I have gone through, and I wonder what my husband goes through everyday without his wife to look after him.

After a partner migrated the left-behind also endured hardship, imagining that subsequently they would be receiving remittances which would improve their standard of living. This hope would often enable the remaining spouse to endure the first 4-5 years confidently visualising the supposed benefits when the migrant spouse succeeds abroad. While some migrants were able to fulfill their spouse's expectations, some were unable to, bringing disappointment and psychological problems to the left-behind as well as serious consequences for the family unit, which could disintegrate. A 46-year-old female respondent left-behind informed me that her neighbours knew her husband had travelled and expected her to be sent clothing. Because the man was unable to send her any, she went to buy 'used clothing' from Accra, washed and ironed them nicely and wore them. When the friends asked her whether she was wearing a new dress sent by her husband from abroad, she said yes. Though she was still in urban southern Ghana, she enacted her imaginary of living like someone whose spouse was abroad, and convinced society, who accepted her charade because it was expected. Informal conversations revealed that some women borrowed money to sustain a lifestyle worthy of a burger's wife, though they did not know how they would pay these debts. These women were leading a life of pretence. While transnationalism is not attainable women enact expectations to keep their dreams alive. This deceit deepened the gender inequalities between the migrant and non-migrant, with negative repercussions if she was unable to eventually migrate. The inability of migrants to send money home tended to jeopardise the migrant dream, leading to a 'transnational gendered delusion' for both parties in urban southern Ghana and the UK.

The men left-behind were also engaged in imaginings as they also lead a life of 'pretence' and are sometimes referred to as 'burgers' in anticipation of what they would soon become. Some left-behind men I encountered during fieldwork wore big chains and a lot of jewelry around their necks similarly to what return migrants wore during their visits. They have picked up burger lifestyles, and would gather friends around them socializing and spend lavishly on drinks though they have not as yet migrated. This was all part of an imaginary game. Many of the participants were living "imagined lives" (Appadurai 1990) that were reflected in their agency. Through the mass media and information about lives of other migrants they imagined that they could improve their social position by living in the

transnational deterritorialised world. A 43-year-old female respondent noted, “I tried several times to join him, and he said I should wait, he would come for me, till eight years, then I got tired. The last time he called, he said he would soon send his papers to court there and very soon he would come for me, but up till now nothing has happened.” Migrants have had to use all sorts of strategies and subterfuges to gain legal status, some of which undermined the split relationship altogether, such as arranging ‘sham’ marriages. These aspects of transnational lives are critical for understanding the subjective lives of those living in the transnational space.

Sexual relationships are an important element of any marriage that leads to marital happiness and fulfillment. However, transnationalism compels spouses to live apart from their partners in different geographical places, depriving them of sexual activity within the marriage. Unfortunately both parties across the transnational space become stressed and anxious and prone to imaginings. Several anecdotes and discourses fault left-behind women and migrants for engaging in extra-marital relationships. Fieldwork observations showed that because polygyny is tolerated in Ghana, little attention is paid to left-behind men’s fidelity and they are left to decide whether to remain faithful. As a 44-year-old male respondent informed me; “I missed my wife so much I started to go after other women, but then my conscience was not free as it kept on reminding me not to be unfaithful. Eventually, I decided to stop so I only go home after work and watch television”. Sex issues are generally private matters in Ghana and people avoid open discussion of them which might account especially for the women’s disinclination to discuss this subject with me. I trust however that my positionality as a Ghanaian male researcher enabled male participants to identify with me and to give honest responses. Migrants arranged for other people to monitor their left-behind spouses and vice versa. Critically, some left-behind women informed me they were leaving their spouses because they had heard that they had gone after other women abroad. Sometimes such stories were true, but on other occasions such women were only partners contracted by migrants to gain legal status intending to invite their ‘true’ spouses thereafter. Women sometimes became involved with other men because of these rumors, only for their husbands to return and find them with other men, leading to embarrassing divorces.

The implications of the ‘imaginary and mind work’ cannot be overlooked since they strain gender relations across the transnational space, influence transnational practices and sometimes lead to the return of migrants. Both migrants and left-behinds deny themselves intimacy and try to endure the hardships of the transnational social field because of the implications it has for increased financial resources and social status. Though it is impossible to know how long their separation will last, they convince themselves to expect that it will be over soon. The consequences of the transnational imaginary for their social identity, gender relations and the society generally are enormous. The failure to achieve the perceived ‘promised land’ influences gender relations as partners are no longer located in one social space, promoting disappointment and disillusionment and sometimes leading to marital breakdown. The expectations of partners would benefit from further studies from other migration streams to help in better understanding this phenomenon.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter describes the consequences of separation of women and men across the transnational social field and contributes to the research on negotiating gender relations in transnationalism as well as the impact of split households on migrants and those left-behind. Transnational families emerge as a result of the globalisation of the market economy which has caused inequalities between some economies. Families that transform themselves into split households show that the household is a social institution with dynamic structures which can adapt to external stimuli that threaten its existence. They differ from traditional nuclear households as the major functions of production, reproduction and socialisation operate across transnational social fields. The household strategy asserts that migration is a means for “diversifying income sources... and maximising welfare at the household level” (Toyota et al. 2007: 157). However, this chapter has shown that in reality this aim may not always be realized, due to ‘dislocations’ (Parrenas 2001) migrants encounter in the destination country. In split households some are able to migrate and others do not. While transnationalism is seen as the household’s decision invariably it has varied effects on different members.

Earlier studies have identified the responses of migrants to dislocations, but the actions and inactions of those left-behind in the origin country have not been fully explored in migration studies. By bringing those left-behind into the picture, the current study has brought new insights into the renegotiation of gender ideologies and relations in transnationalism. For instance, the response of the left-behind to the dislocations migrants encounter is crucial. They pray unceasingly for the migrant so that problems will be minimised in their path. They take over the gender identity of the partner and reverse the roles, supporting the migrant and enduring stress and loneliness with fortitude. Agreeing with Mahler's (2001) view, this study has not found that the hierarchy of gender relations is extensively renegotiated in the transnational social field. Though the man left-behind is ready to perform household tasks, the power relations are resistant to change as patriarchal ideologies still recognise him as the head of the household. As a result, the financial position of the female migrant, who may be the main breadwinner, does not translate into decision-making power or lead to greater empowerment. The male migrant enjoys more power than the female left-behind, whom he manipulates through his relatively better financial gains abroad, to maintain the hierarchical relationship as the woman's dependency deepens. I argue that while some women left-behind have gained greater social status and financial empowerment, others have not benefited due to dislocations that militated against some migrants' ability to fulfill their roles in the transnational space. Left-behind women affirmed that they did not gain independence or autonomy in the absence of their spouses, but rather a 'loss of their other half,' making the changes in gender ideologies, relations and the patriarchal structure ambivalent and contradictory. A similar conclusion was drawn by Pessar (1999) and Hondagneu-Sotelo and Cranford (1999). The left-behinds take on greater responsibility, performing 'double shifts,' looking after children, housework and sometimes earning income. The 'separate spheres' ideology becomes distorted as both women and men take up responsibilities which are for either party due to transnational circumstances. While patriarchal structures are tinkered with, their demise appears still distant.

Regular communication can overcome spatial barriers and compress the distances of time and space that separate transnational couples, to constantly (re)construct and (re)negotiate

the ties that bind them in and across the multiple geographic places and social spaces. The lives of left-behinds especially are embedded in a ‘social imaginary,’ where they lead a life of hope and waiting for their migration. This is parallel to the ‘myth of return’. What happens where the left-behind are unable to migrate: In response, a likely scenario is what I term the ‘*transnational gender delusion*’. The inability of either migrants or the left-behind to fulfill their dreams of transnational lives for reasons already outlined affects gender relations and deepens inequalities in the social space. The transnational social space provides a complexity of web of change and stability in power dynamics and gender relations. The study confirms Pries (2001) point that geographic space is socially constructed and structured, and the spatial can independently shape the social. While gender ideologies and relations shape transnationalism, they are also reconfigured by it. Looking at transnationalism from a gendered perspective brings further insights to the phenomenon and expands our perspectives on the ‘social imaginary’ of migrants and left-behinds.

Some migrants have chosen to renegotiate the care of children transnationally (see section 6.2). The next chapter shifts focus to the fostering of the second generation migrants, who are sent back to urban southern Ghana by their migrant parents.

Chapter Eight: Transnational Fosterage

This chapter looks further at transnational families, focusing on: migrants and their children sent back home; and foster parents whose life trajectories extend beyond one nation-state. Serra has stated that existing explanations for why adults participate in fostering arrangements “are either incomplete or unclear” (2009:158). However, migrant parents state that their children’s socialization in the host country is leading to ‘dissonant acculturation’ (Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Transnational studies have concentrated on adults, with limited investigations on young adults and children who participate in transnational social fields (Mahler 1999; Pessar and Mahler 2003). Orellana et al. (2001) argue that researchers who disregard children’s involvement in family migration processes overlook a central building block. What is the extent and nature of children’s participation in fosterage decisions and how do they cope with the changes in their family lives across transnational social fields? How does the transnational caring relationship influence family lives and relationships across the countries of origin and destination, and with what implications for gender and intergenerational relations? While in certain situations migrants leave their children behind (Parrenas 2005), or sometimes the children are sent ahead abroad (Zhou 1998), the primary focus of this chapter is on children who are sent back.

This chapter examines the formation and character of transnational fosterage families looking at renegotiation and reorganization of the gender division of labour, and the provision of financial, emotional, and practical support in the transnational social space. It explores how systems of inequalities impact on migrants, leading to their children being sent back home and extending their life trajectories beyond one nation-state. The chapter also explores fostering as a transnational strategy. I argue that fostering alters the socialisation and social reproduction processes of children who are sent back to the hometowns of parents.

A transnational social field has been defined by Itzigsohn et al. as “a field of social interactions and exchanges that transcend political and geographical boundaries of one nation and have become the relevant field of action” (1999:317). Transnational social fields

consist of interactions linked across nation states, illustrated by the behaviour and organisation of the people involved in expressing their cultural values, sharing of ideas and exchanges, through and in the connections embedded in the socio-economic and political systems of the geographical boundaries. This concept is used to explain the transnational fostering relationships through the interactions in the field between migrants and their children sent home, as well as foster parents. The discussion of transnational fosterage for Ghanaian children sent back home engages with two aspects of family care suggested by Ackers and Stalford due to their relevance (2004: 130-131). *Caring about* involves contact and emotional support and is illustrated by “the frequency and nature or quality of contact”. It comprises emotional functions like providing comfort, communicating by phone, e-mails and visits, participation in decision making, and paying for care. *Caring for* includes instrumental functions and demands physical presence, since it deals with “concrete ‘hands on’ care ...more on a personal level” (Ibid. 131). This dimension of caring challenges spatial and temporal separations that transnationalism engenders. The provision and accomplishment of emotional and instrumental functions across national boundaries implies the regular or occasional participation in social contacts across national borders (Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Levitt 2001a). Finally, the chapter examines acculturation gaps between migrant parents and young adults (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Directing the spotlight onto gender and generation and exploring transnational fosterage across geographical distances, is expected to reveal broader insights into transnationalism.

8.1 Determinants of transnational fosterage

Ghanaian migrant parents in London send their children back to their home country to be looked after by relatives for specific periods. Children sent to Ghana include mainly those born in London by migrant parents and those born in Ghana and who have arrived in London with age under about 12 years. This section examines the reasons why migrants send their children back home for fostering. A childcare strategy in response to changes to life situations (Blanc and Lloyd 1990), fostering occurs where both biological parents are alive, but their children live away from them in other households. The practice is widespread in West Africa, including Ghana, for parents to send their children to live with

other households (Goody 1982, Pilon 2003, Serra 2009). This practice has been adapted by Ghanaian migrants to their migration situation as a strategy enabling childrearing activities to be carried out across national borders.

The migrants in the study mentioned that they expected their children to do better than them by climbing the class hierarchy. They also expected their children to display certain behavioural traits and values which they as parents had acquired in Ghana. These behaviours included respect for elders, staying away from drugs, having a positive sexual attitude, being disciplined, avoiding teenage pregnancy, gangs and criminal activities. Children who deviate from these traits are regarded as failures in the Ghanaian community. To avoid their children being acculturated to 'second generation decline' (Gans 1992) or being drawn by 'peer pressure' (Portes and Zhou 1993) into a youth culture that tolerates drugs and so suffering downward mobility, they choose transnational fostering as a strategy in order for their extended relatives back home in Ghana to train the children. A 47-year-old male respondent complained about his daughter;

This girl is 19 now, we had a whole lot of troubles, the police and social services were regular to our house. She was involved in shoplifting and other problems.... Eventually we decided to send her to Ghana. She stayed for 4 years and she came back and now she is fine.

Parents were afraid that their children's assimilation into British youth culture would be disastrous. During the period of fieldwork for this study in 2008, 29 knife fatalities among young people were reported in London (BBC 2008) with a fair share happening in North London where the research was based. Parents saw Ghana as an alternative socio-cultural space where they could raise their children. A 59-year-old male respondent recounted his son's story:

He started messing around in the classroom and community. Now he says that he picked wrong friends. He started smoking all stuff, and joined a gang. ...He left the house for 2 years and I did not know where he was living ... In 2007, he had a problem with the lady and he came home. I deceived him and took him to Ghana... We convinced him and he agreed to go to school so I paid the school fees.... He is now almost a year and a half there (Ghana) and his character has changed though he is struggling to learn.

This story is typical of the discourses about the youth I heard in London. Portes describes this situation as “‘segmented assimilation,’ in which many second-generation youths end up assimilating into the lowest rungs of the host society, associated with gangs, violence, and the pervasive presence of the drug trade” (2009:8). This results from high numbers of migrant children living in underprivileged and poor communities. Kenway and Palmer (2007) found that about 45% of Black Africans in London are in income poverty; and the majority of the black youth were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) (Middleton et al. 2005). Zhou (1997) identified a similar phenomenon happening to migrant children in the US. Therefore if the children decide to play truant, there is good reason to send them to Ghana. Orellana et al. have termed this ‘transnational disciplining’ against children who become social deviants or indulge in criminal activities (2001: 588). Migrants pointed out that in Ghana the whole community raises a child, which they find as valuable. Orellana et al. (2001) found that among Mexicans this strategy was normally a threat that was rarely implemented, but in the Ghanaian situation it was acted upon and various methods were used to ensure that children returned to Ghana. Transnational fosterage is an option to remove vulnerable children from this social space considered inimical to their proper development.

Apart from fear for their security and social mobility, one other consideration was for migrants’ children to learn the Ghanaian cultural heritage to help in their identity formation. A 52-year-old male respondent argued, “sometimes it is a bit difficult because they get mixed up and confused, as to which culture they belong to.” Parents wanted their children to maintain their cultural identity by learning their mother tongue, knowing their kin relations, encountering the Ghanaian physical space, and experiencing the same upbringing they as parents had had. They explained that language was an important indicator of ethnic identity that facilitates the understanding of culture. Ying (1999) notes that conflicts may occur in migrant families due to generational and cultural gaps, with children adopting the destination country values and parents maintaining normative values of their home country culture. The study found that this situation often led to some children being sent to Ghana. In addition, it was cheaper for parents to look after the children in Ghana because the same

amount of money used in London could stretch further in Ghana and other family members could also benefit.

Another major cause of fostering involves the marginalization of migrants as ethnic minorities in the labour market in London. As shown in Chapter Five, due to dislocations of class, ethnicity and migration status, both Ghanaian parents usually have to work. This need undermines the performance of unpaid care in the home. Childcare has been commodified in London, so parents involve third parties to provide care (McDowell et al. 2006). Most participants informed me that they cannot afford the costs involved and mentioned that public facilities are inadequate. Unable to find time for childcare, they opt to send the children home to allow themselves some space to work and maximize their incomes. This shows the interrelationship between earning and caring. Immigration legislation and policy also affects care provision, an observation corroborated by Burholt (2004) among Asian migrants in UK. Migrants are not capable of inviting and utilizing kin support from the home country to provide childcare. Children are therefore sent to Ghana where it is believed extended family members can provide commensurate care.

Some parents also thought that in London the children's confinement in their rooms for long periods of the day (especially during winter periods) was damaging for the child's development and that there was more space available in Ghana for children to exercise and engage themselves. Therefore, the child's well-being and health, was justification to send them home.

This study further observed that children who are socialized typically as second-generation and assimilate in London do not appreciate the need to honour filial piety and support their parents in old age. To promote their security in old age and informally insure themselves; parents send children to Ghana to make them conscious of their responsibility towards them, their kin and relations. Boys are also sometimes sent to Ghana for circumcision because parents thought it would be better done in Ghana, where they remain for a number of years. Some children it was observed were sent to Ghana because of family crisis, such

as divorce and death. Grandparents also requested to see their grandchildren so parents sent the children to stay with them for some time.

The study found that the children are sometimes consulted before decisions for sending them are made, but in other cases they are compelled or deceived and sent to Ghana. Some children were sent as babies and did not have a say. A 16-year-old female respondent noted, “they did not inform me, I was told we were going to the USA and before I knew we were in Ghana. I guess they thought I would not have agreed to come”. Another method adopted was to tell the children that they were going for holidays and when the children arrived in Ghana the parents would refuse to let them return to London with them. On other occasions, they sent the children with relatives or friends who were travelling on holidays to Ghana. Where they were young adults, they sent them as unaccompanied children, transferring the responsibility to the airline staff to hand them over. Foster parents were also sometimes invited to London before the child(ren)’s birth and after the child(ren) had been weaned and become familiar with their future foster parent, they were then sent with them to Ghana.

Parents believed they had a duty to raise children to achieve certain desired outcomes, and therefore derogated to themselves the function of acting in the ‘child’s interest’ depending on their views of what was safe, appropriate, possible, or good for their children. Though women were empowered abroad, significantly, they did not have the time to nurture their children. They stated that though it was a difficult choice if they kept them in London they would become wayward and it would be difficult to ensure conformity at a later stage. The cultural values of Ghanaians, which encourage collectivism, played a significant role in migrants’ and their families’ adoption of this strategy. Whitehouse (2009) has noted that due to strong extended-family bonds amongst West Africans, fostered children do not find themselves disadvantaged. Other studies have also confirmed this practice among migrants in the US such as the Mexicans (Viruell-Fuentes 2006) and Yemenese and Koreans (Orellana et al. 2001).

However not all migrants send their children to Ghana. Some do not because they lack the requisite social capital and networks to send their children home. Others keep their children

in UK because as they informed me, migrants whose children are born here and who live here continuously over a period would qualify for legal status. Yet others thought that they should rear their own children to be able to develop emotional attachment and affection for them and be able to relate to them. However, throughout the life course of most families one or the other child is sent back to Ghana, based on one or more of the determinants described above.

A major concern for researchers in transnationalism has been the durability of the transnational phenomenon and whether it will be carried forward by the second and subsequent generations (Levitt and Waters 2002, Kasinitz et al. 2002). While a consensus is yet to be reached, I argue that the child fostering activities of Ghanaian migrants involving transnational connections across geographical distances potentially contributes to rethinking this debate. This is because transnational fostering could impact positively on the durability of transnational practices and its sustainability over time and space, by opening up the possibility for second and subsequent generations to participate in activities spanning national borders, thereby ensuring that there is continuity of transnational connections beyond the first generation.

8.2 Decision-making and living arrangements

Men and women negotiate over gender divisions of labour and where women decline to perform 'double shift,' subsequently the child(ren) must be sent to Ghana. The statement by a 49-year-old male respondent depicts the power relations in the decision-making process before children are sent to Ghana;

Initially, I wanted her to stay in the house and look after the kids so that I would do more jobs. But she disagreed that she also has to look after other relations in Ghana who were looking up to her.... So we sent the child home.

Unfortunately, Ghanaians are not able to benefit substantially from regular visits by grandmothers and other female relatives to the host country to provide practical childcare when required. The partners normally arrive at a consensus that it is in the best interest of the child, especially where drugs, crime or other negative factors are detected. I observed that it was normally women who disagreed on the final decision because the norm is for them to nurture their own child(ren). However, the extended family obligations weigh in on

the decision to allow their children to be fostered. Though women were desirous of looking after their own children abroad they were constrained as they had to also fulfil extended family obligations. They therefore gave in to be able to make some money and then look after their children back home, while at the same time fulfilling their responsibilities back home to their kin who also benefit from their remittances. Women are therefore torn between their children and their extended family commitments. Potash (1995:84) confirms this point that “there is always a conflict between personal choices and cultural norms”. In one case, the man had to agree for the woman to visit her child every year before she consented for the child to be sent to Ghana. Another reason women offer is that the kin relation might not be able to look after the child(ren) well. The study found out that men normally do not have any problem with the children being sent to Ghana.

In making the fosterage decision, the primary consideration is that social and family networks are available in Ghana to host the child(ren). In addition the child’s welfare and well-being are paramount; fostering can affect the child’s health, education, nutrition and psychological development. Usually, because Ghanaian ethnic groups are “embedded in webs of personal relationships”, they are able to find foster parents (Griffiths 1995 quoted from Reynolds and Zontini 2006: 5). The inclination is towards sending them directly to their mothers (child’s grandmother), or maternal or paternal sisters, women having preference over men. If it is necessary to send the child(ren) to a man, parents ensure that the person has a wife or a woman in the house who will nurture and provide ‘hands on’ personal care for the child. This is based on the gender ideology that men should not perform household work (Ainsworth 1992). Though fathers may look after their own children in the absence of their mothers, (chapter 7) migrants prefer not to send their children to bachelors. Gender therefore crosscuts the fosterage decision and transnational fosterage does not transform gender relations in any significant way.

The decision by the sending household is made in view of what I term ‘exogenous’ and ‘endogenous’ factors. The exogenous factors include influences beyond the control of the foster parent (which are outside the kinship system), such as the residence of the kin relation, infrastructure, and availability of schools in the locality, the number of persons in

the house, the ability to transfer money conveniently, and good means of communication. The endogenous factors concern the foster parent: his/her temperament, no matter how she/he is related to the migrant parents; a loving and caring nature, gender, education, age, whether the person is employed, household management and the person's experience of having or looking after children of his/her own. The essence is to ensure the all-round development of the child, so they look for someone who has affection for children and can accept them as his/her own. They also prefer a person who is disciplined and religious to train them, whom they can have confidence and with whom they can communicate easily. Most of the fostering agreements are only verbal based on mutual understanding, trust and reciprocity. Most kin members accept that children are the responsibility of the whole lineage, not just the parents; therefore they feel an obligation towards the children and operate without any code of practice. Ghanaian foster children mostly live in homes with other family members such as aunties, uncles and grandparents around them, benefitting from social networks of support and control. This contrasts with Zhou's Chinese 'parachute kids' who were noted to have "too much 'free' time after school and too little supervision" (1998:691).

8.3 Long distance parenthood

Caring work for children requires physical and emotional support, so familial relationships and responsibilities are renegotiated in transnational families. Due to the geographical distance that separates parents and children, parents can only perform one type of family care, that is, 'caring about' roles (Ackers and Stalford 2004 and Reynolds and Zontini 2006:5). They send funds for others to provide the other form of family care, 'caring for' which involves personal care for the children.

The fieldwork identified that one means of maintaining transnational caring relationships across the social field is visiting the foster children in Ghana. Parents tried to visit their children in Ghana at least once a year. It was mostly the men who travelled for this function, because when there were other children in London, they negotiated that the women should remain behind and look after the siblings. The men also mostly supervise ongoing family projects in Ghana and therefore take advantage to visit. Unfortunately

parents who have illegal status have no option to travel to see their children. Others do not have enough funds to travel every year. Engagement in multiple jobs also constrains their ability to visit regularly. Gender norms mediate the level of interaction of parents with children, determining who could and could not visit often; men hold advantaged positions with regard to this transnational practice.

Remittances are another major form of the '*caring about*' function that parents are involved in. Most parents maintain their roles by honoring their financial obligations and regularly sending money home to their children and kin. The cost of maintaining the child in Ghana is normally shared. In a few relationships still governed by patriarchal norms, the women may provide some funds but the man sends most of the money for school fees and major household expenditure. The mother may often assist when the child requests by sending small amounts such as £20.00 occasionally. They reported that they send it monthly, quarterly or thrice a year, at Christmas, Easter holidays and in August when the academic year is about to begin. Negotiations held between sending and receiving households determine how much should be sent periodically. As a 48-year-old male respondent informed me; "I send my mother £150.00 every month for herself and my daughter. We asked and she came up with her budget and we added something small". The financial remittances are used for material care such as food, education, health, clothing, transport to school and other incidental expenditure. To placate the children for sending them away parents try to provide them with whatever they need, both goods and money, for them to enjoy their stay back home. The regularity of provision of financial and material resources sustains the transnational existence and reduces the physical distance between parents and their children, who are aware that their parents provide for their upkeep. Dislocations and the social location of the family in London are crucial in determining the regularity of remittances. The sending of remittances to cater for children sent back is gendered. Even where the woman contributes, the money is sent in the name of the man due to the gender ideology that the man is the 'breadwinner'. Gender ideologies cause the woman's contributions to be subsumed under those of the man, who gains all the social recognition that accrues to the 'provider'. Though women did not complain about this some mentioned that they wished their contributions were acknowledged.

Communication is another major element which keeps the transnational links alive ensuring maintenance of the bonds that define transnational families. Participants informed me they tried to ‘always keep in touch’ to shape transnational intimacy. Transnational communication employs various media on a day-to-day basis (see section 7.2). True to gender relations and ideologies, this is a core transnational practice for women (Levitt 2001b). Women constantly call and send messages providing emotional security to children despite the physical distance. This statement by a 48-year-old female respondent confirms,

I find it difficult to sleep if I have not talked to my boy for three days. I need to know if he went to school, what he ate, if he is generally okay. On several occasions my husband will just conclude that ‘he is fine’ though he has not talked to them in Ghana.

Reynolds and Zontini (2006) maintain that cultural remittances represent emotional attachments, strengthen kinship ties and identity, and show the dedication of migrants to the children and foster parents, promoting unity among relatives. Power relations however favoured parents, who decided when and how often to call the disadvantaged children sent home. Parrenas (2001) made similar findings among Filipina domestic workers who left their children behind: though communication to a large extent enabled them to maintain personal contact, the daily routine of intimacy could not be fully achieved over temporal and spatial distance.

Though it was parents who sent the children back home, they sometimes missed them. The pain of separation dislocation was shown mostly by women. Field observations and informal interactions demonstrated that women felt regret and concern while many men put on an air of masculine strength to hide their pain. Parents also had difficulties with the siblings in London who always asked about their sibling. A 49-year-old male respondent stated: “Since he went I have visited thrice, I visit every year and the most difficult part for me is when I am leaving. He has this way of looking at you as if he has been abandoned and then guiltiness comes over me....” Another female respondent sadly noted,

Though I knew it was a good thing to let her go I did not agree fully with my husband. Sometimes I cannot sleep. When...I am eating, especially her favourite food; I wonder what she is also eating that evening.

Parents continue to play an active part in the socialisation process and communicate with children on the value of education and discipline and the need for them (children) to work hard and move upward socially. The study identified that men continued, despite the geographical distance, to try to provide moral care and instil discipline in their children. Many male participants and some female as well had internalised the gender norm which considers the man as the disciplinarian of the family.

The findings on long-distance parenting show that caring activities are gendered, as women and men consciously or unconsciously exhibit preferred gender roles. Gender mediates long-distance parenting as negotiations are held to determine who visits the child(ren) sent back home, sends remittances, and provides emotional support. A 38-year-old female informed me, “as for my husband he will only ask me, have you called Kofi this week? How is he, hope he is doing well.” There was generally a positive feeling that fostering out is useful to a child, leading to a disciplined life, the development of ethnic identity, and the ability to cope with the stresses of discrimination. Both women and men participated in long-distance parenting across the ‘time and space compression’ that separates transnational families. Class and legal status considerations undermine the intensity and frequency of performance of transnational parenting. The ‘hands on’ personal care has been handed over to other kin, as foster parents who will be the subject of the next section of this chapter. The ‘hands on’ personal care has been handed over to other kin, as foster parents who will be the subject of the next section of this chapter.

8.4 Fostering transnational children

Research on transnationalism is usually based on migrants as the actors who move; however non-migrants also lead lives within the transnational social field. Levitt has noted that “movement is not a prerequisite for engaging in transnational activities” (2001b: 198). Foster parents who look after migrants’ children are embedded in reciprocal relationships, giving and receiving goods, ideas, money and contacts across state borders. Their livelihood activities involve them in transnational practices as they contribute to the reproduction of the second generation.

The study identified that migrant parents often relied on persons from their kinship group. Certain guiding principles influence the behaviour of kinship members towards each other. When facing choices they negotiate “the proper thing to do” to fulfil kinship commitment (Williams 2004:55). That rationale causes kin members to assume fostering responsibilities even if it may be an inconvenience to them. They stated that they gain contentment and personal satisfaction from looking after these children. A 47-year-old male foster parent explained,

The whole matter was personally broached by me to my wife, because he was giving problems to my sister-in-law. I had overheard her complaining several times to her sister (my wife). So I said they should bring him so that we straighten him up.

In most cases parents make the initial request, but as shown above sometimes non-migrants ask for the children. This is because the child is seen as belonging to the whole lineage and the kin group as having an obligation. The rearrangements change the dynamics of the household and lifestyles of the foster parents. The situation is manageable because it is considered temporary. They noted that the most difficult part of the fostering process was for the young adults to adjust and settle down. The foster parents conceded that it was always better when the parents came with children initially, and after settling them down return to London. Another approach which helped children to adjust is to inform them about the foster parent before leaving for Ghana, as a 38-year-old male foster parent noted: “I had been talking to them on phone from Ghana when they were abroad and they had seen my pictures. The first time I asked him whether he has heard of Uncle Ben then he lifted the head and said yes, and embraced me”. Another approach was for the foster parent to travel to London to be with the child for some time before bringing them home. Adjusting to food was another problem. Foster parents had to make different food arrangements for fostered children or the whole family had to change its food menu. This was sometimes stressful to other family members, who had to change their diet. Foster parents who had to foster smaller children did not have many problems because as they intimated; “they came as little children so the training I am giving them is all that they know.”

The study tried to ascertain from the foster parents their roles in the maintenance of transnational families. Foster parents mainly focus on ‘hands on’ personal care, or ‘caring

for' (Ackers and Stalford 2004). They nurture the children by ensuring that they have brushed their teeth, bathing them; feeding them and sending them to school. The foster parents expressed concern for their health, schooling, moral development and emotional lives and pointed out that they support and provide security for them and provide motherly care. They also have the responsibility and obligation to transmit the valued traditions of Ghanaian society to these children. They always remind them of Ghanaian cultural values and behavioural standards: showing respect to the elderly, discipline, comportment, communal living, working hard to achieve success, and showing appreciation. Apart from this process of ensuring the intergenerational production and transmission of durable transnational identities, they sustain transnationalism, disproving the suggestion of some scholars that it is ephemeral and will not extend beyond the first generation of migrants (Rumbaut 1998; Levitt 2001a).

The perspectives of foster parents on the children's emotional struggles are very significant data indicating the social impact of fostering on transnational families. The foster parents confirmed that it was a constant preoccupation for them to help their emotional adjustment. They always had to find ways of encouraging children to contain their emotions when they were distraught. A 38-year-old female respondent noted;

Any time there was a problem of crying I called to find out and if anybody is maltreating him I offer help. I remember once he said he should have been first in class and he missed it by a mark so he cried incessantly. I called him and counselled him ... and assured him I still love him so he should not worry.

The foster children enjoyed basic emotional security from the foster parents. Another foster family stated that the child calls them Daddy and Mama, and when the biological mother calls she gets confused and sometimes asks "is that aunty"? Some see their parents as strangers, so most migrant parents try to communicate regularly to ensure that their children remember them. According to foster parents, anytime the younger children pick up the home phone (landline) they know that they want to talk to their parents. Children sometimes use the mobile phones of foster parents to 'bleep' their migrant parents, who call back when they are free.

Foster parents may undergo many emotional strains themselves. For instance foster parents reported becoming very distraught at the illness of a foster child, because she/he is not her child and she does not want anything unpleasant to happen to the foster child. Migrant parents put a lot of pressure on the foster parents by over-indulging these children, whom they considered as '*Abrokyire ba*' (born abroad) and went to any lengths to satisfy despite the fact that they had sent them home. Though I heard of anecdotes about fostered children being maltreated, I did not encounter any such child throughout my fieldwork. The foster parents noted that some children are difficult to control, and some are sent back to the UK because they are temperamental and incorrigible.

They expressed various views about the remittances that they receive to enable them to nurture and develop the foster children. They received varied sums of money depending on the wealth of the migrants and the number of children. A foster parent with three young children, the youngest being six years and the oldest fourteen years, received three hundred Ghana cedis, equivalent to about (£152.00) monthly, but this was increased when school reopened to cater for school fees. A 54-year-old female respondent affirmed,

There is no arrangement, whatever they send I exchange and use. If I need anything they will send and so there is no problem. If nothing has come as well, I do not bother them. I know abroad it is not easy so whatever they bring I manage.

There was variation in amounts sent, but in most cases respondents confirmed that it was sufficient to meet the children's needs. However, there were a few migrant families who did not send sufficient remittances and the foster parents complained. For example a 38-year-old female respondent said; "What he sends is not enough, I have asked him to increase it ..., yet when he calls he does not even mention the issue..." Another foster parent was exasperated with a similar situation and remarked that "we are not beggars". A 65-year-old female respondent on the other hand, commented, "I did not mind because he is my grandson". Sometimes migrant parents think that foster parents want to make a profit out of them, remarking that foster parents think "money is flowing on the streets" abroad. However, the situation is difficult for some foster parents. For instance, where the foster children are infants, some foster parents have to reduce their work to make time to look after them. This reinforces power hierarchies as the foster parents become dependent on the

migrant for daily sustenance across the geographic space in the transnational social field. Corroborating Williams (2004), the foster care relationship leads to inequalities and unexpected dependencies. These inequalities are due to the financial power the migrant gains over the foster parent, which is differentiated by class and social location. Due to the fact that the two persons inhabit different geographic scales there is misunderstanding in the transnational social field, influenced by socio-economic factors in both social spaces. This epitomises the comment by Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) that kin relationships can become strained by differences and power relations.

The foster parents maintained that the children they are looking after are their own children according to Ghanaian traditions, and therefore they did not need any appreciation. They believe that without their assistance their migrant siblings and other relations would not be able to achieve their objectives in migrating and so they saw it as an opportunity also to assist family members. As a 59-year-old female respondent noted, “My sister’s child is my child so I am happy that they are with me”. Other foster parents thought differently though, as this 49-year-old female respondent noted about her sister;

If your child is with somebody, you need to appreciate it because if somebody gives birth he does not suffer as much as the person who looks after the child, if the child is sick, hungry, emotional attachment are all the responsibility of the foster parent.

Parrenas identified similar sentiments among non-migrant kin members in Philippines who argued that it was “not really their responsibility” (2005:332). While in this context the children are not sent back but left behind, in both situations the children are cared for by female extended kin, who see their motherly role as a “cultural expectation of familial cooperation” (Ibid. 115). For example, Caroline, looking after her own grandchild, remarked that her labour “should be reciprocated with both love and money” (Gamburd 2000:207). The basis of the contract, which concerns trust and reciprocity, is undermined if migrant parents do not reciprocate the gesture of their kin members through remittances and other expressions of gratitude. The foster parents noted that parents should know that once they bring their children for fostering it becomes a ‘challenge’ -*oye asudi* - which foster parents have to deal with and its worth should be recognized. Baldassar et al. (2007) have noted that financial support allows foster parents to provide personal care which migrants cannot perform due to geographical distance.

Parrenas identifies three types of care in the reproduction of the family; moral, emotional, and material care (2001:117). Foster parents play an important role in moral care as they ensure that the children learn respect and ‘discipline’ in the Ghanaian context and become ‘responsible’ citizens. At the same time they ensure that the children fully benefit from the material care provided by parents. In the performance of emotional care, study findings show that both foster parents and mothers especially contribute to the expression of warmth and affection to the children across the social space. The transnational practice of fostering is a complex process and care-giving of migrant children cuts across the social field as both parents and their foster surrogates contribute to the support systems and share the process of care-giving to the children. Patriarchal norms are however reinforced as both women and men across the transnational divide continue to ‘do gender’. Gender relations while they may seemingly be reconfigured in the absence of other children abroad, are not reconfigured in the fostering process as migrant parents and foster parents subscribe to gender norms and values. Ethnographic observations have identified that foster parents trained boys and girls into stereotypical gender roles. The fostering of child-care promotes and strengthens extended kin ties and has implications for the nature of parenting, gender relations and children’s development.

Foster parents confirmed that children are mostly sent back abroad when they reach a terminal or transition stage of the education cycle. This could be when they are to begin primary school or after, junior high school or secondary school. They are expected to join in at the next stage when they return to London. In recent times it is becoming more difficult to find places in schools for children who return to UK because there are laws determining parental obligation and requirements about school attendance. The educational system in London therefore influences the Ghanaian space in determining the period of stay of the child(ren) in Ghana. Most foster parents thought fostering was a good strategy because children would be trained for some time to get to know the Ghanaian way of life before returning. An important issue raised was that they had to know their family members and learn their mother tongue which they could not perfect in London. A 47-year-old female respondent added, “The children also learn about the sense of belongingness, communal life and filial piety.” A 54-year-old male foster parent summed it up by

rationalizing that it was no different from an exchange programme and the benefits were numerous.

8.5 Growing up in transnational families

This section explores familial relations and arrangements in transnational fosterage from the perspective of young adult children's interpretations of transnational family life. Viruell-Fuentes (2006) has observed that children's views and voices have not yet been well reflected. The children concerned here ranged from 12 to 21 years, had been sent back to urban southern Ghana between infancy and their teenage years and were currently in transnational households. The case history below involves intergenerational relations between a 59-year-old migrant parent and the 21 year old son who has been sent back to Ghana, and sets the stage for examining some of the dynamics surrounding transnational fosterage as a migrant strategy.

Mr. Kwao, the father of this family arrived in London in the early 1990s as a labour migrant, the wife joining later and subsequently the children. Mr. Kwao is now a bus driver and the mother works as a retail clerk. Apart from these jobs they do additional cleaning jobs whenever possible. The parents mentioned that they were staying in a working class community in London, and were hardly ever home. The parents' desire however is for their children to attain socioeconomic mobility in order to surpass them in educational achievements and also in the labour market. The son, explains that when their father left them in Ghana, discipline started to deteriorate because the mother was always busy working to support them. The indication is that at the time the man was settling down so he could not send remittances often, and their mother had to work extra hard. She left when the father had legalized his stay and they were left with their grandparents who were by then old, almost 70 years. According to the son, though, they were in a family house and they were fed and everybody helped them; no particular person was responsible for them. The grandfather died before they joined their parents; the boy was by then 12 years and his sister was 10. He complained that though the father has stated that he had travelled because he wanted to make their future bright, and that he now understands it, psychologically they did not have much emotional care in their absence. So they apparently arrived in London as very distressed children. Their parents after their arrival continued to work round the clock without paying much attention to them. Though the father explained that they needed to work to support them and the extended family, unfortunately they could not reach an agreement in negotiating paid and unpaid work. The boy's expectations about abroad were also fanciful and consequently not met; as he said, "I thought I would be walking on gold". It was in that context that the boy joined a gang with other ethnic minorities. He was hanging out in the parks, on drugs and picked up a youth culture typical of the marginalised youth where schooling is undervalued. This led to several intergenerational conflicts, which finally led to him being returned to Ghana. From the boy's perspective they were deprived of parental care, first in Ghana, then in London, and this provided him with the latitude to make his own type of friends and thereby ruined a major part of his life. He is picking up the pieces in Ghana. The father's view is that the migrant environment is too hostile for ethnic minorities and the school and social system did not allow parents to discipline their children. The girl had been sent to Ghana earlier and she spent three years in Ghana, and according to her father she has transformed upon her return.

The gentleman, Mr. Kwao was interviewed in London and subsequently arranged for the son to be interviewed in urban southern Ghana while performing his transnational gender duty as a father visiting the son, and requested to be part of the interview with the consent of the son.

Son: My parents did not take their time to watch my movements ...now they wish to transform me.... They are providing very much for my upkeep here in Ghana and I am comfortable, my foster parents are good....Mainly, I think parents should give the child an insight as to the best behaviour which could lead to success. But unfortunately, the parents are stressed, you work all day, and do evening cleaning in addition, and when you return your son is not in the house. It is very late...you are aware that if you discipline him he would call the Police. He comes back and you are shouting and your son has been taught in school that if ...he knows something is about to go wrong he should walk out, not to irritate the father. In our Ghanaian society the parent will take it that you have walked out on him/her. So the clash starts, your parents would close the door that they would not allow you in the house again, wherever you know go. This is my unfortunate story.

Father: They have been told at school that they can report parents. Fortunately in Ghana...If you misbehave you will be punished, but I concede that sometimes the pressure is too much in London... there is too much freedom there.

Child: Do parents sit down and ask themselves whether they are being good parents?

Father: ...when we were in Ghana he was an 'angel', he would help at home. Now in London... he is walking around parks with other teenagers and no direction. ...Peer pressure and too much individual life. I think it is the society It is not the child or the parent.

Child: If they (parents) were there, they would have directed us. So I am back in Ghana and now I appreciate it but I have learnt it the difficult way. If you are an African you are an African, if you are a European, you are a European; we cannot mix the issues and that is where we the second generation are having a problem.

This is a situation of 'generational dissonance' (Portes and Rumbaut 1996), where the child is not acculturating to the expectations of the parents. The dialogue above is a typical illustration of the study findings in London, and epitomizes the interrelationships between patriarchal gender ideologies, structural factors (dislocations) and intergenerational differences which coalesce to influence the fosterage decision. The social space could not provide a conducive atmosphere for the child's development; the parents concede they were both doing two jobs, which undermined care provision for children. Because he is likely to experience downward assimilation and the parents' desire for 'intergenerational mobility' (Portes and Zhou 1993: 83) has been jeopardized, they decide to send him to Ghana to learn about his cultural heritage and be 'disciplined.' This is not different from the findings on Haitian and Black migrant children in the US (Waters 1994). Perlmann and Waldinger (1996) have noted a similar phenomenon they have termed "the second generation revolt" with very similar underlying factors as those found with some Ghanaian children in

London, such as declining economic opportunities, discrimination and downward mobility. While Haller and Landolt note that efforts by parents to send children “‘home’ to be disciplined may backfire” (2005:1190), my findings have not supported this assertion, though the probability cannot be ruled out.

I found out from the children whether they knew why they had been sent to Ghana. They provided various reasons for their relocation such as: “to learn to be more independent”; “to be disciplined”; “to learn the Ghanaian culture”; “to learn the Ghanaian language”; “to have a balanced life”; “to learn a sense of who I am”; “to learn to appreciate things and not take things for granted”; “to be studious”. Some also expressed the need for them to know their root, indicating “this is where my father comes from so it is good to come and know here,” and others believe that it is their ‘home’. A 14-year-old male respondent noted, “they wanted me to be bilingual.... My grades were low and my mum said they wanted me to see the difference between British life and Ghanaian culture”.

It was not every child who knew that he/she was being sent away and therefore had the opportunity to know the reason. An 18 year old female respondent reported,

Initially they did not tell me anything. Later they said they wanted me to learn new things, to be independent and to change my character. Actually they tricked me, they told me I was going for holidays in US. I felt very angry because they told me a lie..., but now you know I am like used to it. (Laughs) I realised they thought I was not going the way they wanted me to grow up, and they wanted to help me to become ‘cool’. They told me that in London I was not learning and disciplined.

Having lived for some time abroad, settling down is a major problem for most young children who are sent to Ghana. It appeared easier for boys than girls to settle down. According to the children they are socialized into gender specific roles within the households, where they are taught their role expectations by household chores that they perform. The boys for instance are trained to recognise themselves as household heads responsible for taking major decisions and to be assertive. For instance, when foster parents leave the house they tell the boys to take charge of the house. Girls however learn domestic skills to become homemakers and are responsible for looking after their siblings, washing, cooking and house chores generally. Most of the girls suggested that boys did not do much, most just get up in the morning and brush their teeth and do not have much to do.

Since some of the girls were not performing the new chores in London, they found it tough trying to settle down (see section 4.2.1). A 16-year-old female respondent confirmed, “I was lazy, but now I am used to it that every woman needs to do chores. In London what I used to do is eat, sleep, eat, sleep and watch television.” This socialization process however has implications for the second generation, reinforcing patriarchal gender ideologies by teaching children their distinct roles, because they may be carried forward in adult life on their return to London.

Other factors affected their settling. As a 16-year-old male respondent remarked,

I was not having any friends and everyone was behaving like ‘you do not come from Ghana’. They laugh at you that you do not know anything; it does not make you happy. I also did not like the food here.

The fact that they did not know certain aspects of Ghanaian culture became a predicament for them and did not make settling easier. Some did not know how they were going to settle down without their parents. Others were frustrated that they had to change their accent because they were laughed at in class.

The young adults confirmed that their parents called them through their foster parents though most felt it was not as often as they wished. Those who were older received the calls themselves since they had their own mobile phones. Their allowance was insufficient to enable them buy credit to call London often. They therefore relied on their parents calling. They also mentioned that they sometimes used the internet. Their inability to call, especially due to insufficient funds, strains intergenerational relations and shows the ‘power–geometry’ (Massey 1994) inherent in the transnational social fields, placing the young adults at the receiving end. They also received parcels, sometimes of canned foods, mobile phones, and clothing through the door-to-door parcel services from London. On the other hand, they conceded that they hardly sent anything to their parents but sometimes send souvenirs to their friends. They were embedded in the transnational social field and demonstrating ‘ways of being’ through their transnational practices (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004:1010). This enabled them to stay connected to family and friends and achieve

intimacy. My findings indicate that it is 'quality time' for both the foster parents and the youth.

All the sent-back children confirmed that discipline is more emphasised in Ghana than in London, and foster parents make it a point to constantly remind them to be disciplined because it is vital to success in life. They considered that the culture in Ghana made them more disciplined. A 19-year-old boy commented,

Ghanaians do not tolerate indiscipline. You cannot talk back when a grown up or elder is talking. In London you could respond back. Here, you need right manners, need to work hard, need to respect your elders etc. You have to be a good kid. Nothing lies low in Ghana. If anything happens everybody in the family will hear and the elders would come and talk to you.

Though they liked London, in terms of discipline, they thought Ghana was better and suggested that the discipline in London has to be improved. According to them too many children were 'freewheelers' in London, with no manners and did not act responsibly. This 17-year-old female respondent noted,

In UK you can do everything but I prefer Ghana. They apply sanctions on you, it makes you more disciplined and you have to be obedient, there is too much freedom in London.

They attributed the discipline to the fact that teachers, parents and other relatives could both advise and spank you if you misbehaved. They believed that the restrictions on the power of teachers in London made the difference. They agreed that though some parents in London tried, they could not go far enough due to restraints from social services and the police. The young adults ascribed the change to the fact that there is more competition in Ghanaian schools and everybody wants to excel so they are also pushed to learn hard. According to them, in London if you were tired in class and you felt you have had enough you could just get up and leave the class. This they said they have not seen happen in Ghana. As this 16-year-old male respondent reiterates;

In London, I was not that serious, because the competition was not so much. But in Ghana if you get up to say something in class and you do not get it right they will laugh... So here you have to be always prepared for class.

They also attributed their success in the education system to the boarding schools which some of them were attending. The boarding schools taught them vital life skills so that by

the time they complete they will know the rudiments of life, including tidying up themselves by washing, ironing, scrubbing and others. However, due to the chores they had to perform like scrubbing, weeding and cleaning some did not like the boarding schools.

On the other hand, some found the discipline too stern as suggested by this 16 year old boy; “In London if they beat us we can report to the Police and they will come. So there the children have an advantage. I wish to return”. They tried to compare the punishment meted out to them in London to that in Ghana to buttress the point that what happened in London was less harsh. In London they explained that you would be grounded and not go out or visit friends. Your pocket money could also be reduced for misbehaviour. Some preferred it to weeding but also agreed it was less effective. While they agreed that it was a good thing and had straightened them up, they also thought that it was sometimes overused, for instance, where the whole class was punished for one person’s misbehaviour. Others also said the discipline made children fear their parents and teachers. They felt parents should be their friends and they should not fear them. Paradoxically, several of the children mentioned that they will pursue this strategy in future as this statement from a 16-year-old male respondent illustrates:

They are good at advising you to behave and be a responsible person. If I become a parent in London and have the opportunity I would bring up my children here before sending them back to London.

This seems to refute the assumption that transnationalism is ephemeral and does not continue beyond the first generation.

Most of the young people said that relocating to urban southern Ghana had made an impact on their lives. They indicated that they would advise their friends when they go back to London. They believed their parents would be proud of them when they returned because they would be more respectful, thoughtful and very helpful at home. In addition they are now taking their studies more seriously. They attributed their academic performance since relocating to Ghana to the environment, teachers and discipline. They blamed their lack of seriousness in London to computer games and the fact that they were not actually bothered. This can be likened to Zhou’s (1997) identification of strong anti-intellectualism and dislike

of learning among ethnic minority groups in the United States. It is worth mentioning that not all ethnic minorities in London performed badly in schools. Wilson et al. (2006) show that Indian and Chinese ethnic students perform better than their white contemporaries.

To provide a more robust understanding of transnational fosterage it was essential to listen to the children's views. In assessing their voices it must be recognised that children are active and competent agents, and knowledgeable informants in constructing their social world, and "are able to speak for themselves" (Hood et al. 1996:122) therefore their voices need to be listened to (Christensen and James 2000:7). Additionally, I observed interactions and employed informal conversations with teachers and foster parents who substantiated that these children had adjusted in behaviour from when they first arrived from London. Logistical and time constraints prevented interviews with children who had not been fostered, in London. Future research could investigate them, and also evaluate the second generation who have returned to London to ascertain the impact on their lives through their level of assimilation and social mobility.

The fostered children explained that they had learnt a lot of things about Ghanaian culture and how children should behave. They had learnt rudiments of good manners and social decorum: not to talk back to people, not to use the left hand when giving or receiving items, to work hard, not to swear and the importance of their family. They explained that whatever they do outside the home would affect their families' reputation. The girls mentioned that their grandmothers teach them what they need to know, especially about cooking and keeping themselves neat. Finally, this 18-year-old female respondent confirmed,

I am now really independent I can do things without any help. It is like 'time and tide waits for no man', at first I used to waste time for dressing and things like that, but now I learn more. I have learnt culture... you can't be Ghanaian and not know about your culture.

They argued that they could speak the language fluently and embraced a sense of belonging and pride in their ethnic identity. Portes (1999) submits that cultural transnationalism leads to the realisation of self-worth. One means of identification with any ethnic group is the ability to understand and be competent in the language. They were therefore happy that they could speak the language more fluently. The young adults further noted that they have

gained more personal autonomy since they arrived in Ghana. They no longer have to expect others to do things for them, but do things on their own.

The young adults argued that they are dual nationals but Ghanaians first, and that their British identity derives from the fact that they were born in Britain or that their parents have British passports. As noted by this 17-year-old female respondent;

I have both passports and I consider myself as dual citizen. Well since my parents come from Ghana and when I look at my colour I know I am Ghanaian. I have British passport because I was born there. My identity does not bother me because there is some status to have a British passport in Ghana and that it is nice to be both.

At their young ages they were ready to obtain the benefits from both statuses. Baldassar (2001) has noted that the visit 'home' helps to validate a person's ethnic identity. These young adults therefore saw their sending back as an opportunity to build bonds with their extended families and 'home' youth. Viruell-Fuentes (2006) made similar findings among Mexicans in the U.S. It also served to reinforce their claim to dual nationality which they considered an asset. Their desire was to eventually enjoy the best of both worlds, depending on which is more useful at the time. This confirms the assertion by Nowicka (2006) that the advantages of duality could be a resource for social, financial and cultural capital. This 19-year-old male respondent asserted, "I have dual citizenship so I consider myself both. When in Ghana I consider myself Ghanaian and when in UK I consider myself British". They stated ironically that when "I am in Ghana, I miss London and when I get to London, I miss Ghana". These observations reinforced the contention of the study that transnational practices may not disappear, but may be sustained by the second generation with the ageing of the first generation. Echoing Levitt and Glick Schiller, I argue that these second generation Ghanaian children, through their presence in Ghana, have engaged in transnational ways of being and identified with a way of belonging which suggests that they are likely to act in a transnational way in the future (2004:1011).

They said they were stunned that Ghanaians also called them '*obroni*' just as they called a white person, because of their accent. In some ways they are perceived as 'different' both in London and in Ghana. They are aware that a lot of Ghanaians would be proud to have their opportunity, so they are not disturbed. While transnationalism offered them the

opportunity to belong it also showed difference, highlighting the importance of language as an element of ethnic identity. They stated that they are considered as the ‘other’ in London and therefore they needed to find a sense of their ethnic belonging and their parents always reminded them to negotiate this tension. A 20-year-old female confronted this:

I don’t look British, do I? The British will not accept me as British although I was born and bred there and I have a British passport. I am black and it makes no sense that I am British.

This corroborates Nowicka’s assertion that “one of the most important factors which determine the choice of identity type is the fact that one is perceived as physically different and the degree to which he/she is aware of it” (2006:1076). Being aware of their phenotypical characteristics, that they are black, they do not pretend to be British but accept that identity on the basis that it provides them opportunities as ‘dual citizens’. As they traverse the transnational social space there may be tensions between allegiance and attachment with regards to both social spaces, as a 16-year-old female respondent concluded; “It was quite complicated at first but now I am managing”.

The study found that the pain of separation affected foster children, who were constantly concerned about their parents and siblings and were psychologically distraught. They maintained that as children they needed the support, love and attention of their parents but this was not forthcoming physically, apart from the periodic visits. The inability of foster children to interact with their parents physically caused a loss of familiarity, which affects intergenerational relations. While parents thought they were doing their best through transnational communication and visits, some of the children thought otherwise, though others acknowledged that they understood their parents’ position. Asked whether they are happy in Ghana, some said “no”. They said they would like to go back. A 15-year-old respondent commented,

I want to go back. I want to go and write the GCSE there. I have been informed by a cousin that now that I am in Ghana if I go back, I might not be accepted to go to school there.

The impression perhaps erroneous is that children have this fear at the back of their mind, so without the reassurances it takes an emotional toll on them. A 16-year-old girl also described her problem: “there is no bond between me and my parents, we just talk on the phone, they do not have time to come and see us. We are far apart. It strengthens the bond

when you are together”. Parrenas (2001) confirms that children continue to be bitter when separated from their parents. Observations in the field showed that despite the fact that parents call, the young adults think they have a familial obligation to visit; this perception Urry notes is an “expectation of (physical) presence and attention”(2003:163). Those whose parents visit confirm that there is more bonding between them and their parents, but for them too “life in London is more enjoyable”. They confirm that mothers do call often, but to them communication alone cannot solve their emotional stress.

Responding about their stay with foster parents, the majority offered a good opinion of the foster parents. A 16-year-old female respondent mentioned,

Here they treat me like a ‘royalty’- ‘*abrokyire child*’ (born abroad) and they try to do everything for me. I sometimes feel like I am ‘locked up here’. They give me respect and that thing I do not like it, they should just treat me like who I am.

This is in contrast to the finding of Ainsworth (1992) that foster children in Cote D’Ivoire were overburdened with household chores. Respondents indicated that their foster parents have accepted them as part of their family, and they are as free with them as with their parents, “He is just like my father; he is my father’s brother. I like him he is a good father; he doesn’t threaten me in any way”. Because the children know they are no longer staying with their parents, they also make great efforts to satisfy their foster parents so that there are no conflicts. They mentioned that their foster parents had a lot of time for them unlike their parents, who did not have time. This is confirmed by a 16 year old respondent; “in UK parents do not have time though they sometimes make up for it during holidays”. However, according to them foster parents emphasis was placed on education and their catchphrase is “learn, learn, work and learn”. It was evident from my findings, as also attested to by Gamburd (2000) that extended families took a lot of pressure off migrant families and improved family relations by sustaining transnational social fields.

Transnational fosterage provides challenges to both parents and young adults. Despite efforts by parents to cater for their siblings in Ghana across the transnational social space through practices such as visiting, communication and remittances there are intergenerational differences. This confirms the claim by Wolf (2002) that families unite and at the same time create tensions. Field observations show that these conflicts are

prompted by the emotional strains the youth are going through and their desire to be together. A major point of contention is that they do not see why parents failed to instil discipline in them back in London. Others also believe that learning Ghanaian culture should not be restricted to returning to Ghana. Another point of contention was the fact that most did not know when they would return. The situation was made more complex by the deceitful strategy parents adopted in sending them to Ghana. Though most of them preferred Ghana so far as discipline and culture was concerned, most thought they had had enough so they should be allowed to go back to London. Orellana et al. (2001) have argued that 'growing up' and 'raising' a child develops into a complex process when the adult-child relations becomes embedded in the transnational social fields. The second generation do not have the same experiences as their parents and so do not share the same world-view, and parents desire to bridge this gap. This complex situation needs to be developed and groomed throughout the transnational process. Parents confirm that changes do occur and therefore they think fostering is in the interest of the children and young adults. A 49-year-old male respondent said that when her daughter returned after three years in urban southern Ghana,

All the teachers kept asking what I did to her. She is quiet, she is studious.... She was a 'cry baby'. There are differences between my two girls. The one who went to Ghana is quiet and solemn and the other is volatile and doesn't want to know about anything.

A 42-year-old female migrant also concluded that; "they change totally, it is an investment to send your children to Ghana." Parents are therefore convinced that sending the children and youth to Ghana does have benefits. To avoid generational conflicts however there is a need for them to prepare the children's mind before they are sent and also reinforce the bridges of contacts.

Many of the young adults interviewed saw the relocation as a worthwhile exercise, though a few did not see it as transformatory. The contention of the few was that, "there is no guarantee that when they go back they will turn out better." The empirical evidence did not support this. A proponent of this argument, who himself had benefitted from transnational fostering for three years and was in Ghana for holidays at the time of my fieldwork, stated in an informal discussion, "it was useful for me and I believe others should also come. But then if you go back there you could readjust back to that life". The question then would be

why he did not readjust but has seen the transnational process as beneficial. Transnational fosterage therefore provides an avenue for the second and subsequent generations to rediscover themselves in a transnational social space which provides them the opportunity to lead ‘dual lives.’

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how transnational fosterage relationships function in migrant families and kinship networks, taking note of their home and transnational activities. The transnational perspective is a heuristic tool for understanding the embeddedness of migrant families in a web of relationships, interconnected with kin networks across temporal and spatial distances in transnational social fields. The decision to foster children is based on factors including the challenges migrants face due to inequalities and dislocations in the environment (see Chapter six; Middleton et al. 2005, Clark and Drinkwater 2007). The inability to renegotiate patriarchal gender roles also triggers the strategic adoption of transnational fostering with kinship members in the home country while they concentrate on the labour market abroad. The fostering process reorganizes and transforms ideas, services, practices and resources through transnational social fields to help to “reinforce self-images and collective solidarities,” (Portes 1999: 472) preparing the second generation to self-effectively cope with the complex, ‘hostile’ and difficult host social environment. The young adults in this study confirm that despite emotional insecurities of being fostered, they have developed ‘weapons’ (social values and behavioural standards) in Ghana with which to ‘battle’ their return to forestall downward assimilation and gain social mobility in London. Transnationalism therefore seems to become a means to successful incorporation; the approach I term the ‘segmented transnational strategy’ may enable young adults to acculturate and withdraw from youth cultures, underclass and strive for upward mobility when they return. A more longitudinal study may substantiate this point.

The caregiving practices of foster parents reinforce patriarchal gender ideologies and children are socialised into these. Gendered expectations and roles are manifest in transnational activities on a daily basis across the nation states to accomplish the socialisation of the second generation. Gender ideologies and relations are renegotiated by parents in the absence of children in the destination country. However, the existing

inequalities in London may be amplified since the adult youth may be reinforced to patriarchal gender norms in the Ghanaian context. This study clearly found that young adults confirmed the transmission of Ghanaian cultural norms, attitudes, social values and behavioural standards. While some were gender specific, others like being disciplined, respect for elders and work ethics, were more general, with the children professing that they have found their 'sojourn' in Ghana quite beneficial. Inequalities of class, ethnicity, migrant status are all at play, cross cut by gender, which plays a role in the fostering decision. The power relations inherent in the transnational social fields are evident as children are placed in subordinate positions, doubly dependent on both biological parents and their surrogates.

This study suggests that the young adults are likely to sustain transnational ties built through their attachment to their home country and that there may be no generational limitations from this experience. The findings contradict the assertion of scholars such as Kivisto (2001) and Haller and Landolt (2005) who question the sustainability of bifocality by the second generation. In so far as the difficult conditions of the destination country's labour market constrain migrants from performing the gender division of labour, their children would be sent back for fosterage. If migrants continue to be disadvantaged into a downward spiral as "downtrodden minority" (Portes 1999); they will seek redemption from their origin countries, where they hope to find the 'spiritual resources' to bring up their children with a more positive outlook on life. These transnational children, strengthened by the sense of worth and belonging they gain from their home environment, will pursue transnational activities and sustain the transnational social fields with a view of safeguarding their identity and ultimately that of their offspring. My findings support the observation by Faist (2000: 201) that transnational activities should be "seen in the context of generational succession" and with Vertovec (2004b), I hypothesise that those who have experienced a transnational way of being may exploit it in the future.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions

The central focus of this study is gender and migration, and the aim of the thesis has been to explore the negotiations of gender relations among Ghanaian women and men migrants, examining their migration trajectories, and considering their motivations to migrate, their settlement and transnational activities. Due to movement to a different social space and the interrelationship with other social differentials, migrants are presented with both opportunities and constraints. These have led to modifications in gender ideologies and relations, leading to losses and gains and impacting migrant and non-migrant lives differently and relationally.

Using an empirical and qualitative approach, the study has drawn upon ethnographic material gained from Ghanaians in London and urban southern Ghana. In order to grasp the complexities of the production and reproduction spheres in the origin and host country social spaces, concepts such as patriarchy, empowerment, cooperative-conflicts and dislocations has been applied. The study shows that children in urban southern Ghana continue to be socialised by sex-typed categories. Patriarchal hierarchical structures in Ghana also appear largely intact, though women often contribute in important ways to the household economy. Patriarchal bargains however are slowly altering gender relations especially among the younger generation in urban southern Ghana, in a 'lagged adaptation' mode. Due to changes in socio-economic circumstances, and the relative weakening of gender ideologies both women and men now adopt migration as an individual or a family strategy.

I argue that gender ideologies, the labour market, the welfare state, host and origin country environment(s), social differentials and individual values all converge to reorganise gender relations in London. The study found that constraints and opportunities in the host country have transformed gender relations to a more egalitarian relationship. This is because women are employed and earning commensurate wages to those of men, and contributing part of their income to household costs. Additionally, changes are occurring in traditional gender orientations of both women and men leading to gender equalities. Based on the

increased access to resources and awareness of their opportunities due to migration, women possess autonomy to make life choices and participate in household decision-making, subsequently levelling gender inequalities. The patriarchal authority of Ghanaian men seems to have been challenged due to the subordinate position they find themselves in as migrants. Transnational activities are gendered for both migrants and non-migrants. However, partners left-behind and children sent back are disadvantaged in gendered power relations.

Moving beyond studies concentrated in migration streams' involving North America, Latin America and Asia, this thesis adds to the burgeoning literature exploring gender relations involving Africa and Europe. It complements recent scholarship on gender and migration by defining a case of the degree of change in patriarchy and gender asymmetries (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, Espiritu 1999, Menjivar 1999, Pessar 1999; Kofman et al. 2000; Bryceson and Vuorela 2002). It contributes to the debate regarding the decline of the sole male breadwinner concept (Gerson 2002; White and Rogers 2000, Crompton 1999c), and brings new insights into research on gender in migration studies.

9.1 Patriarchy: reality or illusion in urban southern Ghana?

This study has taken the view, in agreement with the socialist feminists that the relations of economic production or capitalism and patriarchy are interrelated and therefore should be analysed from that perspective since they "influence and affect each other" (Moore 1988:48). The evidence from this study shows that both economic relations and patriarchy impinge on gender relations. The socialisation system in urban southern Ghana appears to continue to inculcate in children gender stereotypes based on the expectations and values linked with being female or male. Patriarchy is therefore reinforced as it structures traditional role expectations and behaviour for boys and girls, relegating girls to the domestic sphere of nurturing. Invariably, this influences women's relationship to the mode of production as they are marginalised in the labour market by low levels of education, job segregation and ideologies which recognise their role only as 'mothers' in urban southern Ghana.

The study demonstrated that intra-household bargaining processes and ‘bargaining positions’ (Sen 1990) are reinforced or renegotiated by the proportions that the woman, man or both contribute for household expenditure. Women are further marginalised when gender ideologies recognise the man as the breadwinner and head of household. Both men and women acknowledge the patriarchal gender order recognising the man as the head of household, though in reality women are contributing to household financial expenditure. Economic factors determine gender inequalities, in combination with personal, cultural, social dimensions as well as legislative influences. Some women however earn an income but are unwilling to contribute to the household budget, reinforcing male domination over women in the household. Income should be backed by a change in gender orientations to lead to equality in power and decision-making. Labour market participation alone may not lead to gender equality but should be backed by almost equal contributions to household expenditure. Additionally, changes in gender orientations will lead to equality in decision-making. This reinforces Lockwood’s (2009) assertion that gender ideologies and family structures obscure women’s contributions and therefore deny them the authority and status they deserve. Progress in gender equality will depend on women contributing equally in household financial management and changes in the personal, ideological and cultural dimensions of their lives.

Housework and childcare are still seen as ‘women’s work.’ They do ‘scheduled housework’; men ‘occasional housework’ less frequently performed, allowing flexibility. Strains on families ensue as women increasingly go out to work and institutional processes do not seem to have kept pace reducing gender inequalities in the reproductive sphere. While scholars like Coltrane (2000) argue that dual-earner couples may share more household tasks, the evidence of this study shows that it is a necessary condition but may not be a sufficient reason. This is because the men continue to be recognised as breadwinners and household heads in Ghana. The ‘household head’ connotes a “political position” that holds power irrespective of who is the breadwinner. Gender ideologies, availability of time, availability of kin relations, and parents work hours affected the determination of allocation of domestic tasks.

The study further showed that despite the increased involvement of women in the public sphere, and their contributions to the household, the man still largely maintains dominance over decision-making and possesses greater authority in the households with the final say in the majority of decisions. Tacit power relations demonstrate that women are not just passive participants. Some women through education and money are able to exercise their relative power and demonstrate their independence though they remain in a minority. Especially among the younger generation in urban southern Ghana, the position of head of household is becoming partly symbolic as both partners strive for gender equality. Apart from economic power there are other factors such as education, religion, socialisation, and ideologies all at play in subordinating women in society and therefore decision-making should be seen in its complexity within wider social relations and historical contexts.

Male domination and female subordination seems to be a reality in Ghana among the urban working- and middle-class participants who I investigated in urban southern Ghana. Despite some challenges to patriarchy the gender hierarchical order persists, though there are subtle differences. The situation may well differ in the rural areas which I did not investigate. Greater equality in households may largely depend on breaking traditional norms of the man as breadwinner and household head, and achieving gender equity in earning capacity. The evidence from the study points to continuity as well as change in gender relations but suggests that the gender hegemony is still somewhat male biased leading to 'patriarchal dividends' (Connell 2000a) for men. While women's expectations for equality are rising, it still remains an illusion.

9.2 Changing Women, Changing Men: Ghanaian migrants in London

Ghanaian women exhibited their sense of agency in London even against the contestations of men by engaging in the labour market. Both women and men ended up in the same labour market niches leaving men at a greater disadvantage. The economic relations of production have undermined the males' breadwinner position, and caused women through the patriarchal bargain to question the legitimacy of male domination. Ghanaian households in London have become less patriarchal with migrant men no longer holding the dominant position in household decision-making. The position of the male as household head and breadwinner is undermined by several factors including: the host country practices of

egalitarianism; the impact of women's involvement in paid work; their contributions to household expenditure; transformations in gender ideologies; practical life situations; the marginalization of men in the labour market based on structural arrangements and these in turn are affected by social differences of race/ethnicity, nationality, and legal status leading to changes in gender relations in the diaspora.

Both women and men achieve financial independence from migration, a necessary step to achieving gender equality. The changes arising from migration are both complex and contradictory, and the evidence shows that though some men are disempowered in London, most men seem to gain empowerment: leading a more fulfilling life as their partners assist them in breadwinning, and spending quality time with their children, 'good parenting'. Women also gain in empowerment, being involved in decision-making and helped by men in domestic tasks. Both women and men negotiate gender relations in various ways while social differences impinge on their gender identity. Women tend to do better than the men. The men seem to perceive that they have been emasculated in the public and the private sphere. The labour market did not provide commensurate changes for women: able to gain employment and access to resources, provisions in the labour market such as race, discrimination, gender segregation limit their hierarchical position on the occupational ladder, potentially undermining gains made in the household.

Patriarchal bargains cause Ghanaian women in the diaspora to enjoy more independence and autonomy, and to gain more egalitarian relationships than their contemporaries in urban southern Ghana. Men now engage in house work and childcare; women have also become co-breadwinners. Decision-making has become a joint venture. The study suggests transformations in gender relations as migrant men now carry out household tasks, shop, and care for their children, roles which they did not previously perform in Ghana. The study further found changes in women's roles as full time housewives, despite the lack of comprehensive provision of childcare for young children and infants. Ghanaian women in London are recognised as 'working mothers,' promoting the 'reserve army ideology,' however the women resist this subordinate position leading to the changes in the division of labour.

Migration challenges gender ideologies and norms, transforming them in complex and varied ways. Gender ideologies and roles constantly change in interactions in the migration context. There is continuity and change as both women and men ‘do gender’ in the diaspora. The present study has provided a fuller understanding of gender dynamics, indicating gains and losses for both women and men in their lived experiences.

9.2.1 Labour market/paid work

Because migrant men were concentrated in low-paying jobs and therefore could not fulfill their sole provider role and provide a decent standard of living for their families, their partners needed to enter the labour market to provide additional incomes for the family. Women negotiate using ‘patriarchal bargains’ to gain independence and participation in the public sphere and the involvement of men in the domestic sphere. Both women and men now work in comparable jobs where both receive similar pay. The migrant circumstances show that pay equity is an equalising factor in gender relations. The women pointed out that though they worked in Ghana they could not contribute as much to the household economy. However, their increased financial contributions in the household since migrating had impacted on their lives enabling them gain greater independence and self-confidence and leading to their participation in household decision making and also to their empowerment. Thus the engagement of women in employment is a necessary condition of equity, but not sufficient to lead to empowerment. For empowerment to be attained; women demonstrated that they needed to contribute part of their income to household maintenance; there should be transformations in gender ideologies; and larger cultural and socio-economic circumstances should provide the atmosphere conducive to the weakening of gender inequalities.

Due to the fact that men are now performing care work in the public sphere - in care homes, hospitals, educational institutions – they are able to translate the skills acquired to the private sphere in their homes as they find it easier to provide care for their own children. Based on the changes as a result of skills translated to the private sphere, they challenge the sexual division of labour (Beneria 2003:156). Migrant men’s perception of work and family has altered as they participate in jobs regarded as women’s in the labour market as well as

perform unpaid household tasks hitherto reserved for women in the domestic sphere, leading to more egalitarian patterns after migrating when women's labour substantially contributes to the household (Kelson and Delaet 1999).

9.2.2 Domestic Division of Labour

Men now share domestic work and child care. Most men accept the 'new deal' and are involved in major household tasks that they did not perform in Ghana. Caring responsibilities influence changes in work schedules and vice versa with impacts on the relative position of women and men: the involvement of men in reproduction for instance could precede the leveling of gender inequalities. The marginalised position of male migrants in the labour market has boosted their involvement in household tasks. The 'chicken model' as explained by Somerville that "men take a free ride and enjoy benefits that follow from the increased income [from the woman]...without contributing any more in terms of domestic (or paid) work" was not relevant to this study (2000:21). Due to declining social control of gender roles, women with egalitarian gender orientations achieve a more egalitarian division of housework, and this is true in the case of Ghanaian migrant women. Ghanaian women have succeeded to a large extent in negotiating the personal, ideological and social dimensions (Segal 1997), through the bargaining processes in the diaspora.

Analyses of decision-making patterns in the migration context have shown that entry into the labour market alone may not have an impact on decision-making dynamics. Additionally, the income gained should be contributed to household expenditure and other contextual factors such as change in gender orientation have to be acknowledged in household negotiations to increase the bargaining power of women. Significantly, women were found actively participating in the decision-making process in London, just as men were involved in household tasks. This was at variance with the findings in urban southern Ghana, where majority of Ghanaian men did not involve their partners in decision-making as illustrated in chapter 4. The participants in this study actively negotiated and discussed how to share housework and breadwinning. Pressures on the fallback position which combine to favour men as a group (Kabeer 2000) have been significantly undermined as

migrant women contribute equally to the household budget. The cultural representation of the head of household as a position connoting masculine identity and security has become merely symbolic, equal partnership based on consensus-building is now the medium determining gender dynamics in decision-making.

9.2.3 Welfare

Migrants view the welfare state as providing more opportunities for women, where men already affected by unemployment are unable to fulfill breadwinning. The involvement of the welfare state in domestic issues (Social Services, calling 999) strengthens the woman's 'fallback position' improving her bargaining power in the household. Fieldwork observations confirm anecdotes that institutions in the UK seem to favour the woman as principal caregiver. Most child benefit packages were given to women and I also found out that most council flats are in the name of women, who applied ostensibly as single mothers because the selection procedure was based on those with greatest needs and such individuals had greater advantages. A study by Goode et al. (1998) in Britain on distribution of income within families receiving benefits also found that women usually controlled family credit. While this policy reifies the hierarchical gender order by categorising women as 'mothers', it also undermines the men's patriarchal position. The welfare system provides mixed blessings because the family is recognised as having the primary responsibility for the provision of care. This policy undermines women's position in production, because of the gender division of labour in the household which sees their participation in the public sphere as secondary and therefore they are inevitably relegated to the domestic sphere to perform unpaid work. But on the other hand, in the case of Ghanaian migrants it led to bargaining around unpaid work to enable women to participate in paid work because the men's job alone could not meet the financial needs of the family. The UK welfare system is very present in both women's and men's lives, fashioning and conditioning their behavior and actions. Gender equality discourses in the host society, social services and police are construed as favouring women and disadvantaging men¹⁰ and leading to negotiations for egalitarian relationships, through joint decision-making and sharing domestic chores. Women have developed self-esteem and confidence from

¹⁰ These perceptions of political support from the courts and police for women led to the formation of 'fathers 4 justice' in 2002. Their aim is "for a fair, just, open and equitable system of family law." (Fathers4justice 2006)

environmental influences which favour egalitarianism and the feminist movement's promotion of equality discourses. Due to factors in the social and institutional context, women in London possess a comparative advantage in gender awareness in relation to women interviewed and observed in urban southern Ghana, and this has informed the bargaining position of Ghanaian women in London. This is echoed by other scholars who note that attitudes to gender roles have changed and the majority of Britons are flexible and do not necessarily subscribe to sex-role ideologies (Hakim 2003, and Crompton et al. 2003). This has impacted on Ghanaian migrants.

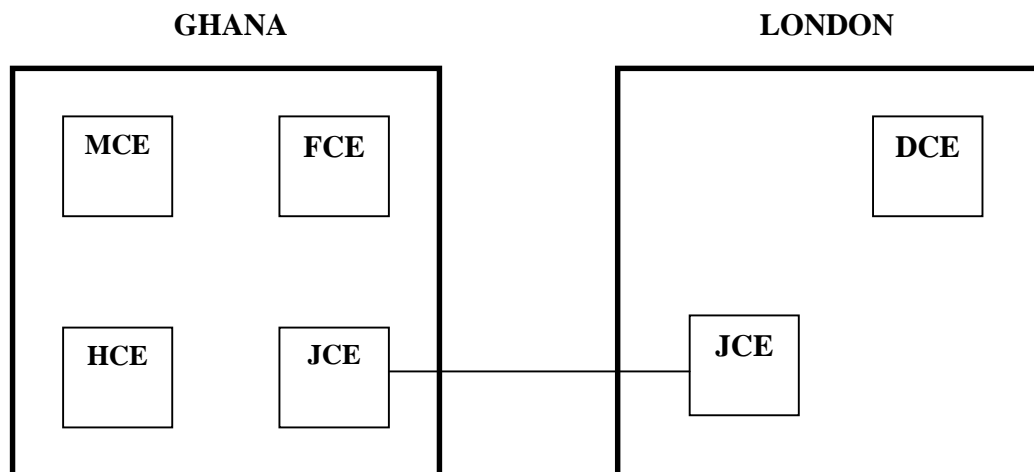
The flexibilisation, feminisation and restructuring of the London labour market and the incidence of social differences lead to innovative strategies by migrants to perform paid work, housework and childcare. Masculinity is not a "static place in a map of gender relations" (Hakim 2003:69) but socially constructed and adjustable depending on the situation. Despite the nuanced complexities characterizing the changes, where for instance some men object to the changes in their masculine roles, majority of both women and men accept that the patriarchal gender order has been dealt a blow. This study critiques other studies (Delamont 2001) which argue that both women and men in Britain have not changed much.

But how robust is this change; does it imply the 'end of patriarchy' (Castells 1997)? Women are becoming dual breadwinners and participating in decision-making. Men are also participating in housework and childcare and sharing breadwinning. At least in the private sphere it seems that the end of patriarchy is near. Hakim (2003) has noted that men would maintain their dominant positions if they are given precedence in the labour market. By implication if men's precedence in the labour market is not maintained their dominance would be weakened; this is the situation among migrants, as women may gain more prominence in the labour market and their 'fall back position' is strengthened. There has been an orientational change towards shared parenting among Ghanaian migrants. 'Transformations of women's work' and the 'transformations of women's consciousness' undermine the patriarchal family (Castells 1997), especially in respect of working class migrants. This is because of the marginalised positions they find themselves in, in the

labour market and the dislocations that they both encounter in the host country. This has led women to increasingly participate in the labour market and contribute to the household economy and also their increased sense of self and self-confidence gained and ability to negotiate have severely challenged the patriarchal gender order in the migration context. The external environment of the host country of migrants does exhibit some patriarchal characteristics. But then, it is the robustness of the migration context that assigns migrants to a common position, which undermines patriarchal dispositions. Evidence that these changes could be re-transformed on migrants' return home points to the difficulty in predicting with certainty the 'end of patriarchy' (Castells 1997). The conceptualising of gender both from the symbolic and sociological approaches enhanced the analysis and explanation of the everyday interactions of migrant experiences and actions. This is because both the cultural and ideological perceptions of gender and economic relations of production and their actual social relations informed the study. It has clarified the gap between gendered ideals and actions, and also the different positions of women and men. This study does not make a claim for all nationalities and classes, especially since it considered limited numbers from the professional classes. But it has shown that under certain conditions patriarchy can be undermined, providing a basis for further investigation into other categories of class, age, and nationality. While women's subordination may not have ended, so far 'private patriarchy' is being challenged (Walby 1990).

9.3 Breadwinning and financial decision-making at home and in the diaspora

Figure 1 below amalgamates the various household fiscal expenditure patterns identified in field work in urban southern Ghana (Chapter 4) and London (Chapter 5). Five approaches of organising money management were therefore found in this study. While three, the male contribution expenditure type (MCE); the hidden contribution expenditure type (HCE) and female contribution expenditure type (FCE) were specific to urban southern Ghana, the distinct contribution expenditure type (DCE) was also specific to London. The joint contribution expenditure type (JCE) was identified in both social spaces.

Fig. 1: Household Financial Expenditure Types**Key:**

MCE – Male Contribution Expenditure Type
HCE – Hidden Contribution Expenditure Type
FCE – Female Contribution Expenditure Type
JCE – Joint Contribution Expenditure Type
DCE – Distinct Contribution Expenditure Type

Source: Author's fieldwork

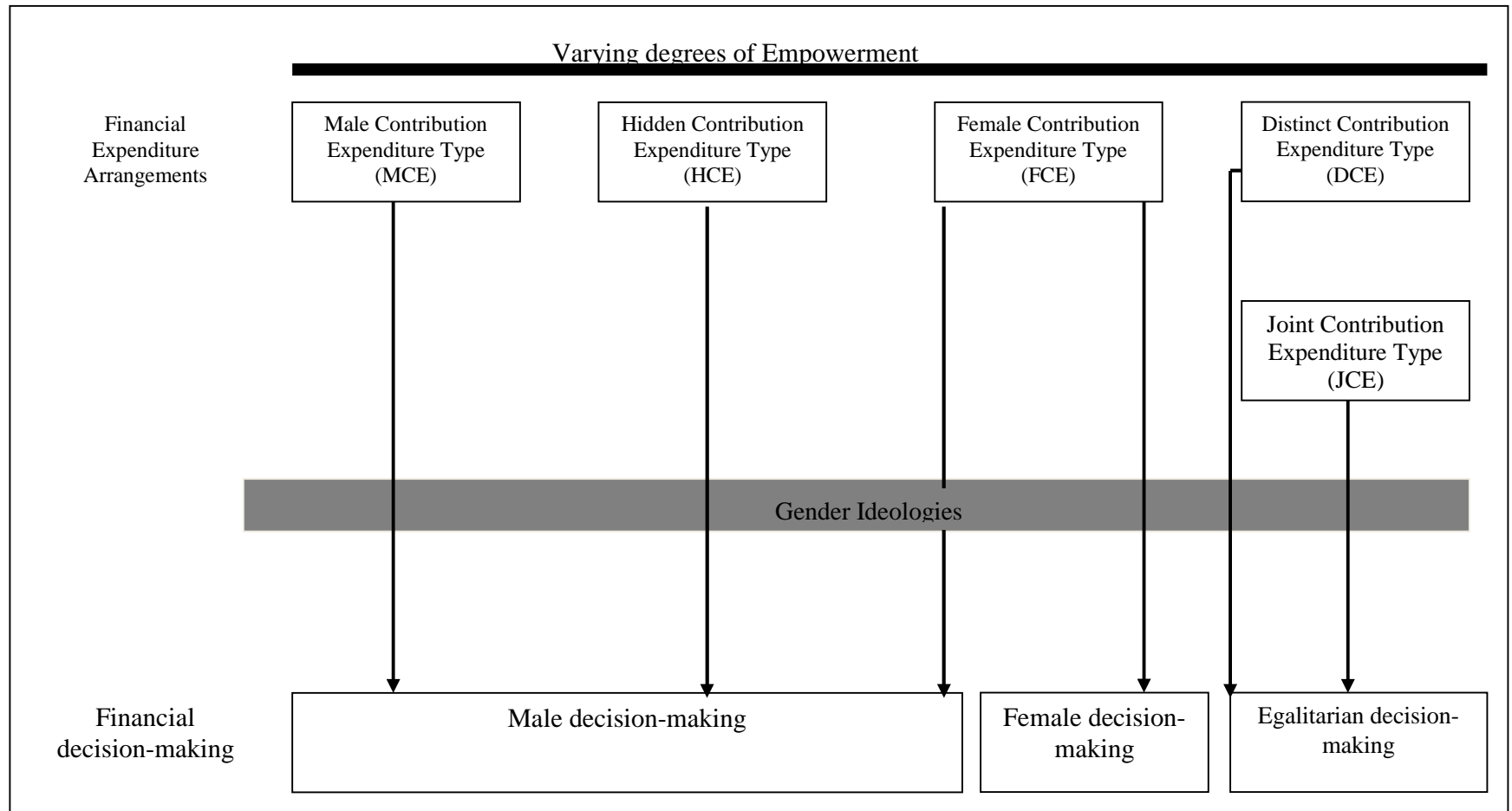
Figure 1 above shows the different expenditure patterns observed in both countries as well as those that were similarly found in the two field sites. While this figure sheds light on the expenditure patterns from my fieldwork I do not wish to imply that the patterns were only limited to the designated field site. Despite the fact that some variations of these typologies were identified in both social contexts; their fieldwork incidence was insignificant and therefore they were not given designations and classified in the typology. The JCE which involves both partners pooling resources with joint control and expenditure was found in both London and urban southern Ghana. The DCE which has each partner controlling and managing their income independently in separate pots, but selecting specific items of expenditure in the household was peculiar to London. The MCE whereby the man provides 'chop money' to the wife for housekeeping expenses, and the HCE which involves the man providing chop money with the woman 'silently' supplementing substantially with her own income due to its insufficiency were also observed in urban southern Ghana. Finally, the

FCE which was also prevalent in Ghana involved the woman being responsible for money management in the household either in the presence or absence of an adult male and could be regarded as a female headed household. The expenditure patterns found in each social context was influenced by the gender orientations of the individuals in the relationship, as well as the labour market, gender ideologies and educational and other external factors.

The findings from this study differ from Pahl's (1989) five categories of wage systems, based on different contextual factors as well as content and interpretation (see Fig. 2 below). While some are similar, others are not recorded by Pahl, such as the hidden contribution expenditure type. In much the same way, my fieldwork investigations did not identify Pahl's male whole wage system as part of the expenditure types. Vogler argues that there are two conflicting discourses about the management of money in the household (1998:701). The first discourse advocates that money should be shared equally in the household irrespective of who contributes, and identifies the household as a 'genderless' institution. The second is based on patriarchal structures and argues that the man is the main breadwinner and therefore should have power over money in the household. These two conflicting discourses have been identified by my study. This is demonstrated in Figure 2 below which compares Pahl's allocative systems with my findings.

FIG. 2: COMPARING PAHL'S ALLOCATIVE SYSTEM WITH AUTHOR'S HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE TYPES

EXPLANATION	PAHL'S (1989)	AUTHOR'S FINDINGS	EXPLANATION
Husband has sole responsibility to manage all household expenditure.	Male Whole wage system		Not established that male solely managed household expenditure.
Husband provides allowance to wife for housekeeping, involving part expenditure and he pays for other expenditure.	Housekeeping allowance	Male Contribution type	Similar; husband provides 'chop money' to wife for housekeeping, and then pays for other household expenditure.
Husband hands over pay cheque to wife for all household expenditure, with exception of his personal spending money.	Female whole wage system	Female Contribution	Differs; wife manages all household money as income earner and sole breadwinner; includes women headed households.
Not established.		Hidden contribution	Husband provides 'chop money' for expenditure but insufficient; wife supplements without husband's knowledge.
Both partners have access and responsibility for management and expenditure of money in common kitty.	Pooling system	Joint contribution	Similar; all money pooled with joint control and expenditure.
No partner has access to other partners' income, separate and independent management and expenditure.	Independent management	Distinct contribution	Similar; each partner controls and manages his/her income independently in 'separate pots.'

Fig. 3: Household fiscal distributive and empowerment model

Source: Author's construct

Figure 3 above, combines household fiscal expenditure types with financial decision-making and maps out varying degrees of empowerment in the relationships. Due to cross-cutting cultural and ideological factors, the relationships are imbued with nuanced complexities which could be subject to varied interpretations. It will also be over simplistic to state that male or female decision making were purely restricted to the categorisations stated above. While any of the decision making patterns could occur under the different expenditure types noted above, due to complexities in gender relations and taking into account the degree of incidence, to a large extent the decision making patterns outlined above represent the general outlook from the fieldwork investigations.

The MCE type is noted to be male-dominated decision-making and is the most inequalitarian and the least empowering for women: the man has the final say in the major decisions in the household. The HCE type is also male-dominated since women choose to remain silent despite their financial contributions to household money management. Because patriarchal norms mediate financial decision-making, this is equally unempowering and gender inequalities persist. There is an exercise of covert power as men pretend not to know that the money they provide is insufficient. They therefore manipulate the system and avoid the discussion of household financial expenditure, to favour themselves and keep their personal spending money for their own use. For instance, in urban southern Ghana women noted that though they kept their 'silent expenditure' to themselves, there were times they wanted to raise the issue of inadequate 'chop money', but then men would intentionally get annoyed. This makes the women feel greatly disempowered. The HCE is more empowering than the MCE because the women are able to determine through their independent decisions how much to add to household expenditure and therefore they exercise some element of autonomy, whereas in the MCE, it is the man who contributes the money and who decides how much he will provide. The woman may not even have any personal spending money, to at least supplement the 'chop money'. At least with the HCE, the woman has personal spending money and can decide to contribute silently or not if she so desires. It is also more empowering to contribute than not to contribute at all.

The FCE include both male- and female-dominated decision-making. In the first instance, the woman maybe the breadwinner but due to gender ideologies and patriarchal norms she succumbs to male-dominated decision-making. This is not very different from the HCE. In HCE, the man does not know, or pretends not to know, and subordinates the woman. With the male-dominated FCE, the man is aware but the woman out of her own volition and societal pressures submits to male-dominated decision-making. Lukes' argument that ideology characterizes individuals' attitudes so that they choose against their own interests (1974 cited in Vogler 1998) is relevant here. Due to the woman's male-dominated ideological beliefs she strives for the existing status quo to be maintained despite her main breadwinning role. The exercise of latent power ensures that there is consensus though it may not be genuine. The study showed in the empirical data that women are not allowed to declare that they are the 'head of household' or 'breadwinner'. They accept their position based on patriarchal norms though they might feel discontent and want to assert their position. Because the man knows very well that he is unable to fulfill his breadwinning role sometimes he acts to ensure that there is harmony. Therefore, the male-dominated FCE is more empowering than the previous two to the women. This is because the man's awareness of his inadequacies allows the woman to subtly control decision-making. In some cases, society only superficially sees the man as in-charge because in reality the woman is in control as the man is careful not to raise contentious issues because he is unable to fulfill his masculine role.

Under the female-dominated FCE, women are responsible for both the management and expenditure of household expenditure and make all the decisions. This situation is even more empowering as the woman determines the household's financial direction, and enjoys autonomy and independence. The fact that she is employed is in itself empowering. The MCE and HCE are therefore the lowest levels of empowerment, while the variation of FCE which is male-dominated is also less empowering than the female dominated decision-making FCE. In female-dominated decision-making, usually there may not be a man available, therefore providing the woman with greater empowerment. As explained though, in some situations there could be an adult man in the household. It could be less empowering than the DCE and JCE, because sometimes women are left

alone with their children and low incomes increases their burdens. Additionally, where the men are available because they may not be employed they become additional burdens to the women. Furthermore, without any welfare provision in urban southern Ghana it is a difficult situation for women, and therefore to be the sole breadwinner can be quite disempowering. For instance, households with dual earners are more likely to have a higher overall standard of living than those with single income (McDowell et al. 2009). In some situations however, the female dominated decision making FCE could be more empowering than the egalitarian JCE, especially where the women in the JCE may always have to consult or seek consent before she can make decisions. Evidence showed that the man could remain adamant and refuse a woman's request just because he felt it was not in his interest. In situations like this the female financial decision making was more empowering than the JCE. The relationship between the expenditure types and financial decision making is therefore nuanced with empowerment varied and complex.

The DCE and JCE are however both egalitarian decision-making types and are equally empowering. Significantly, both typologies provide an avenue for women to have their own spending money to use as they wish and also to exhibit joint decision-making. The involvement of women in paying for household expenditure is a necessary step in giving them the leverage to negotiate for an egalitarian relationship. In the pre-migration context as seen from the MCE, women do not contribute to household expenditure. This is because the incomes women earn are not substantial enough to contribute. Additionally, in some cases both women and men in urban southern Ghana subscribe to the male breadwinner ideology and therefore the man is expected to play his masculine role. Because men control the household income they determine decision making in the household and therefore women are disadvantaged. In the HCE in urban southern Ghana though women contribute to household expenditure, due to societal norms concerning the proper gender attitudes, women are silent about their contributions leading to men dominating household decision making and reinforcing gender inequality. However in London, both partners evolve egalitarian gender ideologies to share access, management and expenditure. They either pool and expend their resources or share the costs. They are

co-breadwinners and financial decision-making is a shared responsibility, promoting equality.

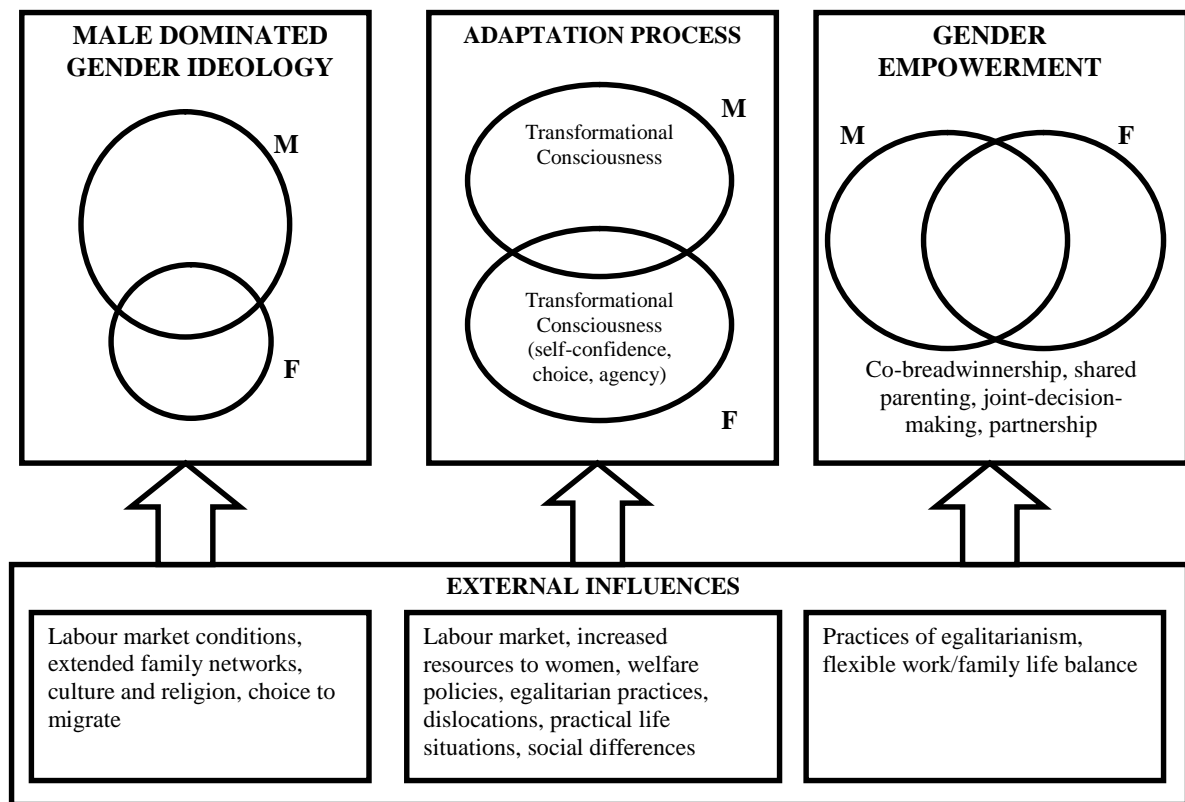
There are however subtle differences between them. For instance, with the JCE there is a need to confer before decisions are made, while with the DCE, decisions can be made individually and independently of each other. It would therefore seem that the DCE provides more autonomy. For instance, a migrant woman could send money to her extended family in Ghana without telling her husband and could set up a business in Ghana in the same manner. However, the ability to negotiate and work in a joint manner promotes an empowering relationship since the individuals gain self-confidence, respect and shared responsibility for decision-making. With the JCE, the husband will be unable to send money to relatives without informing his wife because if he does she will know from the accounts; this is also empowering. In a joint relationship both sides give away some autonomy as a means of checks and balances, and thereby avoid each side being undermined by the other. Despite financial resource contributions, gender ideologies such as 'head of household' and environmental factors mediate expenditure patterns to determine gender inequalities and varying levels of empowerment. The gender ideologies internalized by participants play a key role in the financial decision-making type they would follow. This study argues that migration has led to the development of these types of decision-making patterns, which are both egalitarian providing women with personal empowerment and empowerment within close relationships.

9.4 Reflections on Empowerment

Fig 4 is based on author's fieldwork findings and ideas on empowerment and power adapted from Lukes (1974), Kabeer (2003, 2005) and Rowlands (1997, 1998). Investigating the everyday practices of migrants enabled exploration of their relationships and comprehension of the perceptions underlying some of their actions, which enabled me to answer the research question whether empowering relationships result from migrating to a new social space. There is little comparable information on empowerment's relation to both origin and destination countries. This empowerment debate has drawn from and stretched further the theoretical works of Steven Lukes, Naila

Kabeer and Jo Rowlands by looking at the circumstances of migrants, whose new social space provides different contextual elements, by assessing empirically factors contributing to strategies adopted and renegotiations in gender relations which affect empowerment. Where men also question and challenge the patriarchal gender order, there emerges a more equitable relationship and egalitarian family forms.

FIG. 4: PROCESSES OF EMPOWERMENT



Source: Author's construct

It is imperative to state that the construct does not rule out the fact that some men identify themselves as emasculated and disempowered in the London labour market. However, if the elements outlined above in the model and the discussions explained below are evolved both women and men gain egalitarian relationships which translate to empowerment. Evidence showed that it was not uncommon for some men to feel

disempowered but through engagement with the partner, and self-perception change in transformational consciousness could occur, and thereby lead to egalitarianism. On the other hand, as earlier explained in the study some men altogether abandon the relationship. Therefore this thesis does not engage in an essentialist argument but implies that the process of empowerment is far more nuanced, and that some partners do not pursue the process as some Christian women for instance, prefer to maintain the hierarchical relationship based on their religious principles. In the same way some men opt out to maintain their masculine identity. The thrust of the argument is therefore to lay out the process through which change in gender relations could occur based on the empirical material leading to egalitarianism and subsequently empowerment.

The basic elements of the empowerment process are engaging resources, self-confidence, making of strategic choices and changing power relations, which lead to achievements and decision-making beneficial to women. I extend the empowerment process further by focusing on the role of the man, as well as contextual and external factors inherent in the environment in the process of empowerment itself because my empirical evidence revealed these factors as critical to achieving the three dimensions of personal, relational and collective empowerment. This thesis contributes further insights into the impact of migration, women's employment and related factors on empowerment. Evidence revealed that participants had become ideologically tuned to equality and sharing because the environment provided a basis, as they shared similar views needed for their survival together. While the context of London was enabling for them, the change to a more egalitarian gender orientation underpinned the process. I propose **four** components relevant for women's empowerment in the household; resources, transformational consciousness, change in gender orientations and influences of external environment.

Male Dominated Gender Ideology

Fig. 4 summarises the empowerment process, based on empirical data in a three-phased model. The first phase, epitomizing the situation I found in urban southern Ghana, reflects a male-dominated gender ideology. The ideology of breadwinner and household head mediated gender inequalities and could not transform to empowerment despite

women's financial contributions. Vogler (1998) has noted that ideologies impact on inequalities in the household, reinforcing women's subordinate status and male domination. The HCE exemplifies this phenomenon. The pervasiveness of the 'man as breadwinner' and 'head of household' ideologies undermined women's ability to challenge patriarchal norms. The study does not argue that women are overly passive, with no agency. Some were able to migrate independently despite the odds, showing some elements of independence, but overall, societal influences and patriarchal norms weakened women's ability to be assertive. The few young educated peer marriages in the study who were practicing joint decision-making were sometimes forced to revert and emulate societal expectations of male dominance in certain situations for the sake of conformity. Environmental influences such as labour market conditions, extended family networks, culture and religion did not provide the leverage to equalize otherwise unequal power relations.

Adaptation Process

The second phase of the empowerment process, the adaptation process, is triggered after migrating to the new social space. Ghanaian migrant women initiate the empowerment process through '*resources*.' They involve material and intellectual resources: acquisition of skills, knowledge and abilities, access to employment, increased awareness of rights, and self-confidence and self-worth (Kabeer 2005). The '*resources*' are a necessary but not sufficient condition for empowerment. They enable women's independent existence, and act as a 'spring board' for the process of empowerment.

Next, through these resources women can engage their transformatory consciousness using 'power within' and 'power to' to constructively engage, negotiate and influence household decision-making. The transformatory consciousness, an innate capacity produces an impetus for women to develop their 'power within', and initiate strategic choices to abandon 'internalised oppression' (Rowlands 1997) and promotes the power to, to overcome patriarchal structures. Based on the consciousness gained women have increased self-confidence and self-worth which leads to a sense of agency whose outcomes promotes equality and justice. Agency and individual choice are keys to

empowerment as they enable women to use the ‘power from within’ and ‘power to’ to establish negotiation and rapport. Channels of communication are activated by women for the exchange of ideas and collaborations in the household to overcome inequalities. At this stage women show men their desire for equity and the synergistic effect it will have on both parties.

Men also adjust in their transformatory consciousness choosing cooperation as it is beneficial for both parties. Due to dislocations, their marginal labour market positions, women’s increased resources, social/welfare policies and life circumstances in the new social space migrant men have to adopt a more proactive approach to the patriarchal norms. This realization leads to a renegotiation of decision-making and the management of resources. Where men refuse to change in their transformatory consciousness, it normally leads to violence and the break-up of marriages.

The second component is supported simultaneously by a change in gender orientations¹¹, which “prescribe particular roles, responsibilities, rights and obligations for women and men” (Ampofo 1999:97). Being conscious of the implications of their social location, men adjust their gender orientation from dominance to egalitarianism. If men internalize and recognise equality for women, they consent to women having ‘equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities’. Both women and men coming from patriarchal societies socialised into male dominated gender role stereotypes need to make a conscious effort to change. Undertaking personal empowerment with male or female dominated orientations may reinforce gender inequalities and power relations leading to violence and ‘zero-sum’ situations. The mind-set at this stage is therefore marked by egalitarian attitudes to female and male roles, shown by changes in social relationships, behavioural changes in household work, child care and approach to the productive sphere. Greenstein (1996:594) explains that women’s increased employment has not led to comparable changes in men’s contributions to domestic work because men’s attitudes

¹¹ This is a difficult concept to define, so to avoid unreliable responses it is evaluated indirectly following Ampofo (1999) using variables such as individual resources; paid work and earnings, responsibility for household expenditure as well as exploring aspects of decision-making.

have not kept up with women's changed ideologies. I argue that transforming gender orientation is critical to gaining empowerment.

External influences including the welfare state, labour market conditions, and practices of egalitarianism, dislocations, practical life situations and social differences mediate the process, enabling empowerment. Throughout the process, the external influences provide the context for the advancement of a robust empowerment. In London, migrant women were in similar jobs as the migrant men and were paid comparable wages (McDowell 2009; Wills et al. 2009). For instance Wills et al., found that all their female and male participants earned £6.20 an hour. However, as shown from my findings in urban southern Ghana because women were marginalised in the formal labour market doing similar jobs was not easily possible, and a majority of women were in the informal labour market with lower earnings. The working status of migrant women therefore impinged on household role and since dual-earning is relatively accepted in London men were able to adjust easily to its practice. Extra household factors such as (socio-economic and legal institutions and networks) should be incorporated in assessment of household dynamics as should the creation of an enabling environment to support women's empowerment (Cornwall and Edwards 2010:8). These factors play vital roles in bargaining for egalitarianism. Empowerment thrives most vigorously in settings with an appropriate legal framework, political will, enduring advocacy, practices of egalitarianism and community awareness of the negative implications of the patriarchal gender order. Women in urban southern Ghana are constrained by societal norms and ideologies and lack a conducive setting; they are 'fighting against the tide'.

Egalitarian Ideologies/Empowerment

The last phase of the model is gender empowerment. When women are in formal employment and contributing substantially to the household budget, the shift in resources enables a renegotiation of the 'patriarchal bargain'. Egalitarian gender orientations, shared parenting, flexible work/life balance and co-breadwinnership are identified in this phase, promoting joint decision-making and gender equality, undermining patriarchal norms. Women in the study had improved self-esteem, self-confidence and a sense of

‘self’ because they were participating in expenditure and decision-making. The men in a sense also felt empowered; they benefitted from women’s decision-making abilities, shared household costs and improved interpersonal relationships with family. The study shows that the movement to a different socio-economic space challenges gender ideologies and relations, causing changes in the status and power of women and men in the destination country. The study supports research by Hondagneu-Sotelo (1999) and Menjivar (1999) that the participation of women in the labour market does influence authority and control in the household but other underlying factors are involved.

A potential original contribution of this study is to introduce the potential contributions of men to the gender empowerment process. Focusing on men in analysing this process is crucial for understanding gender dynamics. The study has shown the relevance of men’s position in the complex interactions shaping conditions for attaining gender equality and empowerment. Men should be recognised as an integral part of the process, along with gender orientations and environmental factors, also sometimes assigned to the periphery. Esping-Andersen has argued that “if we want more gender equality, we may have to concentrate on men’s behaviour” (2002:70). For instance, Rowlands (1997) sees the role of the man, machismo, as part of the periphery and an inhibiting factor. However, without changes in transformatory consciousness, and gender orientation of the man, the empowerment process is doomed to stall. I propose the inclusion of the man as a robust approach that opens up the empowerment process and allows a clearer appreciation of its elements, without which personal empowerment may be unattainable.

The transformation of the individual may be key to facilitating the empowerment process, but other factors may be involved. The acquisition of resources could unlock the bargaining process, or it could be disengaged through a combination of resources and realizing the importance of negotiating and creating rapport. Empowerment may not necessarily be imposed by a change agent; women through their own capacities may develop ‘transformatory consciousness’ to trigger the process resulting in egalitarian relationship and empowerment. As Cornwall and Edwards comment, studies of how

women are gaining empowerment should note what “women are doing for and by themselves to bring about change in their own ... lives” (2010:1).

The social structures found after migration to UK provide women with leverage with which to seek more egalitarian relationships. Focus group discussions in London clarified that women had a collective idea of injustice and patriarchal men refused permission for women to associate, afraid that they would be empowered to insist on their entitlement and inclusion. Through interactions in London they gained collective empowerment and have been changing the household division of labour through advocacy. In church groupings and migrant association meetings women were continuously encouraged to assert themselves and develop their self-worth. Men were also reminded that they needed to ‘shed off’ their dominant ‘garb’. Three dimensions of empowerment in personal, relational and collective situations are evident among Ghanaian women in London (Rowlands 1997). Migration accentuates changing gender relations by providing a conducive climate for women to make informed choices and decisions. The persistence of women subordination highlights the need to eliminate gender orientations which support ‘internalised oppression’ and the patriarchal gender order. Labour market participation alone may not lead to egalitarianism in financial and household arrangements. Greater access of women to financial resources should accompany transformations in norms, socialisation processes and ideologies, men’s inclusion and the creation of an enabling atmosphere.

Empowerment has varied dimensions. Though it should address the collective, I argue that through personal and relational empowerment “small gains accumulate” (Lahiri and Mitra 2002: 57). The concept of empowerment is not achieved when men resist embracing women’s empowerment, demonstrating ‘paradoxical transnational masculinity,’ whose manifestations need further research. Additional research and empirical evidence is needed in other areas to test the results of this study. A deeper analytical understanding of the phenomena will enable understanding of the concept of empowerment. I offer this framework as a contribution to the debate on the complex process of empowerment

9.5 Gender and Transnationalism

A cardinal mechanism maintaining the patriarchal gender order is the gender division of labour, which is exemplified in a conventional nuclear family living under the same roof. Far from being a liberatory phenomenon which provides opportunities and leads to empowerment, (see Guarnizo et al. 2003, Viruell-Fuentes 2006) transnationalism has the potential to reinforce hierarchical power relations. The partners left-behind are neglected to the extent that they are excluded from the future for which their partners journeyed, sometimes leading to marital breakup. Concentrating on the stresses and strains of transnationalism may reveal many of the ‘nuances’ of transformations and redefinitions in transnational conjugal relations, adding a holistic dimension to an otherwise essentialised aspect of transnationalism (Parrenas 2001).

Migrants are compelled by dislocations to maintain their partners in Ghana. Some male participants mentioned that they were unwilling to allow their wives to join them for fear that their hierarchical gender position would be undermined. The continued presence of left-behind spouses in urban southern Ghana has a gendered dimension which is a significant finding of this study. In split marriages the dynamics of patriarchal power are evident in the transnational social space. The gender division of labour is reinforced in this context as women are doubly burdened by performance of other perceived male roles. Stress is placed on the women, who act as both fathers and mothers. Where the woman travels abroad, some men try to perform female tasks in the partners’ absence. Transnationalism also enables changing gender relations as without their women in the destination country some men are compelled to do ‘gender work’. Transnational families therefore challenge the maintenance of the ideology of separate spheres in Ghanaian households, though at a slow pace. Left-behind men are reluctant to accept remittances from their female migrant partners in a bid to idealise masculine ideologies. The woman’s social location vis-à-vis the man across the transnational social space could influence decision-making power. Financial resources the migrant men provide give them undue power in the relationship. Transnational gender relations are therefore marked by gendered differences in power and status. Patriarchal norms such as the head of household persist as women preserve them despite opportunities provided by separation

to abandon the function of household head. While some women gained greater social status, autonomy and financial empowerment, others benefited less. The stakes in the transnational social space are ambivalent and uncertain.

The lives of left-behind partners especially, are embedded in a 'social imaginary' where they lead an imagined life between two worlds waiting for their opportunity to migrate. Long years of waiting and dwindling chances to migrate negate the assumption that transnationalism is liberatory. For most of them, images of grandiose, success and the good fortune they envisage at the other end of the transnational space remain imaginary. Their inability to migrate leads to what I term the 'transnational gendered delusion'. The inability of left-behind men and women to fulfill their migrant dreams, leads both parties to deny that their aspirations cannot be realised. Migrants also face this delusion, realising quite soon after arrival their disadvantaged social location in the host country. Their ability to remit money and invite the partner is limited and the migrant dream of participating in the transnational experience is threatened. Looking at transnationalism from a gendered perspective brings further insights to the 'social imaginary' of migrants and left-behinds.

Childcare problems cause migrants to send their children to Ghana. Transnationalism challenges the conventional ideal of the 'family' as being a unit physically together in a geographic place. Care giving responsibilities and obligations are renegotiated and the patriarchal gender order reinforced with the 'nurturant' and 'breadwinner' roles separated across the transnational social space. Ironically in the diaspora migrants can enjoy egalitarian relationships in the absence of children as they share breadwinning, take joint decisions and share housework. Significantly, because they are dealing with their kin relations in the home country they enact traditional gender norms to reflect kin expectations. Both continuity and change exist in gendered transnational caring across national borders. The children are socialised into gender-specific roles in Ghana, which may undermine their parents' modest gains in equalising gender relations abroad, thereby reinforcing the patriarchal gender structures.

The study interrogated foster left-behind spouses who also lead their lives within the transnational social field. Foster parents while rooted in the home country are involved in transnational practices that bind them with migrants alongside their children across spatial barriers. The study addressed a gap in knowledge about mutual benefits accruable from fosterage decisions to host and origin countries. Children have seen their sending back home as beneficial since they have learnt to be more disciplined, focused and aspirational. These values from the origin country would prepare them to successfully acculturate in the host society on their return. Through this approach, which I term the segmented transnational strategy; transnationalism becomes a means to successful assimilation in the host country. The second generation's failure to assimilate is a problem, so their eventual return with a sound perspective of mind is a positive development. The origin country gains from fostering because the second generation learns to appreciate their cultural heritage and construct a sense of identity with their homeland. They establish a social place for themselves in their families which could be exploited for future transnational activities. Significantly, transnationalism could last beyond the first generation as the children moving across the transnational social space are determined to pursue the same agenda for their children. These suggest future research.

9.6 Thesis limitations and future research

This thesis has achieved the objectives it set itself. However, it is imperative for a review to consider any failures and limitations on the thesis process, especially information gathered and conclusions drawn, which in retrospect might have added value to the project. This section therefore presents drawbacks relevant to research participants, questions explored and methods used, proposing future research to extend and illuminate further the subject matter of the study.

This study integrated the household and labour market dynamics, as a dimension of the larger social context, out of other dimensions which could influence gender ideologies and relations. Using a household approach further prioritizes conjugal relations, and coupled with time constraints, the thesis could not develop fully the extended family

influences on the phenomenon. The incorporation of factors such as the extended family to the analysis would provide a broader picture of the migration processes. Further studies would need to look more in-depth at such variables to contribute to broadening understanding of the gender and migration phenomenon.

The selection of greater number of participants with relatively higher educational levels particularly in London could affect the findings, because it has been shown that persons with higher educational attainments are more likely to have a tendency towards egalitarian relationships (Awumbila 2001, Oppong 2005). While this was relevant in urban southern Ghana, this study did not find this particularly significant in London. The likely possible effect on the findings is acknowledged. As earlier explained the objective of this thesis was not to achieve statistical generalizations, especially because the number of illegal migrants would be difficult to determine. The aim was to draw out meanings and interpretations of migrant lives. Therefore samples were purposely selected based on research questions to provide insight which could best be achieved through an in-depth study with small samples.

The research participants were drawn mainly from the working/middle classes in London and in urban southern Ghana. The study found that other social classes might experience different responses to the gender and migration phenomenon. In the same way there may be differences in experiences for migrants in the rural settings in UK, as well as for Ghanaians in rural Ghana. The exclusion of professional classes could also affect the generalisability of the study. Future research could expand this work further by looking at other social classes, interactions between class structures in the migration experience, and experiences within different national contexts. Such a study would enhance knowledge of the migration-gender nexus from different perspectives and point out similarities and differences to provide more comprehensive knowledge of the subject.

The ethnographic observation and in depth interviews provided rich data in relation to paid work, the performance of domestic work and childcare tasks. It enabled the researcher to ensure that what the participants said was happening in their lives was

actually what they did, not what they thought ought to be happening. This is essential because people's perceptions sometimes differ from their actual behaviour. However, in hindsight the additional use of time-use diaries by participants to record the performance of domestic tasks and childcare responsibilities would have enabled the capture of more precise patterns of frequency and/or amount of time spent by the partners in different activities separately or together. While the study showed who does what in the households, this technique would have shown more specifically how long each activity was performed, who performed which activity more, and why. It would have circumvented memory lapses during retrospective recall, under/overestimation or generalised responses, and added to triangulation, supplementing the ethnographic observation.

An important question for this thesis is whether the transformations in gender roles and restructuring of gender relations, illustrated in the ethnographic material, would persist when the migrants return to Ghana. Do men hand back the performance of household tasks to women upon return? Is patriarchy re-imposed or are the changes maintained? This is relevant because changes in family life should not only be seen from the perspective of when the change began or how long it lasted, but most importantly the "robustness of the change" Qvortrup (1989, cited from Lopez and Pairo 2000:51). Where change is deep-seated, it is likely to endure even after migrants return to their country of origin and may indicate a sturdy phenomenon.

The literature suggests that return migration may reinforce traditional gender norms; as Jolly (2005) notes, Muslim husbands from Pakistan returned home with stricter interpretations of the purdah practices. On the other hand, returnee men from Somaliland are regarded as having lost their masculinity; they have 'kitchen problems' due to conflicts they have with their wives over responsibility for domestic tasks (Hansen 2008). Tiemoko found in a study from West Africa that return led to "improved family relations" (2004:170). The effects of return migration on gender relations and vice versa seem to be contradictory. My initial investigations during fieldwork have also not provided enough proof for emphatic conclusions. The evidence suggests that because the

masculinity of Ghanaian male migrants has been challenged in the diaspora, they are more inclined towards return than the women. Women insist that their children complete their education, marry and settle down before they return. Other women also maintain that they would return only if the men were ready to play their role as sole providers. Where both partners return to Ghana, initial fieldwork investigations provide evidence to substantiate the fears of women that most men cease to perform housework and childcare when they return to Ghana. Most of the changes that occur abroad may not be sustainable in the home country, the process reverting to the patriarchal order. Some women returnees however maintained that the self-esteem, autonomy and self-confidence developed in London are intact. According to them they still take certain decisions and initiatives which most Ghanaian women cannot do. Most conclude that if not for their stay abroad they would be subordinate to their husbands and lack such confidence. This point shows that some aspects of gender relations which transform as a result of migration are sustainable. It is essential for future research to investigate in more detail the gendered perspectives of migrants return, examining how Ghanaian men and women present and reconstruct their masculinity and femininity, and resolve their gender crises upon return. Additionally, there is a need to carry out research with more recent migrants and the second generation of migrant families.

Important migration flows between sub-Saharan Africa and Europe remain under researched (Hatton and Williamson 2003, Grillo and Mazzucato 2008). This study has expanded knowledge on Ghanaian migrants from a gendered and transnational family perspective. In order to generalise these findings, future studies should expand research away from Asia-Europe and Latin American-USA migration to other African migrations.

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