PARTS UNKNOWN: A CRITICAL EXPLORATION OF FISHERS' SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS OF CHILD LABOUR IN GHANA

SHAIBU BUKARI

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

DECEMBER, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has not, in the same or any other form, been submitted to the University of Sussex or any other university for a degree.

Signed:

Name: Shaibu Bukari

Date: 17th December 2015

DEDICATION

**To my aunty Hajia Halima Zolib Abubakar (aka Town illiterate) and my late father
Bukari Akansiseh (aka Seaman Frafra)**

Thank you so much for believing in me.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
ed.	Edition
Ed.	Editor
FANI	Free Association Narrative Interviewing
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GASOW	Ghana Association of Social Workers
GETFund	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GLSS	Ghana Living Standard Survey
GSS	Ghana Statistic Service
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IREWOC	International Research on Working Children
JUC	Joint Universities Conference
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
M.Phil.	Master of Philosophy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
R. E.	Revised Edition
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
S.E.	Standard Edition
SBHA	Society Biology and Human Affairs
UCC	University of Cape Coast
UNCRC	United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nation Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAHO	West African Health Organisation

SUMMARY

This study from the onset sought to explore, through a postcolonial critique, the meaning ascribed to child labour by fishers in a fishing community in Ghana. The purpose was to inform practice in social work so that social justice might be achieved for working children and their parents. However the study expanded, methodologically and theoretically, to preliminarily include a psychoanalytically informed psychosocial and discursive approach, extending the postcolonial critique to develop a nuanced understandings of the fishers' lived experience of, and responses to, children's work. Distinct from the dominant reductionist and positivistic etiologic understandings of child labour, this approach neither derides child labour as morally reprehensible and unequivocally dangerous, nor romanticises its beneficial aspects and links to cultural and traditional beliefs and practices (see Klocker, 2012). Instead, enables understanding of the fishers as 'defended subjects' who invest in certain discourses as a way of defending against their vulnerable selves. It also affords a critically reflexive understanding of myself as a 'defended researcher', owing to my semi-insider position as a former child labourer, and of the impact of this on my research relationships and findings. The study is intended to inform social worker practices in order to deal with complex situations concerning the relationship among fishers and their children paying equal attention both to the inner and the social circumstances of the fishers (Wilson, Ruch, Lymbery, & Cooper, 2011). In this regard it is inspired by Mel Gray's (2005) contention that social work practice should be shaped by the extent to which local social, political, economic, historical and cultural factors, as well as local voices, mould and shape social work responses. The study is conducted using critical ethnographic design that draws on the lived experiences of 24 fishers. Attempts were made to explore the fishers' experiences using psychoanalytically informed method (FANI) in addition to other conventional methods.

The study highlights the fishers' use of narratives of slavery to explicate child labour. It focuses on the relationships that the fishers' have developed with their children and with the laws surrounding the use of children in work. It gives an indication of how the fishers' violently and aggressively relate with their working children. It also highlights

the fishers' rejection of the laws surrounding child labour as being foreign and an imposition which excludes customary laws. The study further examines the identities the fishers developed in relation to laws that regulate them and children's work. It suggests that others see the fishers as powerless subjects who don't matter. It also underscores my shame and worries as a researcher considered by the fishers as an 'educated elite' who works for 'white people'. It further highlights how I provided self-justifying explications to defend myself as a researcher. The findings imply that solutions to child labour need to be localised paying equal attention to both the psyche and the social life of the fishers. They speak to the imperative for critical review of social workers/NGOs practices taking into account the unconscious processes that go on between fishers as parents and social workers as service providers. This thesis introduces a psychosocial dimension and insight into debates on child labour in Ghana.

PREFACE-MY STORY

My parents are all Ghanaians from the North-eastern part of Ghana (See Appendix 1 for the map of Ghana), specifically Upper East Region of Ghana. They moved to the South-western part of Ghana in their quest for a better life. My father ended up getting a job as cook in a Ghanaian ship. He was a very staunch polygamous Muslim with four wives. My mother was his first wife, so she was regarded as the leader of all the wives. I am the last child of my mother's four living children (six dead). I was born in 1977 in Cape Coast, the Metropolitan capital of the Central Region of Ghana (see Appendix 2 for the map of the Central Region of Ghana). At age 11 (1988) I lived with a foster parent in a fishing community in the Central Region of Ghana. This fishing community happens to be the setting for the study.

I had to live with a foster parent because my mother had misunderstandings with my father and left us. As a consequence I had to be rotated among my other three stepmothers. However, I could not coexist peacefully with my siblings who were children of my stepmothers. We were always competing for our father's attention and food. Those who had their mothers around were given all the love, proper care and all the food. I had no 'mother' to 'fight' for me. This made me feel emotionally and physically unsafe and dejected as a child. This among other reasons prompted my father who was about to travel abroad to take me to a woman friend of his in the fishing community. My foster parent was a fisher. She had a very large shed purposely for selling fresh fish. She had other sites for the processing (smoking, salting, frying, and drying) of fish.

I quite remember I was taken to her on Friday. The following day she took me to '*Mpoano*' (A Fante[1] word which translates to seashore). I was the only child with her. But I saw so many children with other fishers. These children were carrying fish out of canoes and boats. I realised that boys were in charge of the carrying of fish out of the boats and canoes, while the girls were in charge of carrying the fish to their parents'

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[1] The main Ghanaian language used in the community is Fante, which is mostly spoken in the Central Region of Ghana. The community mainly practice the matrilineal system of inheritance which is associated with the Akan groups in Ghana (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013).

sheds and sites as well as the processing of the fish. I carried fish to the shed and sites of my foster parent as well. This job was very tiring, so sometimes I would just feign sick in order to be left alone. As a child I needed enough time to play around and go to school. But I was deprived of that. This is because my foster parent was so keen in using me for her business. Anytime I left home without working, I was denied food and a place to sleep. I slept in an abandoned kiosk with other children. I had children colleagues who were also always running away from too much work. Some of them were older than me. The older ones use to steal fish from the seashore or fish processors for us to sell or eat.

For a whole week, I could only attend school for two or three days. I lived my life in this manner until my mother came for me. My life became 'normal' and I continued with schooling till I completed my GCE Ordinary and Advanced Levels. For my first and second degrees, I read Bachelor of Education (Psychology) and Masters of Philosophy (M. Phil.) (Development Studies) respectively at the University of Cape Coast (UCC), Central Region. I was employed as Teaching Assistance at UCC after my first degree. Owing to my passion for the alleviation of poverty and hardship among parents and children in our communities, I read for an M.Phil. (Development Studies). I carried out a research in the Central Region of Ghana on Microfinance and Poverty Reduction. As I was reading for my Masters, I became a discussant on radio and television stations with focus on social problems affecting children and their parents in fishing communities in the Central Region. I quickly metamorphosed into a political activist to advance the course of my political party even though I was still considered as a social commentator. This among other activities contributed to my popularity at the local level.

Notwithstanding that, at some point in my life I felt convinced that my whole life was fragmented, especially my academic life was in bit and pieces. I felt the need to refocus and chart a new academic course that would take into consideration my ambition and target of helping children and their parents through research work. Therefore, my fragmented identity, inquisitive nature, and my undying desire of helping children informed my decision to enrol for a PhD. in Social Work and Social Care at the University of Sussex, UK. I recall with some trepidation how I received my PhD

sponsorship letter from the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) on the 24th July 2012.   I had my own personal challenges with GETFund as regards the payment of tuition and maintenance fees. Admittedly these affected me throughout the research period, particularly during my stay in the community as a student critical ethnographer interacting, participating and observing the fishers. These among other challenges during data collection stirred up some feelings in me (See Chapter Eight for how I negotiated these feelings and emotional challenges).

Prominent among my multiple selves are my Ghanaian-ness (Northerner); principal research assistant in a University in the Central region of Ghana where the setting is located; social commentator on radio stations; political activist; research student from England; and a child who experienced child labour in the fishing industry.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1. 1 Introduction

This is a study that explores the meaning ascribed to child labour[2] by fishers in a fishing community in Ghana. The purpose was to inform policy and practice in social work, so that social justice might be achieved for working children and their parents in fishing communities in Ghana. Thus it was crucial to advance nuanced understandings of fishers' responses to children's work which neither deride it as morally reprehensible and unequivocally dangerous, nor romanticise its beneficial aspects and links to cultural and traditional beliefs and practices (see Klocker, 2012). Hence, the whole debate about the definition of child labour/child work whether harmful or/and detrimental or as a form of training or/and socialisation process or as a coping strategy was considered problematic as far as that small fishing community in the Central Region of Ghana was concerned. While the scholarly debates on child labour suggest an attempt to legislate what constitutes child labour universally, and also an attempt to destabilise the authority of Western children's rights discourses, they have developed mostly out of child focused and child rights approach, not from postcolonial perspective. Such studies have also been conducted from the perspective of the working children themselves, not from the perspective of those who put the children to work (see Esia-Donkoh & Mariwah, 2011).

My initial attempt was to draw on postcolonial theory through a critical ethnographic study of fishers in the fishing community to decolonise understandings of child labour. This was to help me to appreciate the fishers' constructs of child labour within a post-colonial mind-set illuminated by critical ethnography that seeks social justice for both the

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[2]In this study children's work and child labour mean the same. This study does not focus on child labour in the household setting which includes fetching wood, water, cooking, cleaning and other similar activities undertaken by children. Rather, it looks at child labour/children's work only in the fishing sector in Ghana.

fishers and their children through social work intervention. It was also to demand wider interrogation of who has been silenced by Western knowledge systems in relation to discourses surrounding child labour (McEwan, 2009). As a result, the study was inspired by Mel Gray's (2005) argument that social work practice should be shaped by the extent to which local social, political, economic, historical and cultural factors, as well as local voices, mould and shape social work responses. However, upon entering the field and interacting with the fishers, I had an epiphany in the form of the realisation of how much more critical my insider position as an ex-child labourer was than I had imagined. The nature of my epiphany is discussed in Section 1.4. This led to the introduction and addition of psychoanalytically informed psychosocial dimension to my data collection and analysis processes. The addition of a psychosocial perspective encouraged attentiveness to what was "beneath the surface" of the fishers narratives, and helped me to understand myself as a researcher and an ex-child labourer in the whole research process. Psychosocial is a non-rationalist understanding of the human subject; attempts to take the unconscious into account; the data collected in a research environment will be co-constructed by the researcher and the participants; and the 'psycho' doesn't mean 'psychology' alone (Bibby, 2011). By psychoanalytically informed psychosocial, I mean I draw mainly on psychoanalytical concepts and ideas to make sense of the data (see Chapter Three for a further discussion of psychosocial and psychoanalysis). I chose this means of understanding the fishers and their narratives because psychosocial does not reduce the fishers' narratives to either social or psychic; there is no duality, the two are inseparable, or at least we cannot talk about one without the other (Clarke, 2008; Hollway, 2009).

The remainder of this Chapter is organised as follows: Section 1.2 provides the background to the study and the rationale for undertaking the study. Section 1.3 presents the research questions as they emerged from the literature on research on child labour in Ghana. Section 1.4 explains how the nature of my epiphany and how the study was approached. Section 1.5 highlights the significance of this study in the generation of knowledge and its contribution to social work practice in Ghana. Finally, Section 1.6 outlines the overall structure and organisation of the thesis.

1. 2 Background to the study and rationale

Studies into child labour have experienced a significant upsurge in the past two decades. Despite this increased attention, child labour remains a significant challenge in many parts of the world (Fors, 2012). Child labour has become a contested concept/theory characterised by various views held by various scholars and organisations (see Bardaran & Barclays, 2011; Basu, 2005). Some of these scholars and organisation hold the view that it should totally be abolished while others hold the belief that it should be regulated in a way to allow children to work. These contestations, consequently, produce contrasting views about policy and practice directed at achieving social justice through social work intervention. Child labour has become amorphous and defies a single definition, hence the contrasting views. For instance, whereas some scholars use the terms 'child work' and 'child labour' mainly interchangeably in the literature (see Diallo, Hagemann, Etienne, Gurbuzer, & Mehran, 2010; Fors, 2012), others use them distinctively to mean different situations (examples ILO, 2013; Mariwah & Esia-Donkoh, 2011). The ILO (2013), for example, distinguishes between three types of working children- children in employment, child labourers and children in hazardous work. The category 'children in employment' is the broadest of the three categories and includes all types of paid productive activity as well as certain types of non-paid productive activity. Examples of the employment category are production of goods for own (household) use or domestic work outside the child's own household. Domestic work performed within the child's own household does not, however, count as economic activity. Furthermore, according to Fors (2012), the definition of economic activity is not confined to legal activities, but also encompasses illegal activities. The ILO tripartite distinction between child employment, child labour and hazardous work is very important but in this study all are considered as various forms of putting children to work. Thus this study uses the terms interchangeably.

In a subtly universalist way, supporting the right of children to dignified work, Roschanski (2005) argued that most of these children work in their parents' businesses or professional undertakings, such as agriculture (fishing and farming), carpentry, or in occupations that are domestic in nature. Roschanski further argued that there must be

ways of ameliorating the circumstances under which children are made to work, instead of an immediate eradication of child labour. It was, however, agreed that a significant number of children are involved in hazardous works identified as "worst forms", requiring an immediate and effective action for their prevention and eradication. Paradoxically, the work that these children do is often deemed absolutely necessary for their own survival and that of their families.

In furtherance of the agenda to oppose the abolition of child labour, one particular section of the child labour activism camp, who take concepts such as 'participation' and 'self-liberation' to their extreme consequence, argue that children have to be organised in labour unions exclusively for children and by children (Baradaran & Barclay, 2011). They refer to the United Nation Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and particularly to those rights outlining the right to participation. One of the main demands is that children are given the right to have a say in matters concerning them (Lieten & White, 2001). These child labour activists are ideologically defined as 'regulationists'. They have taken a stance against the 'abolitionists', who advocate the total and immediate abolition of child labour (Lieten & White, 2001). It is argued by the 'regulationists' that not only do children often have to work for survival, but that they should even have the right to work. Organisations of working children should fight for such a right to work and see to it that the work does not become exploitative. In the Latin American context in particular, there has been a relentless battle between the 'abolicionistas' and the 'regulacionistas'. This debate is also on-going in Asian countries like India, Bangladesh and Pakistan where children have organised themselves in groups and associations to fight for their well-being (Roschanski, 2005).

Statistically, new estimates presented in ILO's (2013) Global Child Labour Report indicate that there are a total of 168 million children in child labour in the 5-17 years age group including 120 million in child labour in the 5-14 years age group. In relative terms, 11 per cent of all 5-17 year-olds and 10 per cent of all 5-14 year olds are in child labour (ILO, 2013). ILO estimated that, 14.5% of children aged 5 to 14 participated in some form of work in 2008. This amounted to 176 million children worldwide. The majority of

these children, roughly 96 million, were located in Asia and the Pacific, whereas sub-Saharan Africa, with 58 million working children, has the second largest incidence. Indeed, these two regions alone accounted for almost 90% of all child labour. It is perhaps unsurprising that Asia and the Pacific has the greatest population of working children given that this is the most populous region of the world in general (Fors, 2012). However, the Asia-Pacific region also exhibits a slightly higher activity rate than the worldwide average, with 14.8% of children participating in work. This activity rate is second only to that of sub-Saharan Africa, where 28.4% of children participate in work (Diallo et al., 2010). According to Fors (2012) in Sub-Saharan Africa the total number of child workers increased by 10 million in eight periods from 2000 to 2008. The participation rate in the region has fluctuated over the period, starting at 28.8% in 2000, falling to 26.4 in 2004 only to rise again to 28.4 in 2008 (Diallo et al., 2010). This perhaps explains why ILO (2013), using the tripartite distinction, argues that the risk of child labour is highest for children in sub-Saharan Africa, where one child in every five is in child labour.

In Ghana the issue of child labour is often debated on the basis of a cultural framework of right, whereby children's activities are perceived either as a means of socialisation for children or a form of apprenticeship (Mariwah & Esia-Donkoh, 2011). Proponents of this view assert that rarely do households who engage their children in income-generating activities see this as an exploitation of children. Thus, children's activities are often regarded as skill training that will usher them into successful and productive adulthood. This is in concurrence with the assertions by two of the most prominent Ghanaian literary writers, Ama Atta Aidoo and Amma Darko (cited in Vivor, 2007), that there is a strict edict in Ghana which aims at having the child brought up to be 'cast in the mold of his/her forebears to toe the line on traditional beliefs and be hard-working' in order to survive in often very harsh environments (Vivor, 2007, p.9).

On the other hand, Esia-Donkoh & Mariwah (2011) argued from an economic perspective that members of households in Africa (Ghana) explore varied coping or survival stratagems in their fight against the high incidence of poverty that confronts

them. They suggest that prominent among these stratagems used by most of the households is the huge dependence on the productivity of their children. Therefore, poverty pushes children into the labour market to earn money to supplement family income or as means of survival of their family as a whole (Mariwah & Esia-Donkoh, 2011). Despite these understandings in the Ghanaian context, two policy approaches are being applied in Ghana for the elimination of child labour in fisheries and other sectors - the rights based approach and the participatory approach. The rights based approach, as it has been variously applied, has sought to educate communities about the nation's laws concerning child labour, encourage individual members of communities to obey these laws, or be sanctioned for not doing so. The participatory approach empowers individuals, families, and communities through a process of conscientisation about child protection, mobilisation, and capacity building, to take informed and voluntary decisions and actions, towards the progressive elimination of different forms of child labour in fishery sector (see Afenyadu, 2010).

These two approaches target the complete abolition of child labour in conformity with Ghana Children's Act 1998 and International Labour Organisation convention 182 which call for the abolition of all the worst forms of child labour. These approaches as applied in Ghana do not allow for regulation of child labour in any form or shape. In Ghana "child labour", amorphously, refers to employment or work carried out by children (5-17years) that neither conforms to the provisions of national legislation, such as the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560), nor the provisions of international instruments such as ILO Convention Nos. 138 and 182, which define the boundaries of work undertaken by children that must be targeted for abolition (see Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), 2014a). This implies that Ghana draws largely on the international definitions of what constitute child labour, and believes in 'international solutions' to child labour.

Ghana's fishery sector is one of the sectors of the economy which continues to witness a high prevalence of child labour despite the application of national and international laws to curtail it. Studies have shown that many of the child labourers in the fisheries industry come from coastal villages and towns (see Afenyadu, 2009). Afenyadu (2010) argues that

despite the government of Ghana's efforts to reduce or abolish child labour or child work, there are still worst forms of child labour in the form of slavery, child prostitution, violence to children, and similar practices including sale and trafficking of children; and debt bondage in fishing communities in Ghana. According to the Ghana Statistical Service national survey in 2014, 21.8 percent of children aged 5-17 years engage in child labour and 14.2 percent engage in hazardous forms of child labour. GSS found out that more than three-quarters (77.2%) of the working children were engaged in the fishery industries, with an additional 12.4 percent engaged in wholesale and retail trade. Only 3.8 percent were engaged in manufacturing works in Ghana (GSS, 2014b).

This calls for the services of well-trained and well-informed social workers in the fight against child labour within the Ghanaian context. These challenges and my personal experiences as an ex-child labourer in the Central region of Ghana, provide a platform for further studies into child labour in fishing communities in Ghana. This study therefore makes an attempt to understand fishers' contextualized understanding of child labour in a postcolonial site which might help to promote social work practices while avoiding imperialistic applications of universalized understandings of child labour which affect social work practices in Ghana (see Chapter Two for discussion of the nature of social work in Ghana). This study goes beyond the usual studies of child labour that only consider the outer or social circumstances of the 'perpetrators' without paying attention to their inner lives or emotions/feelings. This could equip policy makers and social workers with a nuanced understanding of the conscious and unconscious dynamics that drive fishers into falling on their own children's labour to increase their productivity instead of employing adult fishers (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). This study assumes that child labour as a phenomenon has unconscious, psychical, and emotional sides that have not been explored (Thomson, 2010a). In this study I argue that fishers go through emotional toils that affect the extent to which they involve their children in their fishing activities inshore and offshore. These emotional toils influence their relationships with their children and the way they react to national and international laws on child labour. It does also affect the fishers' identity construction in the fishing community. As an ex-child labourer in the same fishing community and now the researcher, I argue that my

emotional toils could affect my relationship with the fishers and data gathering and processing. Certainly this is not to say that researchers have not been thinking about the psyche and social aspects of child labour, but perhaps this lack speaks to the need for exploring these less-researched aspects of child labour by considering together both the inner/internal and social/outer circumstances of fishers who employ their children in their fishing activities.

1. 3 Research questions

My review of the relevant literature confirmed a gap relating to the absence of how fishers' psychic experience and social life are fundamentally enmeshed with each other in their understanding of child labour and its implications for social work in Ghana. By psychic, I mean the inner life or feelings of a person. Therefore, the overarching question that this study seeks to address is: What are the implications of the fishers' social and psychical construction of child labour for social work? The structural economic aspects of child labour were not the primary concern of this study. These aspects have been extensively studied and reviewed elsewhere (see Afenyadu, 2010, 2009; Mariwah & Esia-Donkoh, 2011; Esia-Donkoh & Mariwah, 2011).

The study proposes to explore the following questions:

1. What are the fishers' understandings of child labour in the community? This will be examined based on a combination of both the social and inner life of the fishers in order to develop a nuanced understanding of how the fishers conceptualise child labour in their locale.

2. How do fishers' understanding of child labour influence their relations with the children, and with national and international regulations of child labour? This understanding will not solely be based on the outer circumstances of the fishers' relationship with their children and the laws but equally at the inner/psychical level.

3. What are the identities of the fishers? This is in relation to identities the fishers develop among themselves and the identities other people construct for them in the community.

4. What are the implications of their understanding of child labour for social work practice in the fishing community?

Question 4 matches the critical ethnographic purpose of the study. This is because the study is not only about understanding but to help bring social justice to the fishers and their children. My approach to answering this question is to draw from all the data I have on how the fishers understand child labour in the community. It is from all the data that I will be drawing out the implications for social work practice and policy.

1. 4 My epiphany and approach to the study

Methodologically I began the study by my appreciative hearing of what the fishers' lives were like in relation to child labour. At a certain point two things happened at the same time- there was an ethical shock for me, that is, the realisation that the fishers were lying to me, breaking national laws, allowing their children to be prostituted, and beating and shouting at children. They say one thing and I observed something else. These experiences raised an ethical hurdle for me; can I keep ignoring this notion of the fishers through a postcolonial critique? I addressed these in Chapter Eight of the thesis. Furthermore I realised I couldn't address the ethical issue without connecting it to emotional issue. This is so because I saw the ethical issue emanating from what the fishers said and did, and experienced it emotionally. At this stage, immediately the ethics and emotions came together, the fishers defended against themselves. For instance one of the fishers' comments that *'you are on our side or not, if not we will throw you out like a dead goat'* explains the attempt of the fishers to get me on their side in terms of how I report what I observe and hear from them. The fishers kept attacking me to protect their own position. How I addressed this will be discussed in Chapter Eight. They expected me to give a collusive postcolonial account of my experiences of them. Or write a nice collusive postcolonial narrative. By collusive postcolonial account, I mean a postcolonial critique which is planned, controlled and directed by myself as the researcher and the fishers as the participants. I realised I would be acting in bad faith if I kept on making sense of the fishers narratives using only postcolonial critique. These experiences with the fishers' led to an additional conceptual framework which equally takes into consideration the inner/personal and outer/social circumstances of the fishers. I

maintained the postcolonial critique but placed more emphasis on the fishers' inner world. This represents my epiphany on the field.

As an academic (outsider) I started the study by using critical ethnography as a methodology/design to interrogate the social construct of the fishers on child labour. To my mind, critical ethnography, drawing on postcolonial theory, was so essential in the understanding and explanation of the fishers' conceptualization of child labour. I believed it could provide an insight into the complex relations between groups of humans and societies (Barton, 2008). As an African man who has had an activist understanding of postcolonial life, and the fact that I had read lot of works of postcolonial theorists, I wanted to present the voices of the local people (fishers); not other people's views imposed on them. Secondly, my being a Ghanaian and an ex-child labourer (insider) in a fishing community in Ghana as discussed in the preface was also to be explored to help me develop a better understanding and appreciation of child labour in the fishing community. However, entering the field and interacting with the fishers and observing how these fishers related to their children, stirred up some feelings in me. Seeing myself and the children in the fishing community reminded me of my childhood as a child labourer in the same fishing community (see Chapter Eight on how I navigated this thoughts and feelings). Apart from this, during my initial interactions with the fishers, both the fishers and myself communicated with each other through our feelings, worries, fantasies, anxieties, and anger. This led to the development of the methodology to include a psychosocial perspective. My understanding was that a psychosocial perspective recognises anxiety as inherent in human condition and it lays emphasis on empirical research in which the emotional life of the researcher and the respondents are explored (Clarke, 2008). I develop a further thinking of psychoanalysis and psychosocial in Chapter Three.

My understanding was that being anxious meant both myself and the fishers became 'defended subjects' in the light of our discussion of child labour in the community (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). The term 'defended subjects' is principally associated with Hollway & Jefferson (2000). Defended subjects invest in particular positions in

discourses to protect vulnerable aspects of self, an essentially psychosocial phenomenon also noted by Gadd (2004). This meant our mental borderlines are porous where unconscious material is concerned (Cooper & Lousada, 2005; Orbach, 2008). It also means that both myself and the fishers were subject to projections and introjections of ideas and feelings coming from both sides (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). By projection, I mean an unconscious situation in which a subject expels and externalizes uncomfortable inner thoughts and feelings (see Klein, 1946). Introjection on the other hand occurs where a subject takes into itself the behaviours, attributes or other external objects, especially of other people (see Winnicott, 2005). I realised that I could neither take fishers' responses on its face value nor expect them to understand absolutely their actions and feelings (Thomson, 2010a).

The question that kept ringing in my head was why psychosocial and not other ways of understanding fishers' inner lives? There are anthropological and sociological ways of understanding both the conscious and the unconscious without using psychosocial. There is a vast literature in anthropology that could explain the fishers' defensiveness (see for example Coe, 2008; Gibbs, 2007; Reddy, 2001). I am also aware that work emerging from discursive, phenomenological and genealogical traditions provides a challenging alternative to psychoanalytic ways of thinking and has increasingly sought to retheorise psychoanalytic concepts from a broadly 'social constructionist' perspective (see Parker, 1997; Billig, 1999; Burkitt, 2002 cited in Redman, 2005, p533). However my interest in the ongoing debates among the Kleinians and the Lacanians (see Frosh and Baraitser, 2008; Hollway, 2008) in psychosocial and the way to approach both the conscious and the unconscious informed my choice of a psychoanalytically informed psychosocial perspective to extend analysis of experience beyond more conventional sociological and anthropological ways of understanding the fishers. Be that as it may, and while wanting to leave open a dialogue about how apparently 'unconscious' processes for instance can be understood, there could be "strong grounds for retaining a notion of a dynamic and irreducible unconscious" (Redman, 2005, p. 533). From this perspective, according to Redman (2005), the social is always saturated with unconscious fantasy, just as the terrain of the unconscious is always saturated with the social.

1. 5 Significance of the study

This study goes into the internal world of those who use children in their profit making or economic activities as a way of ensuring household survival. The study introduces another strand to the tension between child labour as a means of socialising and training children versus its potential to lead to exploitation of children. Furthermore, the study underscores a gap 'hidden' in the UNCRC. This 'hidden' gap has to do with the Convention's lack of consideration for the emotional toils and anxieties parents go through that, perhaps, could 'push' these parents into enlisting their children's labour in their economic activities at the peril of their children's health and social development.

This study methodologically combines psychosocial thinking with critical ethnography to examine the way of life of the fishers "beneath the surface" or the "word of mouth" or narratives from the fishers. It is against this background that this study adds substantially to debates on child labour, social work practice, literature and theorisation of child labour in Ghana. This study theoretically and practically opens up and widens the manner we make sense of child labour in Ghana in particular and Africa in general.

The study shows how fishers as subjects invest in certain discourses as a way of defending themselves against their vulnerable selves and anxieties. As a result, the study shows how both participants to the study and the researcher unconsciously mask the 'meaning of their feelings and actions' as a way of protecting themselves against anxieties and "painful truths" that threaten our identities (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p. 24). This helps to draw parallel between the researcher and social worker who visits such communities to interact with fishers and their children regarding the ways the fishers will want to be treated (see Chapter Eight). The study helps social service providers to understand the sophisticated nature of fishers in the community, so that they tailor services to meet their needs. This study contributes to knowledge by exploring how researcher subjectivity can be interrogated as a source of evidence (Thomson, Hadfield, Kehily, & Sharpe, 2012).

1. 6 Organisation of the study

This study is structured into Nine Chapters. Chapter One has given a broad overview of the study. Chapter Two presents an overview of the Ghanaian context; the nature of the fishery sector in Ghana; perspectives on children's work/child labour in the Ghanaian fishery sector; the history and nature of social work in Ghana; and laws and policies on child labour in Ghana. These legal formulations are laws made at the national level and those that Ghana has ratified at the international level.

Chapter Three begins with presentation of discourses on psychoanalysis as it informs my approach to psychosocial. The works of Sigmund Freud, Frantz Fanon, and Judith Butler are briefly discussed in this chapter. Chapter Four explores issues of methodological design and the data collection methods. This chapter starts with a discussion of my epistemological and ontological positions, followed by a brief overview of critical ethnography as a design for the study. The nature of my qualitative approach, case study, and recruitment of study participants for the study are also discussed. The chapter ends with a brief description of ethical consideration and challenges that confronted me on the field of study and reflexivity.

Chapters Five, Six, Seven, and Eight present and discuss the findings and analysis of the study. These chapters introduce psychical experiences combined with the social circumstances of the fishers to the wider literature on child labour by exploring the issue 'beneath the surface' what is communicated verbally from the fishers' perspectives. Chapter Five specifically discusses the fishers' construct of child labour taking into consideration the fishers' social/external and inner/psychical accounts of child labour in the community. In Chapter Six, I discuss the fishers' relationships with their children and laws on child labour. Chapter Seven discusses the fishers' identity and how they regard and construct their children. It also highlights how the fishermen regard their fisherwomen and their social roles in the community. Finally in Chapter Eight I explore

how I populated my mind/internal world with thoughts and feelings as the researcher during the study.

Chapter Nine, the final, presents a discussion of the key findings and conclusions and provides reflections. It also looks at how the study may inform social work practices in the Ghanaian context and the contributions the study makes to knowledge. This chapter also makes proposal for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

PERSPECTIVES ON CHILD LABOUR IN GHANAIAN FISHING COMMUNITIES: PRACTICES AND POLICIES

2. 1 Introduction

This Chapter reviews various literatures from official government of Ghana, international organisations, and academic scholars' accounts and research reports on child labour in fishing communities in Ghana. It provides six main sections. Section 2.2 details the national context in which the study was undertaken. The section examines the country Ghana and its population in relation to traces of working children in its fishing industry. Section 2.3 explores the nature of the Ghanaian fishery sector and it socioeconomic importance. Section 2.4 discusses the perspectives on child labour in fishing communities in Ghana. In this section I explore some of the theoretical and empirical discourses and their critiques in Ghana. Section 2.5 discusses the nature of social work in Ghana. It highlights the indigenous and professional nature of social work in Ghana, followed by section 2.6 which discusses the various national and international laws, customary laws, and policies on child labour and how they constraint social work practices in Ghana.

2. 2 Country overview

Ghana covers a total area of 238,533 square km (227,533 land and 11,000 water). The country has a population of 24,791,273 with population growth rate of 2.5 percent, a GDP growth of 5.7%, per capita income of $2,500 (GSS, 2014a). Ghana shares borders with Burkina Faso in the north, Togo in the East, Cote d'Ivoire in the West and the Gulf of Guinea at the south (see Appendix 1). The country is one of the creations of the partitioning of Africa resulting from the European scramble for colonies in the 1800s. The British administered the country as a colonial enclave for 207 years - from the British Royal African Company administration (1750-1842) to Britain's direct control

(1843-1957) (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). Ghana became the first sub-Saharan country in colonial Africa to gain its independence in 1957 from the British.

Currently, the country is divided into ten administrative regions. The Southern and Western parts of the country, comprising the Greater Accra, Western, Eastern, Central, Volta and Ashanti regions are more developed, compared with the Northern Savannah Ecological Zone comprising the northern parts of Brong-Ahafo and Volta and the Northern, Upper East, and Upper West regions. The regional boundaries are defined by the constitution of the country (Okudzeto, Mariki, Lal, & Senu, 2015). Only Western, Central, Volta, and Greater Accra regions have coastlines (see Appendix 1). These are all in the Southern and Western part of Ghana. These regions have two distinct wet seasons in a year- a major one in May-June and a Minor one in August-September. Situated along the coast of Ghana are 92 lagoons, some of which are described as "closed" and others, "open". There are also a number of rivers that enter the sea through estuaries; these estuaries, together with the lagoons and wetlands associated with them, serve as nursery grounds for many marine fish and crustacean species (see Koranteng, Bortey, & Yeboah, 2006). These are the regions in which major fishing and other farming activities are undertaken (Koranteng, et al., 2006). However, the Volta River and its basin form the major drainage feature in the country. It originates in the north along two widely dispersed branches and flows into the sea in the eastern part of the country near the Togolese border. Therefore, there are other people in the Northern part of Ghana who also engage in minor fishing activities subsistently.

The Ghana Living Standard Survey 6 (GLSS6) conducted by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) indicates a quarter (25.2%) of the working population of around 12 million have no formal education, while slightly more than half (57.2%) have education up to primary school level (GSS, 2014a). According to GSS through the GLSS6, close to 20% of the population aged 15 years and older have never been to school. The proportion of the population which has never attended school in the rural areas (33.1%) is more than twice that of the urban areas (14.2%) (see GSS, 2014a). The number of people living in extreme poverty is considered high even though it has declined over time (Okudzeto, et. al., 2015). The proportion of people living in extreme poverty declined from 16.5% in

2006 to 8.4% in 2013, with the number of people who cannot afford to feed themselves reduced by 39% from 3.6 million in 2006 to 2.2 million in 2013. Generally, poverty rates declined from 51.7% in 1991/92 to 28.5% in 2005/2006 and stood at 24.2% in 2012/2013, which meets the first MDG target of halving poverty (GSS, 2014a).

2. 3 The nature of the Ghanaian fishery sector and its socio-economic importance

The Fisheries sector provides subsistence livelihood for many people worldwide (Bene, 2003). The sector is considered as an open access and a back-up option especially for the rural poor and other coastline dwellers (Golo, 2012). Therefore, the sector contributes significantly to livelihoods around the world by providing food security, income and employment through various activities in its three sub-sectors: harvesting, processing and marketing (Golo, 2012). In 2008, it was estimated that two hundred million people around the globe were directly or indirectly dependent on fisheries and aquaculture, out of which the majority are involved in small-scale fisheries (World Bank, 2009). It was reported that about 6 to 9 million people in sub-Saharan Africa depend on the fisheries sector as a source of income, food and nutrition (Koranteng et al., 2006). In Ghana in particular the fisheries sector plays an important role by providing sources of employment to a large number of households.

Fishing is attractive because of the income it generates as well as the instant revenues that come to fishers (Kraan, 2009). Moreover, the fishing sector has often served as a safety net for other rural inhabitants and children have always been used in fishing in the past (see Béné 2003). The artisanal fishing sector proved to be much more viable than the semi-industrial sector in Ghana (Bank of Ghana, 2008). The artisanal fishing sector covers marine and inland activities. Fishing in Ghana could be considered from small-scale and large perspectives. Small-scale fisheries include artisanal fisheries operated in the marine waters of Ghana, and subsistence fisheries, represented by the portion of the fish caught by the artisanal fleet that is taken home by fishers, and the subsistence lagoon component (Bank of Ghana, 2008). Currently over 12,000 artisanal canoes and about 200,000 fishers (with about 2 million dependents) operate from 334 landing centres in almost 200 fishing villages located along the coast (Amador et al., 2006). The large-scale

fishery in Ghana is divided into three distinct categories, the semi-industrial sector, the industrial, also called "Distant-Water Fleet" and the foreign tuna fleets based in Ghana. This has undergone some changes because of the emergence of the Exclusive Economic Zone concept in the late 1970s (Atta-Mills et al., 2004).

Nonetheless, there are relatively few foreign fishing vessels operating legally in Ghanaian waters (Atta-Mills et al., 2004). Most of these foreign vessels appear to be tuna vessels. While in the past tuna vessels were mostly foreign, and landed their catches elsewhere, and under-reported it, most of the tuna caught in Ghanaian waters are landed in Ghana (Falaye, 2008). The sector is estimated to contribute 87 per cent of the total fish produced in Ghana (Koranteng, 2006). It serves, as one of the major components of the country's economy and fish is an important non-traditional export commodity. In recent times, the growth rate of the fishing sector has increased from -8.7% in 2011 to 5.8% in 2013 which is higher than the growth rate in forestry and logging sector (-14% in 2011, 0.0% in 2013) (GSS, 2014a). The fisheries sector accounted for 6% of Ghana agricultural GDP and 1.4% of her national GDP in 2013 (GSS, 2014a). The number of fishers in all the sectors employed by the Ghanaian fisheries increased from 479,000 fishers in 1950 to 645,000 fishers in 2010. The labour-intensive artisanal and subsistence fisheries contributed to 99% of the total employment. This, according to GSS, includes a great number of children working.

2. 4 Perspectives on child labour/work in fishing communities in Ghana

Child labour in sub-Saharan Africa is a complex issue and the number of children working in sub-Saharan Africa is seen to be alarming from the perspective of the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2010). According to Canagarajah and Nielsen (2001) this is because in sub-Saharan African region, children's world of work is intertwined with cultural values that encourage or see nothing wrong with sending children to work.

The Ghana Statistical Service Child Labour Report (2014b) estimates that nearly 29 percent of children participated in economic activity within the period of reference

(October 2012 to October 2013). GSS continues that 21.8 percent of these children performed economic activities that could be described as child labour while 14.2 percent engaged in 'worst forms' of child labour including hazardous work, thus jeopardising their health and safety. Afenyadu (2010) argues that the Ghanaian fisheries sector is known as one key area where daily activities have involved children. Both in the marine and inland fishery activities, children work on board vessels, unloading catches, preparing nets and baits, feeding and harvesting fish in aquaculture ponds, and sorting, processing and selling. At the upstream level, child labour occurs in areas as net making and boat building. The Child Labour Report estimates that about 30 percent of these children are from fishing communities (GSS, 2014b).

Since fishing activity is globally seen to fall under the worst forms of child labour category, it needs no gainsaying to point out that there is massive child labour in fishing communities in Ghana. This also shows the extent to which child labour permeates every socioeconomic endeavour of fishing communities and other sectors in Ghana (Afenyadu, 2010). For instance, some of the most widely cited studies on child labour in Ghanaian fisheries in the Volta Region of Ghana (Afenyadu, 2009; Bene, 2003; Koranteng et al., 2006) reveal that the Tongus who mostly fish along the Volta Lake for example regard fishing as an integral part of their cultural identity. The people, therefore, insists that their children assimilate the fishing and fishing processing occupation, no matter the circumstances. Nukunya (2003) also adds that in Ghana, as in much of Africa, taking part is a form of learning which was crucial in past societies where there were no formal education structures. Consistent with this orientation, Tongu households no matter their social class would ensure that their citizens assimilate the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values associated with fishing and fish processing in their childhood (Afenyadu, 2010). Thus children are trained from a very tender age, to acquire skills in swimming, handling the fish net, and diving, through apprenticeship.

Afenyadu's study indicated that some of the training methods are risky. Children may be asked to dive deep into the Volta Lake. If they return too quickly according to the estimation of their masters or parents, they are beaten to return. For children who are very

young however, a rope is tied around their waist while on fishing expeditions or training so that they can be easily rescued by pulling the rope (Afenyadu, 2010). There is evidence, according to Afenyadu (2009), that some of these children get drowned during training. However, Afenyadu's study revealed that some females, of the Tongu ethnicity also acquired fishing skills from childhood. Thus children of this ethnicity would, whether in school or not, have to contribute to fishing efforts of the household. Kufogbe, et al. (2005) also report that fisher entrepreneurs in the marine sector would insist that at least one or more of their children familiarise themselves enough with the practice and management of fishing and related activities to be able to inherit their parents' assets, and thereby take over and sustain the family business in future. Hence their insistence on engaging their children in the industry.

Golo (2012) contends that children working in the fishing and fish processing therefore become the sociocultural mechanism by which the fisher-culture is transferred from one generation to the next. In fishing activities, a wide variety of tasks are assigned to children, such as paddling, fetching water from the boat, casting and pulling the net, checking it and taking fish out, diving to free nets entangled between tree stumps, carrying the net and fish to the village and mending or adapting the net (Zdunnek, Dinkelaker, Kalla, Mathias, Szrama & Wenz, 2008). Zdunnek et al. (2008) indicate that the nets have to be replaced every few months to be effective and they are a continuous investment. Many fishers buy bundles of simple nylon gauze; weights and ropes are weaved in at the edges according to their needs. The work of adapting the nets is very tedious and this is often assigned to young males. Zdunnek and her colleagues (2008) through their study in Ghana further established that one or more boys are part of the crew in nearly all kinds of boats. The smallest boats have one to two persons as crew; at least one is likely to be a child, the mediumised boats have a crew of three to four persons; at least one, more often two or three, children are part of it and the largest boats have a crew of six or more; typically, two children belong to it.

According to Mensah and Antwi (2002) in Ghana children are engaged in every stage of fishing activity: production and sale of inputs; actual fish catch, fish processing,

marketing and distribution, upstream jobs and other related duties. Children at age five are allowed by their parents or care-givers to work at sea or lakes. They conclude that a large number of these children (boys and girls) dropout of school to engage in full time fishing with the reason that their parents/guardians are unable to cater for their basic school needs, lucrativeness of the fishing activity or truancy of children. However ILO (2013) states that there are certain tasks only an adult can do such as paddling the larger boats and adjustment of the nets. ILO further argues that adults or older stronger children cast and pull the big winch net. Some children in certain communities in Ghana are considered as "adults" immediately they attain age 14 and 15 and so are regarded as children who can handle heavy work. Zdunnek et al. (2008) also argue that boys accompany the fishing crew out to the deep sea, where they help to locate the fish, cast and pull the nets. Casting the net takes about five to ten minutes, pulling it back takes about two hours. Depending on how long it takes to locate a "good catch", the boat could be back on shore after three hours or after an entire day. The boats normally leave around 6 am or 6pm. They argue that the most common are hooks, nets and traps made of bamboo or glass bottles with bait inside. The nets are cast in shallow water or from small boats powered by paddles or sails. Boys are engaged in all these methods and it seems that they start helping from the age of five years onwards.

2.5 History and nature of social work in Ghana

Prior to gaining independence, social problems in Ghana were solved within the context of a traditional system, which had always been an integral part of social life of the indigenous people (Nukunya, 2003). This traditional system was a social institution of extended families characterised by strong family ties. This assured the security of its members (Osei-Hwedie, 2001). The system dictated its social norms, safeguarded its moral values, and conserved its economic base (Apt & Blavo, 1997). Against this background, it is argued that the emergence of social work as a profession in Ghana coincided with the development of a social welfare system through the colonial administration (see Asamoah, 1995; Avendal, 2011; Baffoe & Dako-Gyekye, 2013; Kreitzer, 2004). This is, perhaps, why Asamoah (1995, p.223) argues that "African social work has historical roots which are value based, indigenous and imported". Blavo (2003,

p. 36), on the other hand, argues that social work "has been in existence from time immemorial in Ghana because we all have problems ... long ago, before colonialism, social work was in practice but it was being performed by a different group of people".

According to Blavo (2003) the need for social workers began with the breakdown of the family institutions in Ghana. The power of the chiefs and the extended family system in Ghana, during the period of colonialism, broke down (Kreitzer, 2004). This came with its attendant social problems, so the colonists brought in what they call 'social work' to help solve the problems due to the capitalist economy and the broken down extended family (Kreitzer, 2012). Kreitzer (2004) contends that expatriates in Ghana and indigenous social workers trained overseas formed the nucleus of the British government administration in social welfare in the 1940s. According to Asamoah and Nortey (1987, p. 22) the British government established a welfare system for her colonies "that reflected both the ideology and basic structures of the system in the United Kingdom" without recourse to local actualities and particularities.

Kreitzer, Abukari, Antonio, Mensah, and Afram (2009) also argue that when the British colonised Ghana they introduced systems of social welfare from their own society instead of strengthening traditional social structures that was already in place. Introducing these welfare systems influenced how social work was to be taught (Kreitzer et al. 2009). According to Kreitzer and her colleagues the British government's consideration of Western education, knowledge and social welfare systems as civilised and African knowledge and traditional social structures as primitive, rendered the African identity and traditional values undesirable. Bjock (2013) in studying the professional social workers experiences of legitimacy in conducting social work in Ghana acknowledged that the hegemony of Western knowledge have had a great impact on the Ghanaian society and social work education and practice. He argues that the dependency on Western knowledge, resources, and development has continued in the manner social workers attached to non-governmental organisations and civil societies do their work. Avendal (2010) on the hand argues that with the emergence of new social problems due to the erosion of traditional support system structures, it was imperative for colonial powers to

introduce Western social work in Ghana, to help solve problems that societal change generated. Bjock (2013) in his study in Ghana critically draws on postcolonialism as a theoretical frame that examines the impact and heritage of colonialism and its construction of knowledge and identities.

2.5.1 Social work education and practice in Ghana

As the traditional support system weakened, social help and support was no longer the issue of only traditional actors. Instead it became organised social work activities attached to the central government. In 1940, social work received official status as it was incorporated under the Colonial Development Act of 1940 (Kreitzer et al., 2009). In 1946, the Department of Social Welfare and Housing was established in Ghana. Later on one of the first African institutions for the training of social workers (The School of Social Work) was founded in Accra, Ghana. The school provides certificate courses for people who are interested in providing social welfare services. Teachers practicing as social workers worked at the Department of Social Welfare (see Laird 2008). There is also the Ghana Association of Social Workers (GASOW) established in 1971. The association works to develop, strengthen and unify the social work profession in Ghana (GASOW 2010). It is a registered professional association affiliated with International Federation of Social Workers and is open for full membership for those who have completed at least Diploma in social work. According to Avendal (2010) GASOW is a fading organisation and its function and role in Ghanaian social work today is not clear.

The University of Ghana, which is the oldest and largest university in Ghana, is the only higher educational institution that runs degree programmes (MPhil. and PhD) in social work (see University of Ghana, 2014). In relation to curriculum, Kreitzer et al. (2009, p. 156) notes that Ghanaian writings are missing from social work course outlines and that the social work library consisted of 99 % Western books "…and students were still adapting social work practice from urban Chicago to rural Ghana" (see also Bjock 2013; Osei-Hwedie & Rankopo, 2011). This has led to the equipping of social workers with 'Westernised' ways of social work practice which in most of time are in conflict with the life style and the cultural values and beliefs of the people (Avendal, 2011; Castillo,

Asante, Becerra, Dwumah, & Barnie, 2015). Arguing on similar issues regarding social work education and practice in Ghana, Osei-Hwedie (2008) contends that the social reality of a context could only be derived from values, norms, and social relationships and processes in that context. By investigating these aspects in a culture, it is possible to analyse what kind of life the people living in that reality are striving for.

According to the University of Ghana (2014) in Ghana social workers are employed in public, private, and mostly in voluntary organisations. Areas where social workers work include child welfare, youth welfare, family welfare, rehabilitation service, disaster relief, the welfare of destitute and community development (Apt & Blavo 1997 cited in Kreitzer, 2012). The governmental body responsible for social welfare issues is the Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare (Republic of Ghana, 2010a, 2010b). There is no unifying judicial framework which guides the work of Ghanaian social workers (Avendal, 2010). However, existing important judicial directives comprise chapter five of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms) (Republic of Ghana 2005). For instance child labour is regulated here. Some amendments were made to the constitution to include, for example, the Domestic Violence Act (2007) and the Children's Act (1998). This will be discussed in Section 2. 6.

Kreitzer (2012) argues that there is a lack of recognition for social work as a profession in Ghana. This, according to Baffoe and Dako-Gyeke, is because it is often considered as a tool or a conduit for globalisation and neo-colonisation. As discussed, social work profession in Ghana dates back to the colonial times with the development of a colonial social welfare system (see Kreitzer, 2004). As a result, the profession has been sidelined and seen by many in some cases as a destruction of local cultures, wisdom, knowledge, and morals (Baffoe, 2013; Osei-Hwedie, 2011). Most social problems in the Ghanaian society are solved within traditional systems and social support networks which are vital parts of social life (Apt and Blavo, 1997). Even though the extended family support system which provides a kind of insurance and security system for its members is thinning over time, most people are still not receptive to the services of social work professionals for the reason that sociocultural beliefs and practices are very strong in the

country (see Baffoe & Dako-Gyeke, 2013; Osei-Hwedie & Rankopo 2011). This perhaps explains why, according to Castillo et al. (2015), in Ghana there is no collaboration among stakeholders, notably government (national and local levels), educational institutions devoted to social work education, education and health care sectors, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. Given the fact that the work of social work involves helping to restore, sustain and improve the social functioning of individuals, families, communities and societies, these responsibilities cannot be achieved without the significant input of other important stakeholders (Gray & Webb, 2013).

Kreitzer et al (2009, p.156) concludes that social work in Ghana is a "profession on the periphery, one not acknowledged by the public". This could be understood in relation to the in-effectiveness of the Department of Social Welfare (see Laird 2008) and the poor state of GASOW (see Kreitzer et al 2009).

2. 6 Laws and policies on child labour in Ghana

As discussed in Section 2. 2, Ghana has ten regions and it's a multicultural nation. All regions are under the central government and no regional institution possesses any legislative authority (Essien, 2012). Owusu-Mensah (2014) contends that inherent in the multicultural nature of Ghana, is another reality; customary law, which is less prominent in modern Ghana. Article 11(3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana defines customary law as the rules of law which by custom are applicable to particular communities. Owusu-Mensah (2014) argues that although these customs vary from one traditional area to another, they serve the purpose of protecting and safeguarding the fundamental human rights of people. Davis and Dagbanja (2009) state that the scope of customary law in Ghana is broad, confusing and traditional area specific. For instance as part of the customary laws of Ghanaian communities children are trained from a very early age (5years old) that they must respect and obey all elders, be humble towards adults, and take their advice. Twum-Danso (2009) also adds that children are not expected to challenge adults and certainly, not expected to question what they are told to do. Daannaa (2010) corroborates Davis and Dagbanja (2009) by asserting that each traditional area in Ghana has broad forms of customary laws which are applicable to their particular

communities. According to Owusu-Mensah (2014) customary laws are generally unwritten and its judicial system procedures are informal with emphasis placed on negotiations and reconciliation by the disputing parties.

Nevertheless, Owusu-Mensah (2014) claims that some elements in the customary laws are well defined and cast in stone, to the extent that leadership of communities cannot compromise on their application wherein leaders are compelled to implement appropriate punishment irrespective of the status of offending parties. Essien (2012) argues that before the advent of European colonial rule in Ghana, these customary laws provided the means and mechanisms through which ethnic groups in Ghana resolved disputes and administered justice among themselves in their various communities. Daannaa (2010) contend that the invasion of Africa by the Europeans brought in a new legal regime based on a European legal system that worked to eliminate or suppress indigenous African systems through critical analysis and interpretation.

The purpose, according to Owusu-Mensah, (2014), was to understand and integrate it or to completely wipe it out and subsequently impose a European system as a replacement. In support of Daannaa (2010), Owusu-Mensah (2014) notes that the law and legal systems in relation to the protection and safeguarding of children in Ghana is heavily marked by its history. Owusu-Mensah further argues that local customs, which are not repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience, are thus considered part of the customary law. According to Davis and Dagbanja (2009) most customs are not considered to be in consonance with natural justice, equity and good conscience. They conclude that most customs are regarded as incompatible either directly or by implication with any law for the time being in force; and contrary to public policy. Gray (2005) also argues that this was also how social work was promoted with a kind of missionary zeal in colonial and post-colonial situations where inherent power imbalances and the relevance of Western models went unquestioned. Further from social work understandings of customary laws in Ghana, Kreitzer (2012) argues that most customary laws in the form of cultural beliefs and practices negatively affect the smooth functioning of social workers operations. Castillo, Asante, Becerra, Dwumah, and Barnie (2015) corroborate this when

they argued for social workers better appreciation of customary laws surrounding children in particular in Ghanaian communities.

Essien (2012) argues that even though Article 11 of the 1992 Ghana Constitution states that the laws of Ghana shall comprise, among others, rules of customary law, most prominent source of Ghana's common laws are English common law and English doctrines of equity. Ghana has passed and ratified various forms of legislations, conventions, and policies to secure children's right and welfare (GSS, 2014b). By welfare and right, I mean ensuring good health, happiness, total protection and safeguard of children from all forms of dangerous work. Essien (2012) argues that the courts of Ghana determine customary laws that qualify to be part of national laws on child labour. Prominent among these laws and policies on children in Ghana are: the 1992 Constitution of Ghana; and Children's Act 1998. The International treaties on children made by UNCRC; and other ILO treaties and conventions. Ghana has institutions and policy frameworks established for the protection of children's rights.

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana is a product of Ghana's return to democracy in 1992. It was passed by Parliament of Ghana and included specific provisions relating to the rights of the child (Twum-Danso, 2010). Article 28 of the Constitution is the main constitutional provision on the rights of the child. The constitution considers a child as a person below the age of eighteen (18) years old. Article 28 of the constitution enjoins parliament of Ghana to enact laws to ensure children's survival, development, and protection. For instance the Article states among others that "…every child has the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to his health, education and development". This, according to Nukunya (2003) somehow goes against the customary law in Ghanaian communities that regard doing/taking part as a form of learning on the part of children. Nukunya claims this has been very crucial in past societies where there were no formal education structures. Based on Nukunya's argument Baffoe and Dako-Gyeke (2013) argue from a social work perspective that in Ghana the absence of clear and unambiguous definition of what constitute child abuse, exploitation, and neglect feed into the absence of clearly defined welfare practice system. Following this, Osei-Hwedie (2011) note that Article 28 of the 1992 constitution does not draw

largely on Ghanaian customary laws. He argues that this presents serious implication for social work practitioners' attempt to achieve social justice for both children and their parents in fishing communities in Ghana. Avendal (2011) corroborates this by arguing that child welfare social work practitioners in Ghana encounter many challenges in their work with children and their parents/care-givers because laws are not sensitive to the way of life of the people. Apart from this, governmental bodies such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) which are central to social work practices are ineffective due to community members' perception of a lack of consideration of customary practices and beliefs in their operations (CHRAJ, 2015; Ghana Police Service, 2015). CHRAJ was established in 1993. It exists to enhance the scale of good governance, democracy, integrity, peace and social development by promoting, protecting and enforcing fundamental human rights and freedoms and administrative justice for all persons in Ghana (CHRAJ 2015). DOVVSU as a section of the Ghana police service was established in 1998. Its target is to prevent, protect, apprehend and prosecute perpetrators of domestic violence and child abuse" (Ghana Police Service 2015). Social workers/NGOs in Ghana file complaints at both CHRAJ and DOVVSU for further action.

2.7 Conclusion

By exploring the context of the study, this Chapter presents an understanding of Ghana's fishery sector and how the context avail itself to child labour activities. This Chapter gives an idea of how the terrain of child labour is contested. Therefore, the need for contextualised understandings of child labour in order to inform policies and practices to engender social work interventions. The issues raised in this Chapter in relation to how existing laws and policies conflict with customary laws presents huge challenge to the capabilities of social workers to ensure that social justice is extended to working children and their parents in fishing communities. The postcolonial understandings of the discourses in child labour discharges the requirement that "the knowledge producer be aware of the historical", the contextual experiences, local actualities "that sustain intellectualism and intellectual projects" on child labour (Dei, 2004, p. 262).

However, this Chapter has only shown how the discourses surrounding child labour are constructed based on the outer circumstances/social, without showing any relation to the inner/internal/psychic aspects. It is possible to draw on an array of frameworks such as 'habitus' by Pierre Bourdieu (1999) among others to understand the link between individuals and social structures. However, for me, they fall short of taking care of how an insider/outsider researcher populates his or her mind with thoughts and feelings at the field undertaking a critical ethnographic study. Thus this study draws on relevant psychoanalytic/psychosocial and postcolonial theorists. In order to bring into my own approach and deal with reflexivity from my own experience, this study draws more on the psychoanalytically informed psychosocial to provide an emergent understanding of child labour. Frantz Fanon helps in making the connection between the psychosocial and the postcolonial critiques, and the personal and the political. The theoretical perspectives of these relevant theorists are briefly discussed in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL STANDPOINTS

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter reviews the relevant psychoanalysis and psychosocial discourse that help to address the research questions. This review is targeted at establishing which concepts and ideas could emerge most helpfully. As indicated in Section 1.1 this study took off as a postcolonial exploration of child labour but theoretically and methodologically expanded to largely take the form of a psychoanalytically informed psychosocial dimension. Consequently, it has become imperative to review and interrogate the prevailing understandings and controversies in psychoanalysis owing to my attempt to draw on psychoanalytical concepts and ideas to develop psychosocial insights into child labour in Ghana. Thus Section 3.2 begins the review with general expositions on psychoanalysis and psychosocial. This section makes an attempt to unravel some of the controversies that come with any attempt to draw on psychoanalysis for psychosocial studies. This is followed by Section 3.3 which briefly discusses some of the ideas of Sigmund Freud (1919) who is considered as the 'father' of psychoanalysis. This is followed by Section 3.4 which briefly examines some of the works of Frantz Fanon (1989) who combined postcolonialism and psychoanalysis in his works. Section 3.5 discusses some of the works of Judith Butler, a literary and gender theorist, whose works are sometimes informed by psychoanalysis.

In this study I use a range of concepts and ideas that come from different areas of psychoanalysis. Here I show the connectivity between the different concepts I draw on to make sense of my data. This is because there are some compatibilities and incompatibilities in the use of these concepts and ideas. There are also debates within the world of people who are well embedded in the use of psychoanalysis (for example, Hollway, 2008; Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). Sigmund Freud's case study method, which

was undertaken in a clinical context, differs in aim and approach from my research stance. I do not adopt psychoanalysis as it is practised in the consulting room (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). The aim instead is to explore the possibility of utilising complementary theoretical explanations to build a unique analytical framework able to develop a better and deeper understanding of child labour. This is consistent with those psychosocial theorists who seek to avoid the risk of over analysing research subjects by reference to the psychosocial as an instinctual concept (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008), while recognising that objects can be become internalised (Hollway, 2008; Hollway & Jefferson, 2013).

3.2 Psychoanalysis and psychosocial

Psychoanalysis is a clinical treatment technique, and a body of theories about mental and emotional states of organisms (see Freud, 1926). According to Rusbridger (2012) psychoanalysis took some time to break free from Freud's emphasis on the biological aspect of affects, and to include a fuller account of the subjective experience of feelings. Frosh & Saville-Young (2011) argue that psychoanalysis as an approach to studying the human 'subject' that claims its own disciplinary status and also infiltrates other disciplines across the entire spectrum of the social sciences and humanities, has been controversial since its beginning in the late 19th century.

Psychosocial study is research in social science which draws on psychoanalytic principles (Clarke and Hogett, 2009). Bibby (2011) argues that psychosocial is a non-rationalist understanding of the human subject; attempts to take the unconscious into account; the data collected in a research environment will be co-constructed by the researcher and the participants; and the 'psycho' doesn't mean 'psychology'. Lucey et al. cited in Redman (2005, p.532) suggests, the 'psycho-social' as it has appeared in recent sociological and social psychological debates references the specifically irrational and unconscious dimensions of social life. According to Frost (2008) psychosocial theory for social work, both historically and contemporarily, draws on various traditions in psychology and sociology, and therefore it is a very difficult concept to hold in place. Its past and present can be hard to extrapolate. Hollway (2009) used the label 'psycho-social' for the developing alternative as a way of conveying that its central precept is to hold together an

understanding of the workings of the psyche and the social without reducing one to the other. Redman (2005) also alludes to the ways in which the social and the unconscious might be said to be mutually constituted such that the one is always already present in the other. Thomson (2007) contends that it helps to access experience in a way that conveys inner life as well as outer circumstance. According to Thomson (2010b) psychosocial makes it possible for a researcher to turn his or her mind to a more sophisticated approach to voice and narratives, that does not take what people say at surface value but understands us as situated and shaped by both historical, biological and psychic trajectories (Thomson, 2010b).

Frost (2008) contends that in sociology with its intellectual inheritance of critical theory, the 'psycho' part of the term 'psychosocial' refers to psychoanalytically informed theory. Unconscious processes and the unconscious dimension of people, organisations and social structures are a fundamental tenet of such psychosocial theory (Hollway &Jefferson, 2013). However it is noted that how the unconscious is defined is a matter of some dispute within psychoanalysis (see Frosh, 1999; Redman, 2005). The internal world and its struggles, for example with anxiety, ambiguity and defence mechanisms, is a key site for enquiry. The 'social' part of the term psychosocial is also contingent and emerging (Frost, 2008). For a psychosocial researcher emotional engagement is both necessary and inescapable. This can be both burdensome and beneficial, both problem and solution (Finlay & Gough, 2003). From a sociological perspective, Wetherell (2003) contends that psychoanalysis is suspected of having strong individualizing tendencies. According to Frosh and Baraitser (2008, p347) there are scholars from a background of post-structuralism and/or influenced by discursive interpretive strategies who problematize the 'expert-knowledge epistemological strategies of psychoanalysis'. In the face of this there are many researchers who seek a language for psychosocial studies that is reducible neither to psychology nor to sociology (see Frosh & Saville-Young, 2011).

Controversies are also rife about the type of psychoanalysis that might fit into psychosocial studies (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008; Hollway, 2008). For instance in the British academic context in which much of this debate has been developed, this has

produced a stand-off between Kleinian and Lacanian thinkers (see Clarke, Hahn, & Hoggett, 2008; Frosh & Emerson, 2005; Hook, 2008; Hollway, 2008). This has led to the question about whether what some regard as the possible critical edge of psychoanalysis is being blunted by a humanistic rendering that appropriates psychosocial studies to what is effectively object relational thinking (Hoggett, 2000), or whether the move to the 'intersubjective' is one that will at last allow psychoanalysis some empirical hold (Clarke, Hahn, & Hoggett, 2008; Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). Furthermore and most importantly, the concern of psychosocial studies with the interplay between the social (external) and inner/psychic (internal) formations has occasioned a turn to psychoanalysis as the discipline that might offer convincing explanations of how what the "inner" becomes "outer" and vice versa (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). According to Redman, Epstein, Kehily, and Mac An Ghaill (2002), Benjamin argues that there is an inherent tension between those psychoanalytic accounts that are committed to a notion of an irreducible 'inner-world' which are populated with primitive feelings, the capacity for identification and unconscious defence mechanisms and other accounts which are 'committed to the proposition that discursive practices attribute personhood to individuals in their passage through social institutions' (p.190).

Despite these controversies, psychoanalysis, both in its Lacanian and Object Relational nature is well favoured and drawn on because of the importance its places on how irrationality permeates the social sphere, and the premium its places on fantasies (see examples Butler, 2004a; Redman, 2005; Redman et. al 2002; Skeggs, 2005; Wetherell, 2008; Zizek, 2000). Even though the details of psychoanalysis and psychosocial debates are beyond the scope of this study, it is possible to argue that

> what the different psychoanalytic traditions hold in common is a
> conception of the unconscious as a 'realm' or register of 'psychic reality'
> that is in excess of and cannot be reduced to the external reality of the
> social world; that is consequential, not least in the sense that it is said
> always to press on and frequently to interrupt this external reality; and
> whose content is by and large unconscious or, at the very least, the subject
> of systematic attempts to avoid paying it attention (Redman, 2005, p. 532).

3.2.1 Understanding defended psychosocial subjects

The term "defended subjects" is principally associated with Hollway & Jefferson (2013). Defended subjects invest in particular positions in discourses to protect vulnerable aspects of self, an essentially psychosocial phenomenon noted by Gadd (2004). Walkerdine, (1997) describes the need that is sometimes felt, perhaps unconsciously, by subjects in ethnographic work to keep levels of anxiety down. Of primary importance to the notion of the psychosocial subject then, is their habitation in a world of lived experience, including cultures of differentiation and oppression; of the realities of class and gender, disability, age, sexuality and 'race' and culture (Frost, 2008, p. 252). In recent years, a number of scholars have highlighted and challenged prevailing conceptualisations of humans in different disciplines and areas of research in the social sciences (Buckner, 2012). Focusing her critiques on views of humans as socially constructed and rationally motivated, Buckner (2012) has argued in favour of a psychosocial understanding that does justice to the complexity of human beings.

In a similar vein, Roseneil (2006, p.849) adopts a critical view on the model of the subject assumed in much sociological work on personal life. She notes a prevalence of "a social constructionist ontology, which assumes the existence of a rational, unitary intimate subject". Roseneil (2006) highlights a lack of attention of constructionist approaches in general to irrational and unconscious motivations, which for her are critical in understanding humans. Inadequate views of the human subject have also been perceived to have predominated in research on crime and the fear of crime. Hollway and Jefferson (2013) point out a tendency among criminologists and sociologists studying fear of crime to assume a socially constructed and/or rationally driven research subject. They consider such conceptualisations problematic as they fail to enable adequate explanations of (often puzzling) differences in people's fear of crime.

As Hollway and Jefferson (2000) argue, taking the inner world seriously as part of a psychosocial project demands an understanding of people and their actions as not only consciously but also unconsciously motivated, and this points to the need to incorporate

psychoanalytic understanding into social science. Hollway and Jefferson (2013) work with a psychoanalytic ontology in conceptualising humans as non-rational, non-unitary 'defended subjects' as a way of accommodating a dynamic unconscious that defends against anxiety and affects people's positioning and investment in available social discourses. The notion of the defended subject is also adopted by Roseneil (2006) in her effort to incorporate attention to the unconscious dynamics that contest the rational mind in her psychosocial study of personal life. Gadd and Jefferson (2007, p.4) argue that "taking the inner world seriously involves an engagement with contemporary psychoanalytic theorizing because only there, in our view, are unconscious as well as conscious processes, and the resulting conflicts and contradictions among reason, anxiety and desire, subjected to any sustained, critical attention". Making a case for a conceptualisation of the human subject as psychosocial that is informed by psychoanalytic thinking, Henriques et al. (2004, p. 206) emphasise that "psychoanalysis challenges any attempt to separate the individual and the social, and to think about this individual in terms of its consciousness of self or a unitary capacity for rational action". Within psychosocial theory, psychoanalytically informed theories of subjectivity are the preferred psychological approach, as they assume a dynamic and mutually constituting relation between the psychic and the social (Buckner, 2012). The next section discusses some of the ideas of Sigmund Freud.

3.3 Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud elaborated a theory of human motivation and behaviour that was natural-scientific in orientation. Humans for him were motivated by hidden internal forces, innate biological instincts or drives. Drives have objects (see Freud, 1937). According to Cohen (2001) the area of Freud's work that appears to be fundamentally correct and of the greatest enduring values is his exploration of the processes of repression and other defence mechanism, and to a considerable degree in his explication of the unconscious. The unconscious is whatever is latent for a time and not known to the conscious mind during that time (McLeod, 2009). Freud (1937) viewed the unconscious as compose most centrally of motives, with their associated ideational content.

Buckner (2012) argues that for Freud people around a subject are therefore objects, in that they are targets of subjects' drives and the means of instinctual gratification. In Freudian theory the drives and instinctual gratification are primary (Freud, 1937). Klein (1952) drawing on Freud argued that relating with others is a by-product of the consummation of the drives, and the significance of others is reduced to their function for the subject (see Hochschild, 1983). Beedell (2009) drawing on Freud also adds that the mother, or her breast, acts as a means for satisfying a child's needs. Mother is not initially assigned the status of a person in her own right (Clarke, 2008). Benjamin (1993) also draws on Freud to contend that this conception of the early nurturing relationship neglects the encounter with a 'real' other, and thus the fundamentally social nature of human existence.

Since Freud, substantial developments have occurred in psychoanalytic thought. Views of the human subject as a fundamentally social being who needs other subjects, and of the search for relationships with real others as the primary motivational force in people have gained ground (see Clarke, 2008). Alford (1989) recognises that in Freud's later works, emotions came to be defined in terms of how they enable the individual to relate to others. Instinctual desires reflect not merely tension within the organism that seeks an outlet but serve to establish relations with others. According to Hollway and Jefferson (2013) in the jargon of psychoanalysis, these emotions are object-related from the very beginning of life. Rusbridger (2012) points out that because Freud's psychology is essentially a one-person psychology, he does not address theoretically the communicative aspects of feelings, although he is clearly very alive to them. Nevertheless, Freud's thought are important in understanding Melanie Klein (1988), whose work is founded on a relational view of the drives and emotions. The next section briefly discusses some of Frantz Fanon's works.

3.4 Frantz Fanon

The work and life of Frantz Fanon has been a site of intense intellectual debates, political disagreements, and diverse ideological investments among African-American, post-colonialist, Africanist, Marxist, postmodernist, feminist, literary and cultural critics (see

Bhabha, 1986). Hook (2004a) argues that Frantz Fanon's greatest source of originality as a postcolonial theorist lay in the fact that he combined psychology and politics in his analysis of colonial problems, national liberation and social revolution. Fanon employs psychoanalytic methods to probe the colonised subject's "abnormal" psyche.

For Fanon (1968) the ideological structures of colonialism were based on the complete eradication of native culture, history, citizenship, and language, and replacing with European ones. According to Fanon (1968), the native must be convinced of her or his essential inferiority in order for her/him to submit to foreign rule, thereby ensuring the colonial project's very survival. The colonial world creates and perpetuates a collective inferiority complex among its colonised subjects; thus, European cultural imperialism and internalized inferiority become the dualistically defining characteristic of the colonised subject's lived experience. Fanon further expostulates that "the feeling of inferiority of the colonised is correlative to the European's feeling of superiority" (Fanon, 1968, p. 93).

Fanon (1968, p.94) in *Wretched of the Earth* argues that violence for the colonised is a 'cleansing force' and makes perpetrators feel good. But Albert (2004) argues that violence has horrible effects on its perpetrators. Additionally Majavu (2007) contends that there is no evidence to make us believe that violence perpetrated by the other side will not have the same effect. Fanon cited in Bulhan (1985) argues that oppression in the practice and institutionalisation of violence by the colonial state is not only motivated and perpetuated by economic motives, but also by psychological and cultural interests. The revolutionary response of the oppressed to such violence generates a new language, people and humanity. Such a response has the potential to produce a liberated society (Bulhan 1985).

In his work titled *Black Skin, White Masks* Fanon (1967) suggestively and stylishly announces the multi-disciplinary approach he uses to probe the colonial subject's crisis of self-identification (see Hook, 2004b). According to Parris (2011) the binary formulation of Black skins and white masks describes several theoretical dichotomies: psychoanalytical, in the employment of a mask to obscure true identity; dialectical, in the

play of opposing racial identities and symbolically Manichean forces; and ontological, in the subsuming of Black identity by the mask of white identity. According to Fanon, the stultifying effects of colonialism's white mask prevent the black man from existing by and for himself. The black man, according to Fanon, must exist by and for white civilisation. As Fanon (1967, p. 12) further states in *Black Skin, White Masks* "White civilisation and European culture have forced an existential deviation on the Negro". Fanon argues that the existential deviation he is referring to is manifest in the colonised subject's forced denial of her own native identity or blackness. Wearing a white mask negates native/Black identity and all that it represents: racial and ethnic particularity, racial self-identification, and native history and culture (Hook, 2004a). The next section briefly discusses Judith Butler.

3.5 Judith Butler

Her work, *Frames of War,* demonstrates how Butler draws on psychoanalysis in her understanding of violence (see Butler, 2009). Various scholars have used and are still using Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity to facilitate discussions of identity in recent times (see Chavez, 2010; Fox, 2007; Holland, 2006).

Butler (2004b) suggests, however, that the theory of performativity originally emerged not from an interest in identity but from a question of survival, in particular for gender and sexual minorities. According to Chavez (2010) Butler was specifically concerned about how some lives are considered real while others are not real. For Butler (1993, p. 2) performativity is premised upon the temporal logic of citation and repetition where "discourse produces the effects that it names". In this case, it is not a wilful subject or a doer who does the gendered deed (Butler, 1995). Rather, the doer is constituted in and by the deed (Butler, 1995). Butler (1995, p. 134) argues that a successful performative draws on and recites ''a set of linguistic conventions which have traditionally worked to bind or engage certain kinds of effects''. Such conventions do not determine the subject because "signification is never foundational; instead, it is a repetitive process that comes to seem as if it is a foundation" (Butler, 1999, p. 185). Nonetheless, Butler's emphasis on the temporal logics of citation and repetition has led some to question the role of context in

the theory of gender performativity (see Fox, 2006).

Butler argues that identity formation is not just suffused with individual notions of pleasure and pain. But it can be complicit in violence. Consequently, she suggests that there is the need for a shared awareness of the vulnerability, humility, and responsibility to the unwilled address of others. Emerging from this is her consideration of how we can develop "liveable lives", so that we can minimise the possibility of "unbearable life" (Butler, 2004a, p. xix-xx).

3.6 Conclusion

In undertaking this illustrative theoretical review and being exposed to psychosocial ways of making meaning of narratives, I have developed an emergent understanding of the utility of different psychoanalytic concepts and ideas for use in this study. By this I mean I used an emergent understanding of psychoanalytically influenced psychosocial concepts and ideas with the aim of determining which of these concepts and ideas are appropriate. In doing this I decided against addressing directly the theoretical debates between Lacanian (1989) and Kleinian (1946) perspectives on these 'psychosocial' as a concept. Instead my analytical approach uses psychoanalytic thinking as a generic paradigm to inform my work (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). This is why I continuously use the phrase psychoanalytically informed psychosocial, rather than drawing on any particular psychoanalytic methodology (see Hollway, 2009).

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter is organised into eight sections. Section 4.2 discusses my epistemological and ontological positions. My epistemological stance is subjective and it questions the idea of absolute truth (Yin, 2014). My ontological stance is considered as "contingent, dialogic and context specific" (Dunne et al., 2005, p.172). Section 4.3 explicates my critical ethnographic design which puts ethical and moral responsibility on the part of the researcher (Madison, 20012). Section 4.4 discusses my qualitative approach, addressing case study design, and recruitment of participants. Section 4.5 explains my data collection strategies. It has five sub-sections: it discusses how I employed in-depth interviews; Free Association Narrative Interviewing (FANI) method; observations; Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); and field notes. Section 4.6 explains how I carried out my data processing and analysis based on the narratives of the fishers. It involves both the fishers and my internal world populated with thoughts, feelings, fears and fantasies. It includes the unuttered and the unutterable. Section 4.7 discusses ethical issues and the practical challenges that confronted me at the field. The Chapter concludes with the reflexive position adopted.

4.2 My epistemological and ontological stance

From the outset of this study, the methodological approach was premised in the subjectivist's ontology and epistemology of social reality using critical ethnographic methodology. This means, for me, there is nothing like definitive true knowledge. Arriving at truth is as a result of our intersubjective views based on consensus. This is perceived as reality in terms of knowledge. Social reality is a creation of each person's consciousness/unconsciousness or product of a multiplicity of interactions rather than the phenomenon out there, independent of those involved in its construction (Bryman, 2012).

Madison (20012; p.5) argued that critical ethnography has an explicit agenda, it has an ethical responsibility to promote freedom, social justice, equity and well-being (see Section 4.3 for further discussion of critical ethnography).

I intended to draw on the external circumstances of the fishers as their intersubjective socio-cultural consensus of lived experiences of child labour in the community (see Section 1.4). Nevertheless, during the field work I realised that the fishers were subjects whose lived experiences of the world regarding child labour cannot be fully understood without knowledge of the way in which their inner worlds allow them to "experience the outer world" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 4).

To my mind explicating the epistemological foundations of one's knowledgeable engagement with certain field of study is, therefore, an important part of research processes, not only in terms of defending the validity claims of the findings, but also in terms of strategic choices one make in the research process and the mode of involvement with the object of study (Alexandrov, 2009). I accounted for the radical implications of a psychoanalytically informed epistemology which requires a different way of knowing from the positivist one in which the history of social and human sciences was embedded (Hollway, 2009). This was informed by my understanding that the claim for a privileged viewpoint, based on the mastery of specialised method and knowledge, is inherent in the epistemology of positivism and has become a central pillar of the empowered status of science and its institutions in modern societies (Alexandrov, 2009). By psychoanalytically informed epistemology, I mean in order to represent the fishers' "…lived experience in its dynamic, multifaceted, complex and conflictual wholeness, words have to be used in such a way that they are not stripped bare of the emotional, sensuous…" (Hollway, 2009, p. 462). I stayed grounded in a research tradition with a set of practices dictated by empirical, qualitative, and psychosocial field-based research, which frame questions of ethics and researcher reflexivity (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). My understanding, like Hollway (2009, p. 150) was that,

> ……….. there are two grounds for believing that a psychoanalytically informed paradigm can enrich psycho-social research methods; epistemological and ontological. Epistemologically the paradigm can help

the use of researcher subjectivity as an instrument of knowing. Ontologically it can inform an understanding of participant subjectivity. Of course these two reasons are intimately linked because a psychoanalytic emphasis on unconscious dynamic intersubjectivity ensures that the focus of both epistemology and ontology is on the affective traffic within relationships, be it the relationship between researcher and researched or those of participants in their life world, past, present and anticipated future.

I worked against the positivist notion of the researcher as a non-engaged observer. This helped to challenge the positivist idea of the value-neutral observer by acknowledging the inevitable imprinting of the values I espoused as the researcher on the process and the outcome of the study (Clarke & Hoggett, 2009). The next section discusses critical ethnography and how it was used as a design in this study.

4.3 Critical ethnography

Critical ethnography is a form of ethnography arising from the Frankfurt School of social research and it espouses a change-oriented approach to understanding social structures within communities (Thomas, 1993). He explained that whereas conventional ethnography is concerned with what is, critical ethnography concerns itself with what could be. It embodies reflection that analyses culture, knowledge, and action in their natural setting with a political purpose (Madison, 2012). Foley and Valenzuela (2008) argue that cultural critique that calls for a change is the main purpose of critical ethnography. According to Thomas (1993, p. 2) critical ethnography "opens to scrutiny otherwise hidden agendas, power centres and assumptions that inhibit, repress and constrain". In that context, it sits well with the psychoanalytically informed psychosocial framework employed as theoretical framework for this study.

This design seeks to "unpack the development of the underdevelopment" in the community (Collins & Blot, 2003 p. 28). This required considerable period of stay in the community (10 months in my case) (Emmerson, Fritz & Shaw, 2011). For instance following Madison (2012) advice, I had a basic level of understanding of the field- the general history, meanings, practices, institutions, and beliefs that constitute the field- before I commenced the actual face-to-face interviewing. I spent time closely listening,

observing, and interacting in the field while compiling extensive field notes which provided a foundation of knowledge and experience upon which I crafted my questions. In critical ethnography data analysis commences from the field in an iterative manner. It relies heavily on thick descriptive writings, explications, and examination and analysis of the main data that comes in as actualities of participant's direct first-hand experience (Madison, 2012).

The analytical procedure was largely inductive: understanding, organising, and presenting the fishers' constructs drawing on psychoanalytic concepts. This does not mean simplistic inductivism or naïve naturalism (Silverman, 2002 cited in Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013) where all that is required was to observe, listen, and write the fishers' social constructs on child labour. This is likened to an artwork, described by Alberty (2002) as being like the rendering of a performance of classical music which, while closely following a text, allows the performer to be represented. In this sense, critical ethnography is not a "fixed point view of a finished picture" but rather an interpretation which invites rather than excludes other perspectives (Alberty, 2002, p.597). This bespeaks of how compelling and necessary it is for critical ethnographers just like any other ethnographers to illuminate on how they negotiate the complexities involved in their authorial powers and interactions with their participants that might affect the data from the field (Silverman, 2010). Elements of micro-political relations like my relationship with the fishers, as a researcher, my insider-outsider positions, and authorial visibility were effectively managed. In this study, I engaged in in-depth examination of texts, theories, and fishers' narrative- said and unsaid, sifting through the complexity of views and developing psychosocial insights into the symbolic meanings that constitute fishers' social constructs, their inner life and my unconscious responses to that as an ex - child labourer and researcher.

In terms of ethics, critical ethnography puts ethical and moral responsibility on the part of the researcher to the researched and decrees that once injustice and oppression have been uncovered, action towards creating solutions should be sought (Madison, 2012). For example in this study, I had to renegotiate my meetings with the fishers anytime they felt

that my presence was inconveniencing them. I had to sometimes call on some NGOs (Ark Foundation) to come and help address any misunderstanding between children and their parents. I also called on local politicians to deal with heaped waste in the community to prevent any disease outbreak. I was not only observing and recording, but also thinking/reflecting and then doing something about what it was that I had seen and recorded. It freed me to move beyond description and images and then imagine what could be, initiating change and "freeing individuals from domination and repression" (Anderson 1989, p. 249) (see Section 4.7 for further discussion).

4.4 My qualitative approach

In this study, I was interested in understanding the concurrent dynamics of the internal context interacting with the external social world of the fishers living in a postcolonial site, in relation to child labour. Their realities regarding child labour, for me, are dynamic and could be negotiated dialogically. The data involved in this kind of study are not numerical but words and descriptive in nature. These are amenable to the use of qualitative research. Moreover, my approach is qualitative because this study uses critical ethnography which focuses on case study using multiple methods of data collection (interview, focus group discussion, observation) (see Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). My study also explored the said, unsaid, unsayable, hidden, anxieties and emotional aspects of child labour in a fishing community from fishers' perspective (Bryman, 2012). Silverman (2010, p. 326) argues that 'there is no longer a call for each researcher to describe and defend qualitative approaches'. Nonetheless, as part of my qualitative approach, I followed Dunne, Pryor and Yates (2005) perspective of regarding research as a social process. By so doing I considered all the theoretical, methodological and other substantive issues as intertwined and related to my identity as a researcher, Ghanaian, and as a child who was a labourer.

My feelings (anger, surprises, joy) about my observations were also documented in my diary and my reflective journal. As discussed in Section 4.3, I spent ten months to observe discourses and to personally conduct in-depth examination of the community and the contextual practices (Cohen et al., 2011). Each interview was transcribed as soon after

conducting the interview as possible. These included transcription of "false starts, hesitations, pauses, laughing, crying, whispering and overlapping of responses", as well as my words as captured in my research diary and reflective journal (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010, p. 517).

4.4.1 Case study

The definition of case study has become a subject of controversy owing to the manner and the extent to which all sorts of research and evaluation reports and their procedures, methods and styles have come to be put under the 'umbrella of case study' (see Yin, 2014). Nonetheless, Case study, for me, could be described as an examination of a subject of study (Case) and its related contextual conditions in an up-close, in-depth, and detailed manner for a period of time (Yin, 2014). Gerring (2007, p. 1) gives an analogy that, for me, may act as a very apt and short formulation of what case study is about. He says,

> There are two ways to learn how to build a house. One might study the construction of many houses – perhaps a large subdivision or even hundreds of thousands of houses. Or one might study the construction of one particular house. The first approach is a cross-case method. The second is a within-case or case study method (Gerring 2007, p. 1).

Furthermore, I also kept up with the understanding of Cohen and Manion (1989, pp. 124-125 cited in Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013) that,

> …the case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit – a child, a clique, a class, a school or community … to probe deeply and to analyse intensively … with a view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which that unit belongs.

My approach to case study, therefore, was based on a constructivist paradigm (Yin, 2014). This paradigm "recognises the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, …………Pluralism, not relativism, is stressed with focus on the circular dynamic tension of subject and object" (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 10 cited in Yin, 2014).

Following this understanding and the lack of time and funds, my case were fishers in a fishing community which I studied in its complexity to generate knowledge that may

inform social work practice and wider studies. This was also to allow me study the child labour phenomenon in-depth and intensively through a long dialogic process. To do this, I, using a multiple method, selected fishers in one fishing community of interest in the Central region (see Appendix 2 for the map of Central region) of Ghana. This particular fishing community was selected because it is typical of any other fishing community in Ghana (see GSS, 2014b); I worked and lived in the same region where the community is located; at age 11 I lived in the same community as a child labourer. The selection of this community was also informed by the argument that children living in fishing communities have more problems than those in urban areas (see Akyeampong, 2011). As part of the ethical arrangements (Sensitive nature of the study), the identity of the community is kept private and undisclosed.

The constructivist paradigmatic approach to case study fostered close collaboration between me and the fishers, making it possible for the fishers to share with me their realities (Yin, 2014). It also created an enabling environment for me to understand the fishers' actions and emotional responses.

4.4.2 Sampling and recruitment of the participants

The data were collected during two field visits. So, the participants were selected in two phases. In the first visit of five months (May-September 2013), I purposively selected eight participants, comprising four males and four females. For the second phase, which was also for five months (May-September, 2014), I selected eight participants purposively. They comprised five males and three females. These set of participants were interviewed and observed. They were not part of the focus group discussion (these methods will be discussed in Section 4.5). Different set of eight fishers was selected purposively for the focus group discussion only (see Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015). They comprised five females and three males. This was meant to help reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight, and also to engender variety of views (Krueger, 2002; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015). My research participants comprised a critical case sample of 24 fishers (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2003). By critical case sample, I mean these fishers have been living in the fishing community all their lives, and have been in

the fishing business in the community in their entire lives. These fishers were made up of 12 males and 12 females.

Before I commenced the recruitment, I had to set boundaries to give an indication of who will be studied and those who will NOT be studied. This was to ensure that my study remained reasonable in scope. My suggestions on how to bind a case included: (1) by time and place (Creswell, 2003); (2) by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994); and (3) time and activity (Stake, 1995). All of these are said to be similar to the development of inclusion and exclusion criteria for sample selection in a quantitative study. The difference is that these boundaries also indicate the breadth and depth of the study and not simply the sample to be included (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Bryman, 2012; Yin, 2014). Practically the following was the inclusion criteria I used to set out the criteria for all those who could be part of the study.

- Participants had to be working with a child or children: biological or foster parent for not less than 8 years.
- Participants had to be able to demonstrate an understanding of the study.
- Participants had to be able to verbally communicate.
- Once a fisher was recruited, no opposite gender sibling or extended family member was recruited because it was believed that it might be uncomfortable for two siblings or cousins of the opposite gender to participate together.

Based on this criterion, I developed a semi-structured interview schedule to select those who could participate in the study at their own free will. I used multiple methods to identify and select participants through purposive sampling (see Baskarada, 2014; Baxter & Jack, 2008). I was guided by what Smith cited in Robson, (2002, p.135) refers to as 'the search for typicality,' in the selection of participants for the study. This means the selection of subjects from whom what will be observed in a particular situation at a particular time is likely to apply more generally. First of all the community chief introduced me to the chief fisherman who in turn introduced me to the fishers at an assembly point. These fishers were composed of migrants, indigenes, and seasonal fishers. I administered a semi-structured interview to identify all of them. This process went on till I got all the 8 participants in the phase and 8 in the second phase, later on.

They were asked to mention the number of years they have been in the fishing business, the number of years they have been working with the children among others. They were asked to state whether the children are their own children or not. Based on this, the seasonal fishers were excluded from the study. This was due to the fact that they were not always into the fishing business. The indigenous and migrant fishers who had been in the fishing business for at least a minimum of eight years were selected to participate in the study because of their deep experiences and understandings of human activities and social structures of the community (Golo, 2012). This was also in conformity with critical ethnography which requires that data is collected from people who have unique experiences and understandings of the actualities in a particular local setting (Madison 2005; Thomas, 1993; Smith, 2005).

There were significant ethical issues involved that underpinned the recruitment of these fishers. Some of them had agreed straight away to be part of the study. Others complained of not having anything tangible from being participants in other studies. Few of the selected fishers were also worried that I could be discussing their activities on radio and on the only television station in the Central region. Some of the fishers selected for the study knew that I am a Ghanaian from a community which is not similar to their community. As I mentioned in the preface, my ability to speak the local dialect frequently helped me to gain their trust. Very few of them knew that I had spent some part of my childhood in the community. This helped me to make a case for my preparedness to help the community through research (see Chapter Eight for further discussion of how I addressed these issues). I kept negotiating these challenges as a process by continuously reminding them that they could decide not to be part of the study anytime (see Section 4.7 for further discussion). Despite these challenges, each fisher was selected only after she/he had fully understood the purpose of the research, the right to withdraw at any stage and/or give assent to participate. This study in a way involved a larger population of the community members because I observed and participated in almost every activity throughout my stay in the community as a student of critical ethnography. The next section discusses the data collection methods used in the study.

4.5 Data collection strategies

Critical ethnographic case studies are amenable to the use of mixed method approach to collect data. I used in-depth interview, focus group discussion, participant and non-participant observation and field notes. In the light of my experiences at the field I introduced the Free Association Narrative Interviewing (FANI) method as discussed by Hollway and Jefferson (2013). I discuss these methods under the following sections.

4.5.1 In-depth interviews

I used an unstructured in-depth interview to elicit information from the selected fishers in order to achieve a holistic understanding of the fishers' social constructs on child labour (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The instrument allowed the collection of data at meaningful and factual levels (Flick, 2006). I spent time to conduct in-depth one-on-one interview with the 16 critical case fishers. The interview sessions discussed fishers' time for reporting for work, their perspectives on the time children report for work, activities undertaken by fishers and their children, preparations before living for fishing expeditions, and the role of children when on sea. I also explored fishers' perspectives on the harmful or dangerous nature of fishing; child labour/work; and laws and regulations surrounding child labour. Sub-themes included slavery, training, discipline, and why fishers continue to engage their children in their work despite regulation. I, further, explored the fishers' perspectives on the relationship they have with their children, educated elite/local politicians, social workers/NGO workers; and their identities in the community (see Appendix 3 for the in-depth interview guide).

The interview sessions, at least two for each member of the critical case sample, explored fishers' perspectives on the themes discussed in the earlier paragraph. I asked the fishers open-ended questions, and probed wherever necessary to obtain data deemed useful for the study (Cohen et. al., 2011). This took the shape of interactive interviews which provided an "in-depth and intimate understanding of people's experiences with emotionally charged and sensitive topics" (Ellis, Kiesinger, & Tillmann-Healy, 1997, p.121). I started each interview by re-explaining the purpose of the study and interview, why the fishers have been chosen, expected duration of the interview, whether and how

the information would be kept confidential, and the use of a note taker and/or tape recorder (Bryman, 2012).

The interviews were organised in both the sheds and homes of the fishers as a way of providing a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information. The fishers felt more comfortable having a conversation with me about their experiences with child labour in their homes and sheds. I did not only asked questions, but I systematically recorded and documented the fishers responses coupled with intense probing for deeper meaning and understanding of the responses. The interviews occurred with one fisher at a time, to provide a more involving experience. I had a challenge of transitioning smoothly from one topic to the next. Nevertheless, I was able to interpret what I heard from the fishers, as well as seek clarity and a deeper understanding from the fishers throughout the interview (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

Some of the responses given by the fishers during the interview sessions were quickly verified through observing critically what was going on around us and the way the respondents react to others. For instance in the course of an interview in the home of one of the fishers, his son came home from school and interrupted our interaction. He (son) asked for his pocket money to buy his lunch. The fisher had forgotten of my presence and all the stories he had told me about how he loves his children and how he treats them with love and care. In my presence the fisher shouted at his child: '*go and join your colleagues at the shore hustling for fish to sell and stop disturbing me. Can't you see I have a visitor'?* After this he looked at me and said *'sometimes these kids become possessed with some evil spirit that makes them disturb us and so we become angry. Please I don't want you (referring to me) to think that I am being defensive or given excuses for what just happened'.* This contributed to my realisation that because of the sensitive nature of discussions around child labour my participants could be defensive. Some of these episodic events prompted me to pay attention to how the fishers used their voices and language to convey meaning. This includes: their choice of vocabulary, comfort with expressing themselves, sudden inarticulateness, speed of speaking, hesitations, emotional level, degree of energy, and my emotional level as an African and a researcher. This

among others fed into the development of a method of interview established by Hollway and Jefferson (2013) termed Free Association Narrative Interviewing (FANI) which is psychoanalytically informed.

4.5.2 Free Association Narrative Interviewing (FANI) Method

Hollway and Jefferson (2013) developed the FANI method. This was based on the psychoanalytic premise of defended research subjects (Hollway, 2009) as discussed in Section 3.2.2. "Defended" in the sense that, it is assumed that research subjects and researchers are not necessarily transparent to themselves from a psychoanalytical point of view (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). This way of thinking about participants and researchers gave birth to the Free Association Narrative Interview (FANI) method, based on Sigmund Freud's idea of free association as a means of tapping into unconscious wishes (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013).

The FANI method is considered as, "the kind of narrative that is not structured according to conscious logic, but according to unconscious logic; that is' the associations follow pathways defined by emotional motivations, rather than rational intentions" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p.39). In this way, the coherence of the narrative may be compromised, and it is by examining the contradictions and avoidances that the researcher might be able to discern the interviewees' concerns, or, in other words, the presences and absences in the narrative (Boydell, 2009). The FANI method involves two interviews (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). The first interview is used "to interrogate critically what was said, to pick up contradictions, inconsistencies, avoidances and changes of emotional tone" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p. 41), while the second interview allows the researcher to follow up and "seek further evidence to test…emergent hunches and provisional hypothesis. It also gives interviewees a chance to reflect". But in my first fieldwork, I used in-depth interview which revealed the defensive nature of the fishers as mentioned in Section 4.5.1. Thus, occasioning the use of the FANI method. With this method I aimed at accessing latent meaning through eliciting and focusing on the associations between ideas, as opposed to exclusively on words and word clusters (Hollway, 2009).

The fishers were asked to tell their stories as 'fisher kids' and how they felt working with their parents, and 'please kindly tell me about how your parents treated you as a child'. Other questions were; 'can you tell me how you feel when you are on sea with the working children?' 'Tell me about some of the challenges before, during and after fishing working with children' (see Appendix 4 for the FANI guide).

4.5.3 Observations

In this study I utilised both participant and non-participant observation method. My observations, like Hollway (2009, p. 466), did not take the shape of a,

> psychoanalytic training tradition, the observation method is combined with a weekly observation seminar, in which the group of observers meets throughout the observation period, led by an experienced psychoanalytically-trained observer, to process together the impact of the developing observation.

My understanding has always been that observing and participating are integral to understanding the breadth and complexities of the fishers' direct experiences on child labour. I explained to them the purpose of the observation and their right to stop me from observing them. The fishers were made aware of my commitment to confidentiality. The fishers' consented on one condition that I would not do participant observation with their women. They explained that I am a young man who should not be seen in the midst of their daughters and wives. I could only observe from afar. I accepted that. So I observed the women and their children from the periphery using non-participatory observation method. Some of the activities I observed with the women and their children were: meeting of fishermen to break bulk of their catch; distribution of fish; carrying of fish; removing of scales from fish; salting of fish, smoking of fish; and frying of fish.

I undertook the study with the belief that I could not study a sensitive issue like child labour as part of a social world without being part of it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). My deployment of participant observation was justified by the possibility that it could help me learn and experience the perspectives held by the fishers. As a foundation of my epistemological position, which is that the reality regarding child labour is multiple, I presumed that there would be multiple perspectives within the community. Since

participant observation has the greatest potential to uncover contextualized, honest data, otherwise inaccessible, it ontologically and epistemologically underpins human quests for understanding multiple realities of life in context (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

The use of participant observation method was mainly with fishermen. I participated as an insider and observed as an outsider of fishers and their children's preparation for fishing expedition, upon return from sea with a catch, distribution of fish to fishmongers to their sheds, distribution of premixed fuel for fishers to power their outboard motors, and addressing of day to day challenges faced by fishers by the chief fisher and his elders. I participated and observed how the fishers and their children carried out mending of fishing nets and the observance of the sacred Tuesday during which no fisher is allowed to go fishing. I participated and observed socio-cultural and nightlife of the fishers and the community members in general. Some of their socio-cultural lives include the celebrations of festivals; gambling among adults and children; and visiting of tourism and recreational sites. I visited their "ghettos" (a hidden place for the selling and buying of marijuana and other drugs). I made notes at end of every session of my observation paying detailed attention to the fishers and their children in almost all their interactions (Hollway, 2009). These I considered to represent my experiences. The observation method did capture the mundane practices and the emotions that were inextricable from the practices, and other issues concerning child labour that, perhaps, were not expressible in words (Hollway, 2009).

While in the community settings, I made careful notes about what I saw as and when it was possible to do so. But I preferred retiring in my room after an observation and writing everything in my field notebook and reflective journal. I recorded the fishers' accounts after every observation session. The fishers' informal conversation and interaction among themselves and with other members of the study population were all recorded in my field notes book, in as much detail as possible. Information and messages communicated through mass media such as radio or television pertaining to the community were all documented. The method helped me as a researcher to approach the

fishers in their own environment in addition to having the fishers come to me to give their perspectives on child labour.

4.5.4 Focus group discussions

I incorporated FGDs in the study in order to have other fishers in the community iron out some differences in opinions and my observations which gave me more insights and enriched my data. It served as an instrument for crosschecking the responses of the fishers. It also enhanced my quest to shovel deep 'beneath the surface'. The entire group was made up of eight fishers. This was in conformity with Adams and Cox (2008) who cautioned that a focus group should not exceed six or eight participants. They argued that if it is too large, people are more likely to break off to talk in sub-groups and leave people out of the discussion. The group was made up of five women and three men. They fully consented before we commenced any discussion. This group met five times. Members of this group were different from those I had interviews with. This was meant to engender multiple realities and perspectives which underpin my epistemological and ontological positions (see Section 4.2). I did not allow a husband and wife in the same group. This was to avoid any defences they might erect in each other's presence. Though, sometimes, undesirable combinations could also serve as foils for each other. Perhaps, they may engage in constructive dialogue which might help to get to the bottom of the issue being discussed (Bryman, 2012). They agreed with me to take notes and tape record all proceedings.

The meetings for FGDs were held in the sheds of some of the fishers. This was to ensure that the setting for the FGDs does not influence its success as the more natural the setting, for the respondents, the more likely they are to give naturalistic responses (Cohen et al., 2011). The fishers normally helped me to arrange the sheds for the discussion. Before the commencement of the FGD, I, again, inform the group members what the purpose of the meeting is, and what we would be talking about. I tried to make them feel reassured and enhanced by their participation. I encouraged an interaction among the participants by introducing an issue to them to deliberate on. I did respond substantively to questions raised by any group member. I posed non-directive questions about how the fishers

experience child labour and the laws surrounding it (see Appendix 6 the FGD guide). I maintained a non-judgmental attitude. However as the moderator of the discussion, I sometimes struggled to maintain an attitude of great interest without reinforcing any particular viewpoint.

I used members' postures, gestures, vocalizations, and other physical cues to organise my data. However it was very challenging for me to interpret gestures and body languages of these group members. This is because sometimes a member folding his or her arm across the chest could mean not interested, tiredness or rejection but it might also signify many other things that I might not be in the know (Liamputtong, 2013). I rounded off of each session by reaffirming to the fishers that the information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. I ensured a debriefing session that spelt out in more detail what the study will be used for and what the aim of the study is (Bryman, 2012).

4.5.5 Field notes

During interviews and observations sessions with the fishers, I observed myself while observing and interviewing the fishers. For that matter, I kept a 'reflexive field notes' "in which researchers are encouraged to document the emotional dynamics of research encounters and their personal reactions to fieldwork situations" (Thomson, 2010b, p. 3). I wrote down the observation of myself in observing the fishers in the form of field notes. My field notes, therefore, became a method of data collection. This is so because the data was how I felt and thought observing and interviewing the fishers. I take the view that listening to people's own stories, and learning from their constructions and analysis of their lived realities, from their own 'stories' as recalled by them – is consciously not detached (Mander, 2010). I believe it is based on ethics of caring and accountability, and its search for truth involves both the researcher and the researched (Mander, 2010).

4.6 Data processing and analysis

The data were not analysed separately but triangulated. Triangulation, according to Cohen et al., (2011), is a systematic process of looking across multiple data sources to crosscheck and confirm evidence to derive themed findings. Practically my data analysis

process, as a whole, followed Green et al.'s (2007) steps of data analysis from a psychoanalytically informed psychosocial perspective. These steps are immersion in the data, coding, creating categories, and the identification of themes. These steps did not follow in a linear fashion because the analysis was done concurrently with the data collection as I already stated. By immersion, I mean I had to involve or "lower myself" deeply into the data. I started by repeatedly reflecting and reviewing my field notes, research diary, and my reflective journal. I read and re-read my transcripts and contextual data. I repeatedly listened to recordings of the interviews. As part of this immersion process, "psychoanalytic attention is given to the way in which language works in and around the researched and the researcher", focusing on absences and incoherencies (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010, p. 519).

In the process of immersion I kept reminding myself of Hollway and Jefferson (2013) analysis of free association narrative interviews which involve the looking out for evidence of defensive organisation. This gave me clues underlying anxieties suggesting the fishers' motivations, positioning, and actions. This helped me to witness and relive the details that make up the interview and observation context including hesitations, body language, and the fishers' confidence, expression of emotions, tone, contradictions, and elisions in answering questions. This produced a process during which I developed ideas about the possibilities of analysis (Hunter, Lusardi, Zucker, Jacelon, & Chandler, 2002). For instance, it was during this stage that I realised that the fishers were splitting objects into good and bad. By doing so, the fishers internalized the good object and split the bad object off and projected on to someone else as explained by Hollway and Jefferson (2013). I regarded this as a defensive mechanism by which positioning is explained in psychoanalytic theory (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013).

Generally, my codes comprised a short descriptive label and main characteristic that flag how to recognise the code in the data and guide any exclusion or qualifications and examples (Neuman, 2006). I examined and organised the information contained in each interview and the whole dataset. I undertook a detailed taxonomic process of sorting and tagging of my data (Bradley, Curry, & Dvers, 2007). At this stage I was further

stimulated to begin to make judgements and tag blocks of transcripts (Ryan & Russell, 2000). Codes that shared a relationship constituted the creation of categories and, subsequently, the identification of emergent themes (Green et al. 2007). To begin coding, I asked myself in the course of reading my transcripts, what is this fisher saying? When I got this right, I applied labels to phrases, sometimes whole paragraph, and single words. I ensured that I had a clear sense of the context in which fishers' statements in the interview, FGDs, and observational data were made. This helped me to apply my coding labels effectively and contextually. I made important notes in the margins of my transcripts and used markers to make colour codes. As an example, in discussing how fishers as parents relate with their children when these children refuse to do what they have been asked to do, some of the fishers talked about *smacking such children hard*, others said *beat them well, well,* some said *put fear in them with belt*. My descriptive coded labels were "smack hard", "beat them", and "put fear". These were all put under the category I created as "Violence". I explained each of these in relation to violence. Then, I separately linked them to an overall theme to show how the fishers relate with their own children in the fishing community.

I created coherent categories and brought together codes that were related. My process of categories creation sometimes happened alongside my coding process. I kept going back and forth examining and linking my codes to categories. This process enabled me to categorise what the fishers said about, for instance, their social and personal conceptualization of child labour in the community. From my psychosocial point of view, this helped me to further unravel anxieties that came with the contradictions and elisions in fishers' account. I sorted these contradictions into various categories for further investigation, so that I could generate explanation for what I observed and recorded during interviews.

I generated my themes by testing the explanations with my data and referring to the theoretical concepts which were relevant to my study (Silverman, 2010). In developing a reflexive approach in all these, I looked at how I positioned myself as a researcher and tried to become aware of my own experience of projective identification to help me develop a psychosocial understanding of the relationship between fishers and their

children (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). By projective identification, I mean projecting into another object and then identifying with the object. This keeps bad parts of the self at a safe distance without losing them (Klein, 1946).

4.7 Ethical considerations and practical challenges

Research, as a systematic process of intentional inquiry, is characterised and governed by certain amount of rigour and sets of principles and guidelines (Bryman, 2008). Furthermore, as I used psychosocial and critical ethnography as methodology, it was very crucial and obligatory to begin with an ethical responsibility to address processes of unfairness or injustice that show up in my relationship and interactions with the fishers. By referring to 'ethical responsibility,' I mean an undeniable sense of duty and commitment based on moral principles of human freedom and well -being, and hence a compassion for the suffering of living beings (Madison, 2012). Before the commencement of this study I had to explain and justify how the study was to be carried in conformity with the research ethical standards of University of Sussex, which requires the protection of the best interest of research participants. I also had to ensure that my research purposes, contents, methods, reporting, and outcomes abided by professional principles and practices (Cohen et al., 2011) like the 1964 Helsinki research standards, amended in 1996 (see Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). Prominent among the areas of concern are informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, data protection, and doing no harm to the fishers and their children. There were ethical issues surrounding the use of psychoanalysis and psychosocial. I will address this in my reflections in Chapter Nine.

Ethical issues arose from the nature of my research project itself, the community setting for the research, the procedures and methods adopted for data collection, the type of data collected, the nature of the participants, and what is to be done with the data and reporting the data (Oliver, 2003). I negotiated access as an on-going multi-layered process owing to the fact that the setting for the study is a postcolonial fishing community demanding my sustained interaction and observation of fishers and how they related with their working children. Therefore, it was not a one-off achievement negotiated with gatekeepers like chief of the community and the chief fisher (Adzahlie-

Mensah, 2012). In my attempt to seek for oral consent from the gatekeepers (Community chief and his elders), they argued that formal education and schooling are the means through which the West controls it former colonies. They suggested that because I am an educated person, I was only in the community to work for 'outsiders'. I felt this was an attack on me as an educated person. At this point I had to demonstrate to the chief and his elders that I identify myself with them, and prove that I am sensitive to their needs even though I am an educated person. After long deliberations about the purpose of the study and duration of the study, the gatekeepers consented orally. They were made aware that I could be asked to leave the community at any time. The community's chief consented by given his verbal approval:

> *My son I am so happy that you have this big idea for this community, especially our children. This problem you are coming to study can be found in all the fishing communities in this country. We need your assistance to deal with them. Honestly, I am so happy to have you here as one of us. You are welcome. I have always had problems with the youth and their love for gambling and smoking. Most of these children do not have any role models in this community these days. As you coming to stay here with us for your research, I know the children would see you differently and learn from you. My only challenge with people like you is that because of your interactions and dealings with whites, you tend to think like them. But don't worry my linguist is gone to call the chief fisherman and women's leader…*

I made some payment instead of the provision of some alcoholic beverages for the pouring of libation, even though this was against my religious beliefs. This act, for me, resonates with Ruch's (2013, p. 3, emphasis original) explication of beneficence as "generally understood quite restrictively in terms of 'hard' intentional and tangible outcomes or benefits for research participants, such as some form of reward/payment for participation or improvements in or access to service provision". By making such a payment, I thought I could be experienced by the fishers as equalizing the relationship or as having the material power in terms of finance which could be used to coerce them for information (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). For me, this was tantamount to influencing their decision to grant me access and allow the fishers to participate in the study. However, the fact that the chief expressed his willingness to assist anybody who has intention of helping the community to deal with child labour encouraged me to move on.

I met the chief fisherman and woman (Konkohene). I read and explained in the local dialect the purpose of the study and process of data collection as well as my stay in the community. The chief fisherman gave his verbal approval:

> *Well gentleman before I welcome you, may I know where you come from? {Referring to me} I asked this question because of the way you speak the Fante dialect with ease. Anyways you are very welcome. This very problem you are trying to contribute to solving has been with us for ages. We need a solution to it. I wish you a happy stay in this community. If you face any challenge just inform me. We will help you to help us. I will ensure that you meet all the fishers and explain everything to them*

The leader of the women gave her verbal approval by supporting what the chief fisherman said. She said: *You are welcome my son. As a woman I don't have much to say but to support what the chief fisherman said. We will help you to help us.*

The linguist of the chief introduced me to the fishers. I read and explained in Fante dialect (local dialect of the fishers) an information sheet and consent form stating the research purpose which contained their rights and my responsibilities. I also informed them about the duration of my stay in the community, and the process of data collection. The chief's gong-beater informed the rest of the community members of my presence in the community as a researcher, so that there would not be surprises if I peer into the social life of the community as a whole (Cohen et al., 2011). I continuously negotiated access by securing day-by-day consent. I ensured that the fishers understood that being part of the study is voluntary and that they have the right to choose whether to be in the study or not (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). I explained and guaranteed them my obligations and commitment to anonymity and confidentiality. Fishers were made to understand that I would use aliases or pseudonyms, code for identifying people, and the use of password protected files (Bryman, 2012) to secure their identity as individuals and the community's identity.

Fishers selected for the study asked questions with respect to the research purpose, the process of data collection and their rights and responsibilities as participants. I recruited

the participants after they had given a verbal consent to be part of the study. The chief fisher was not selected for the study and he did not have any hand in the selection of the participants. This was to ensure that selected fishers feel free to express themselves without any fear or favour. Even though children were not selected as participants, I read and explained the purpose of the study and the process of data collection to the children of the selected fishers. This was so because the study was about them from their parents' perspective. I observed and interacted with their parents as they were working together. Therefore it was ethically right for me to seek for their consent. I explained to the children their right to stop me from discussing anything about them with their parents. I was sensitively aware of the unequal power relations that existed between the fishers and me; the researcher and the Ghanaian.

One of the practical challenges that nearly stalled this study was when two of my initial participants communicated to me their desire to stop participating in the study because of the attitude of their husbands. They explained to me that their husbands felt that they are married women who should not be seen with another man in the name of research. To address this issue I met their husbands and they explained to me their worries and reservations. They later on agreed with me to always ensure that I interacted with the women in an open space for everybody to see us. They disagreed with the initial arrangements of holding the interviews in the sheds of the women.

I anticipated the need to ensure that none of my method of data collection constituted any emotional or physical harm to the fishers. I repeatedly kept reminding the fishers of their right to refuse to talk to me or to stop me from participating and observing them at any time they deemed fit. Each interview session, for example, began with a reminder to the fishers' that participation in the research was voluntary. These were brought about based on my reflections on the fissure of distance between me and the fishers related to age, education, and idiom which I had to negotiate well and build platform for mutual trust and respect to bring about cordiality in our relationship. I provided feedback to participants by reading and explaining in the local dialect the transcripts, and a summary of the report in a focus group briefing session. This formed part of my debriefing session. I approached my ethical issues with an attitude of compassion, respect, gratitude, and

common sense without being too effusive (Bryman, 2008), yet I was not spared of ethical challenges.

4.8 Reflexivity

The start of this study saw the convergence of all the factors that made up my multiple selves. These were my Ghanaian-ness; my childhood experiences as a child labourer; Being a principal research assistant; social commentator on radio/television; political activist; and a student-researcher from the United Kingdom (see the Preface). I was, and played most of these roles (Apart from studying in the UK) in the Central Region of Ghana. All of these contributed to my study. But also made it an extremely challenging process. All of these highlight the fact that researcher subjectivity and identity cannot be excluded in the research process. It also highlights the place of intersubjective dynamics (see Hollway, 2009). Thus being reflexive becomes imperative in this study. The analytic stance I employed was a concentric reflexivity approach (see Saville Young & Frosh, 2010). This means I had to continuously disclose myself throughout the research process, and also share same centre with the fishers without necessarily sharing same radius. Through this process I constantly reflected on my interactions, observations and dialogues with fishers. This also involved the analysis of the way data and text are put together, the use of intonations, stresses and the rhythmic patterning of words so as to interrogate effectively (Frosh, 2007). This approach therefore required of me to pay attention to the details of the spoken word as well as the broader cultural discourses (Saville Young & Frosh, 2010).

My personal beliefs, values, experiences as an ex-child labourer, interest, and socio-political obligations as a Ghanaian influenced my choice and understandings of this study. As a Ghanaian I spent time reasoning about how the whole fieldwork and data collection process had affected my understandings of fishers, children and their way of life in terms of their inner and outer circumstances. This includes my appreciation of the fishers' traditions, values, feelings, and anxieties as a Ghanaian from the North studying a fishing community in the South. I was also concerned about how being an ex-child labourer could affect my understandings of the narratives of the fishers, my emotions and

my representation of this in a textual form as a researcher. I was also concerned about how to negotiate my relationship with the fishers to ensure that the operations of power relations were well managed. All of these had to do with my personal choices in keeping a research diary and journals, writing one thing at a time while thinking about how the study was to be framed for my purpose. I had the aim of ensuring that the study brings about a change in both myself and the fishers and their children through personal and cultural growth to be delivered by social work interventions.

These show that my words and feelings are included in the analysis so as to reflect on the joint narrative work that emerged during the interview. From my perspective, this facilitated an accountable and transparent approach to my contribution to the material. According to Wetherell (2008) doing so recognises the specific context in which the narrative material is produced, a context that comes with its own pressures to narrate a coherent self. This among others explain why I kept journal and reflexive diary in which I kept track of activities of my multiple selves and how I felt about the happenings in the community. As a result I used my subjectivity to assist in my data analysis as part of my reflexive approach (see Hollway & Jefferson, 20013).

I became the measuring instrument in the analysis by going back and forth through a process of reading, re-reading and constructing and reconstructing the data. This helped me to make sense of the data. Drawing on concepts and ideas from psychoanalysis, I developed complex reasoning as I tried to link all the loose strands of the data to identify themes. The final product or thesis is considered as a reconstruction of the fishers' perspectives drawing on my previous and personal experiences with child labour in Ghana. Premium is placed on how my being the researcher influenced my interpretation of the data, and the construction of the final text (Burawoy, 1998). My Ghanaian-ness (Speaks the fishers' dialect, Fante), and an ex-child labourer suggest that I have previous experience with my study of child labour. This meant I could influence the entire study. However, I am also a student studying in the United Kingdom (Acquired Western values and maybe taste), and I am Ghanaian from the Northern part of Ghana. This meant I could act as an outsider as well even though I was born in the Central region of Ghana

and could speak the fishers' dialect as discussed in the preface. Varying my methods of engagement, putting people at ease and triangulating the information through the complementary research methods all helped to provide a more accurate research data and final text.

CHAPTER FIVE

FISHERS' SOCIAL CONSTRUCT ON CHILD LABOUR

5.1 Introduction

My analysis is dual in nature, which shows how these fishers are defensive, based on the fishers' conscious and unconscious responses. These fishers might be justifying behaviours which are considered as being inappropriate towards children in the face of someone else's gaze. They could be doing this consciously but beneath this I could also see strange behaviour that doesn't fit in the fishers' narrative; they easily get angry which does not connect to the situation and they gave incoherent narratives. There were contradictions, elisions, slips of tongue, false start and expression of themselves through their feelings and emotions. These could represent unconscious as well as conscious defensive responses when they felt challenged to account for their thinking and behaviour in the postcolonial context, as exacerbated by the effects of globalisation and the threat posed by it to the future of the local fishing industry and sense of wellbeing of its members. In this way my interest was not only in the social or outer (political economic) circumstances of the local people but also and moreover with the inner/internal lives of the fishers in this context, paying attention to both conscious and unconscious processes beneath the surface. In this way a more nuanced understanding of the fishers might emerge.

This Chapter and Chapter Six discuss how the fishers become very self-protective, deny any exploitation or abuse of children, provide justification of any personal abuse of children, blame others for any error, and take credit for anything good regarding the parenting of their children. These Chapters, therefore, focuses on how the fishers make use of defence mechanism strategies like denial (Sigmund Freud, 1923); projections, introjections, and paranoid-schizoid positions (Melanie Klein, 1946, 1952; Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, 2013) anytime exploitation of children is mentioned or posed as a question to them. Chapter Seven continues by focusing on the fishers identities drawing

largely on Judith Butler's concept of performativity to explain how the fishers' construct their identities and how these affect their continuous use of their children in their fishing activities despite all the laws surrounding child labour. Chapter Eight discusses my position as an ex -child worker and now a researcher. It focuses, more pointedly, on how I occupied my mind with thoughts and feelings as I interacted and observed these fishers and their children. As I indicated in Section 4.7, these analyses are presented thematically. This is to prevent other scholars in the Central region of Ghana from identifying the real identities of the participants and the fishing community owing to the detailed description of the text.

This present analysis chapter is organised under three themes and sections. These themes address the expressed voices, inner states, and outer circumstances of the fishers. The data analysed in this chapter are mainly drawn from interviews, focus group discussions, and observation of the fishers in the fishing community. Section 5.2 discusses the theme child labour as slavery. This focuses on the fishers' assumption of a posture of 'holier than thou' and blaming others of engaging in enslavement of children through child labour through the presentation of narrative of slavery. I draw on Sigmund Freud's ideas of projection and Melanie Klein's notion of splitting to highlight on how the fishers use narratives of slavery to conceptualise child labour in the community.

Section 5.3 discusses the theme child labour as product of colonisation and globalisation. It explores the fishers' continuous use of narratives of slavery to explain child labour in the fishing community. This theme highlights how discomforting the issue of child labour is to the fishers which they think was caused by their past encounters with colonial rule, and their continuous present encounter with the 'colonial master'. In this section, I use Stephen Frosh's (2013) mechanisms of haunting and melancholic postcolonial state to understand the fishers as people who still feel a connection with their ancestors even though they did not have any physical contact with them. This also highlights the suggestion that exploitation of children, through child labour, was passed on from generation to generation. The last but not the least is Section 5.4 which explores the theme child labour as a shield against poverty, and catalyst for socialisation. This

discusses how fishers protect themselves against any internal guilt by vehemently citing poverty and socialisation as reasons for children engaging in fishing work. The summary of the whole chapter is presented in Section 5.5. All the names in this study are **pseudonyms.**

5.2 Child labour as slavery

The fishers in the research community during one-on-one interview made their own expositions as to what they think child labour is as practiced in the community. The fishers, both men and women, indicated that child labour simply means *slavery work.* In the Fante dialect this is termed as *Donkor edwuma*. For these fishers, a child does slavery work when he or she is asked to do any form of work without pay; when a child is incapable of doing a particular work but forced to do it; when a child is shouted at and beaten to do any form of work; when a child is forced to work against his or her wish; when a child is not allowed to enjoy his childhood but always working; when a child works without resting; when a child works late in the night; and when a child works without food and water. According to the fishers these are all akin to the 'harsh' treatments meted out to our ancestors. The fishers indicated that child labour is a modern slavery characterised by the use of deception or violent coercion to compel children by their own parents to labour without pay and food. The fishers suggested that most of these children are often victims of slavery who are often deprived of the freedom of movement, and are unable to leave the facility where they are forced to work by other parents who also fishers in the community. They further commented to the effect that some of their colleague fishers subject their children to physical violence and sexual abuse. To theorise the dynamics of the data in this section, I employ a Kleinian framework in particular to think about paranoid-schizoid and depressive functioning, projections, processes of projective identification, and introjections (Klein, 946). The fishers were asked,

Me: Please can you tell me about the nature of working with children in the fishing industry in this community?
Agya Ebu (May 08, 2013);

Oh do you mean child labour? [Me: Yes please]. *For me child labour is when you shout at the child when he is working instead of talking to him for making a mistake. Is just like the way whites treated our ancestors who worked on plantations among others as slaves. During the slavery days blacks were beaten and denied rest and food. Child labour in this community is like that. Some fishermen don't have patience. When a child that he is working with sleeps off during work he will hit him...you see that is child labour because that child is related to the fisher like a slave and his master. That is exactly what some fishers do in this community, whether is their own child or not.*

Alhaji Osmanu (May 17, 2013);

Child labour is hard work for children… is slavery work. Child work is like a child working without rest.it is also hard work and slavery if is not supervised and in accordance with the age of the child. If you give a child any work to do without rest, it is a child labour. A work is a work. You just have to ensure that the child is safe and healthier and not harmed. Here children are always beaten because of work. We have all been there before. Our work here could be considered child labour if the child is not 12 years and above, if he is not well supervised, if he works continuously without resting at his own time, if he is beating and coerced to work, if he is ordered to do work beyond his capacity. Child labour is slavery in nature and that is what our ancestors were beaten by the whites to do. But the fact is this fishing work is what our ancestors did and then we took over. Our ancestors were so human and innocent like children, that why the wicked slave master forced them to work. This is what some parents are also doing to their children in this community.

Maame Adjoa Dede (June 17, 2013);

……. child labour is just like slavery work. When you force children to work against their wish, it is child labour. Every society determines what is good for it people not others from any other group somewhere. I don't engage my children in my work but I know is not harmful to them. I know people who do it in this community. You need to ensure they rest properly, consider their age, give them food, and make sure they are not sick. We know what our children can do and what they cannot… The fishers, especially the males, who go to sea with their children don't even know that it is dangerous and not good for the children's health.

Esi Tawiah (June 26, 2013);

……..For me when you apply force for a child to do any form of work against her wish, happiness and strength is child labour. A child from the

age of 7 to 16 can be supervised to work as a form of training. But in doing so, the parents must supervise and watch the child carefully. There is nothing wrong with a child working. We have all done that before. Just make sure that the child is not used like a slave. Know that they are human like yourself. Slaves were not allowed to rest. So if you don't allow the children to rest during work, that's slavery. The child must be fed properly and should have enough rest. Most of the fishers think they went through it, so it is alright for their children. For me that is being ruthless to children…. people who are wicked to children are animals.

The fishers' comments suggest a conscious justification of behaviour which is in order to save face in the presence of their fellow Ghanaian who happens to be the researcher. Nonetheless these comments suggest a difficulty in identifying precisely what is being discussed any time child labour is mentioned (see Boudilon, 2009). Many people understand the term according to its historical usage, referring to the work of children generally, particularly in the labour force, often but not always carrying negative connotations (Cunningham & Stromquist, 2005, p. 79; Ennew et al., 2005, p. 28). Bass (2004, p. 3) uses the term in this inclusive sense, commenting, "Not all child labour is bad". Kielland and Tovo (2006, p. 10) illustrate another problem with loose definition. Although they question whether child labour is intrinsically bad. They rightly point out that it is specific factors in the context of work that can make it damaging to children. On the other hand this could also be understood psychosocially, using the concept of 'projection'. For example, these comments by the fishers suggest an unconscious projection of their discomforting thoughts and feelings about child labour into their ancestors' slave masters. By projection, I mean a form of defence mechanism in which someone attributes thoughts, feelings, and ideas which are perceived as undesirable to someone else (see Freud, 1937). This could be exemplified by Agya Ebu's comment that it *is just like the way whites treated our ancestors who worked on plantations among others as slaves. During the slavery days blacks were beaten and denied rest and food. Child labour in this community is like that.* Agya Ebu in another interview might have contradicted himself when he said *children need to be beaten…parents are not patient with children.* This suggests how difficult it is to make some overall sense of the fishers, especially when their accounts are infused with contradictions and inconsistencies (Hollway and Jefferson, 2013). For instance the fisher woman Esi Tawiah commented to

the effect that slaves were not allowed to rest yet during my interaction with her, her daughter complained of being tired of working. Esi Tawiah compelled her to continue working otherwise she won't have any food to eat for the rest of the day. When I reminded her of what she had already told me, she said *hahahahahahahaha forgive me for contradicting myself, I don't know what I am doing.*

The fishers comments further suggest that they could be engaging in splitting and further projection where parts of the self that are feared as bad are split off through projection and usually identified as belonging to an outside object as discussed in Section 3.3. For instance the fisher, Alhaji Osman's comment that his ancestors were kind and peace loving people just like children but were taken advantage of by the slave master through labour may give substance to this. This comment suggests how fishers have located the good in their ancestors who are regarded as *so human like children* and the bad in their slave masters considered as *wicked* (bad). Hollway and Jefferson (2013) argue that when an idea is too painful to bear because of its associated feeling, the defence of projection is used to get rid of the feeling by putting it into someone else. These comments from the fishers also give an indication that interactions could be negotiated by internal fantasies derived from histories of significant relationships that could be accessible possibly through feelings and not through our conscious awareness (Klein, 1988).

Furthermore, implicit in the fishers' comments could be their argument that they were not into such practices of treating children like slaves but knew others who did that. The comments by the fishers give an indication that it is other fishers who engage their children in child labour. The fisher Maame Adjoa Dede, for instance, commented that, *I don't engage my children in my work but I know is not harmful to them. I know people who do it in this community.* The fisher by this comment could be contradicting herself when she said she does not engage her children in child labour but knows it is not harmful. She further added that she was aware of other fishers who were engaging their children in child labour activities. This comment suggested the fishers could further be splitting and projecting their feelings and thoughts in relation to child labour. These comments bespeak of Hollway and Jefferson (2013) argument that these fishers could be

defended subjects with porous mental boundaries so far as unconscious materials are taken into consideration (see Section 3.2). They argue that these fishers could be subject to projections of ideas and feelings coming from others.

The comments by the fishers also suggested the fishers had underestimated the harm they were doing to their children. For example Maame Adjoa Dede commented that *the fishers, especially the males, who go to sea with their children don't even know that it is dangerous and not good for the children's health.* Esi Tawiah also commented that, *Most of the fishers think they went through it, so it is alright for their children. For me that is being ruthless to children….people who are wicked to children are animals.* These comments indicate that the fishers are not aware that going to sea with their children for fishing could affect their health, growth, and total development. It also suggest that the fishers regard fishers who engage their children in fishing activities as not being sensitive to the needs of children in the community. Such fishers are considered as *being ruthless* and are compared to *animals.*

The following are further comments by the fishers. These fishers vehemently argued that child labour is just like slavery and that most of the fishers were treating their children like slaves in the community. For instance Atule Aban (fisherman) said;

> *………. I did not get the chance to be a child because my own parents used me for all kind of work. So from childhood I was a slave and I am still a slave. My colleagues in this shed may disagree with me but I will say it. I intentionally kept quiet to listen to them. Children in this community are going through the same treatment like I did. They are beaten, forced to work and insulted all the time by their own parents. They are all slaves. They are moneymaking machines (FGD, June 30, 2013).*

Abambiri Ekow also had this to say;

> *I agree with all the comments made by my elder brother. Look children in this community are treated like mini adults. They don't have any childhood at all. Those who go through these kinds of slavery treatments are the motherless and fatherless children. Most of the children loitering around the shore are products of teenage pregnancy. So, adults use them like slaves for money. Fishers in this community also use their own children that way because they don't want to pay any body to work for them. For me it is funny the way almost everybody here is saying child*

labour is slavery and that children are not treated that way here. Hahahahahaha is just for good face (FGD, June 30, 2013).

Preliminarily and instantaneously these two fishers' comments and some agreements and disagreements gave me an indication of the idea that my participants were further taking defensive positions and therefore not forthright with the 'true' state of affairs regarding how children are being treated in the community by their own parents and other caretakers. They painted a picture of children in the community being just "objects of adult work" and physical and mental violence and are bound into systems and structures in which they live as "heavily controlled and subordinated" human beings (Mayall, 2002, p. 248). Children being "object of adult work" means these children are forced to work by adults. In other words these children are directly put under the control of their parents to work like adults in the community. This suggests that the children might have been positioned as subordinates and *moneymaking machines.* This is differently explained by Fanon's (2005) idea of hegemony which is based on pure violence. This gives an indication of the adults in the community playing the role of a coloniser or master dehumansing and oppressing their children by conforming them to their (Adults ways of working) ways (Fanon, 2005). These comments may resonate with Fanon's (1968, p. 36-47) argument that, the "colonialist bourgeoisie" (fishers) have taken the best of society for themselves, and in so doing have marginalized and subordinated the "peasantry" (children). For instance the comment, *they are beaten, forced to work and insulted all the time by their own parents,* suggests the fishers maintain their social position of supremacy over the children through the use of physical violence and the "language of pure force" (Fanon, 1968, p. 29). Fanon (2005, p. 25) contends that this pure force by parents against their children through work, deprived of an appropriate outlet against its real source, results in an "aggressiveness turned against his own people".

Another issue that is worthy of noting is when I visited Esi Tawiah to participate and observe her and her children as they processed fish. She ordered her children to fetch some of the fish into a different basin and work on separately. She shouted and ordered the children to sit somewhere else and continue their work. She said;

Hey! you animals ('mboa' meaning animals in Fante dialect) can't you see I have visitors….have you forgotten what I have been telling you? 'kwasia' meaning foolish in Fante dialect) girls get up and fetch some into the other basin.

I asked Esi Tawiah if she could tell me about how she worked with her parents growing up compared to how she works with her children today. Esi Tawiah said;

……….hahahahaha. I won't deny of my stubbornness when I was a child…hahahahah. My mother used to beat me very well anytime I misbehaved. My mother had money so she bought me anything I needed. My father was a useless man. He was always taking from my mother to take care of other women. At age fourteen, me and my other siblings helped my mother to fight my father. We beat him mercilessly [Me: seriously, why?]. Oh hmmmm this reminds of all these wicked things we did to my father. He died and we were not told. [Me: sorry, tell me about how you treat your children differently like you said the other time]. Oh yea you see these children are very stubborn these days. Today the radio stations are always making noise about the children's right. So they (children) don't have any respect for anybody. Not in my house. So you need to be a bit tough on them. Otherwise they will be lazy………

Here I felt Esi Tawiah had provided me with a narrative that is not more of a story but gives an indication of what Hollway and Jefferson (2013) and Thomson (2009) regard as the whole that is more than the sum of its parts. Esi Tawiah suggests that she had an ideal past by investing so much in an idealized past in which children of their time had great respect for their parents compared to today's children who have been influenced by what is said on local radio about children's rights. She on the other hand contradicts herself by making a comment to the effect that in her time as a child her mother used to beat her anytime she *misbehaved*. Therefore, this suggests that treatments meted out to children in *her time* and *this time* are similar, notably being beaten for pretending to be tired and she is also beating her own children for *faking* tiredness. These comments might be understood through the idea of paranoid-schizoid splitting of good and bad (Klein, 1946). This splitting of objects into good and bad is the basis for what Melanie Klein (1988) terms the paranoid-schizoid position; a position to which we may all resort in the face of self-threatening occurrences because it permits us to believe in a good object, on which we can rely, uncontaminated by "bad threats which have been split off and located elsewhere" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p. 22). As discussed in Section 3.4, the good and

bad splitting is achieved through the unconscious projection and introjection of mental objects (Klein, 1946). Introjection occurs where a subject takes into itself the behaviours, attributes or other external objects (Winnicott, 2005).

By positing a similar defensive pattern I make sense of Esi Tawiah's idealisation of her *training* and *socialising* of her children by only beating them anytime they repeat mistakes and when they fake tiredness as against the 'others' she claimed have been treating their children like 'slaves'. This suggests an idea of how such splitting could protect her against being regarded as an exploiter of children's labour like the 'others' she described as always beating and exploiting their own children for financial gains (Clarke, 2008). The comments *I won't deny of my stubbornness when I was a child…hahahahah* and *sometimes I regret beating my children. Because it makes me feel like I beat them because I was beaten,* give an indication of Esi Tawiah in a position of self-denial and ambivalence. This suggests her ways of reacting to unwelcoming knowledge of the 'slavery' nature of child labour she went through in the past that she is also extending same to her own children (Cohen, 2001). It gives an indication of her denying and accepting at the same time the harsher realities of her past where she was beaten to work, and she and her other siblings supported their mother to beat up their father. She splits the bad from the good in order to protect her present self (see Klein, 1988). However, there is the need for me to open to examination of the meanings I make on Esi Tawiah's narratives (Thomson, 2009). This is so because "without examining ourselves, we run the risk of letting our unelucidated prejudices dominate our research" (Finlay, 2003, p. 108 cited in Finlay & Gough, 2003).

Like Esi Tawiah said, I also used to fake tiredness and sickness so that I could be allowed to rest without working. Sometimes my caretaker expects me to be sleeping in the house because I am sick. But she comes home to see that I am long gone to play with my peers. This attitude was always addressed with severe beatings. Honestly, when I look back, I conclude that I deserved some measure of beatings but not as severely as I often got. This does not mean I support the beating of children in any form. This position I put myself in suggests an idea of projective identification. By this I mean a projecting into an

object and then identifying with the object. This keeps bad part of the self at a safe distance without losing them. Hollway and Jefferson (2000, p. 69) refer to this as an "unconscious 'embrace' of another person". Thus my agreement with Esi Tawiah suggest that I am 'embracing' her unconsciously regarding her understandings of child labour in relation to the beating of children. What is confounding to me is Esi Tawiah's claim that she is able to know when a child is sick or not even though she is not a trained medical doctor. Nevertheless, I was aware there were some traditional ways of knowing when someone was sick. After all as Clarke (2008, p. 119) puts it, Esi Tawiah's 'fiction' could be my 'fact', and her 'rationality' could be my 'irrationality' in a given situation.

I also went to sea with one of the fishers (Alhaji Osman) and two of his children. He was so supportive of my stay in the community. He was my 'Godfather'. We share a common faith in terms of religion. I mean we are all Muslims. I was so fortunate to know Alhaji Osman. I liked him so much because he had love for everyone around him regardless of your faith. He appeared to me as so God fearing. He always delivers a sermon to me before we commence any interview. I enjoyed interviewing him. He was so resilient, hardworking and a goal-getter. Alhaji Osman's childhood was so challenging and full of uncertainty. According to him, this toughened and made him so strong in life. These are reflected in his narrative during my interview with him;

> ……*My brother I started taking care of myself at age eight. Because my father had four wives with so many children. So it was like each for himself, God for us all. My father was a womaniser… He had money. I am not supposed to tell you this but I need to set the record straight. So that you know where I am coming from. You are also a Muslim so you know what I am talking about. [Me: Insha Allah]. Yes I also have three wives but I am not a womanizer. He had about seven canoes working for him. My father was more of a careless and a useless man compared to me. Don't get me wrong that I am just disgracing my father…. My children respect me so much even though I am Mr. no nonsense. [Me: haahhaaha, what about that?]. I mean I beat them and ask them to kneel down when they misbehave or refuse to do their work. I do that with love and humanely. It has been stated both in the Bible and Quran that we should not spare the rod and spoil the child. Children are naturally lazy and so don't like work. So you need put some fear in them to make them get serious with life. I was not fortunate during my childhood…..*

Alhaji Osman had this to tell me when I observed and noticed him use a paddle to hit one

of his children for sleeping on the job;

> *These children are just problem. If you are not careful they will make you look like a bad person. This child in particular is evil. Her mother has been polluting his mind against his other brothers because they are from different mothers. They all join me in my work to be trained even though I want them to go to school but I don't have the money like I used to. Now I am somehow poor. This government has created hardship everywhere in the country. Now all the money in this country is with you the educated people ruling us. You are stealing everything.*

As he was explaining we saw some two boats also fishing. I asked Alhaji Osman what those boats were doing. He looked at them and said;

> *…You see what they are doing. They are Europeans and Koreans always in our waters fishing. God will punish these people. The activities of these people have also led to employment of more children in our work. This is because they use good technology to take all the fish from our sea. So when we go to sea we don't get anything. If you don't get anything, how do you pay your workers that you have employed? Therefore, you just use your own children, simple, case die. So the illegal activities of these white people are pushing more children into child labour that you are talking about. I don't like them at all. [Me: Which people?] The white people. I hate them massa. But I don't blame them…. The educated elites in Ghana support them. These people make laws against child labour. These are the realities.*

These narratives give an indication of how contradictory Alhaji could be in his conceptualisation of child labour as slavery. Alhaji Osman reported that, child labour is when a child… *works continuously without resting at his own time, if he is beating and coerced to work, if he is ordered to do work beyond his capacity.* Ironically, he emphasised a willingness to beat his children when they refuse to work. Furthermore, Alhaji Osman believes that children are naturally born lazy, so the only way to deal with that laziness is to beat the 'lazy child'. This apparently contradicts his position that it is *inhumane for adults to beat children*. He uses the Bible and the Quran to normalise or rationalise the beating of his children. Drawing on Melanie Klein, I could argue that Alhaji Osman lives in the world of paranoid-schizoid (Klein, 1988). This maybe explained by his thinking that his actions toward his children are for the 'good reasons' but other fishers' actions towards their children are bad for that matter constitute an act of 'slavery'. Therefore, Alhaji Osman's comment suggests he has two sides and there is a

seeming violence that pervades his positioning (Fanon, 1968). This also gives an indication of the way Alhaji Osman's 'bad things' are disposed of both metaphorically and, often, physically in his way of considering the issue of child labour (Clarke, 2008).

On one breadth he claims that he does not treat his children as child labourers going by his definition of child labour. On the other, he claims that the fishing activities of Europeans and others in Ghanaian water influence the fishers' decision to use their children's labour in their activities. He talks about how he hates the Europeans and the educated elites who he claims support the Europeans. When he hits his son with a paddle and realised I was observing, he felt cornered. So he might have resorted to a paranoid-schizoid positioning. He rationalised his action by saying that *children are just problem*. He was aware of what he had already told me that treating a child that way amounted to enslaving the child. The apparent contradictory positions in his narratives could be further illustrated in the fact that whereas Alhaji Osman blames his father of becoming poor because he had four wives and many children, Alhaji Osman also has three wives and many children just like his father. The other side of Alhaji Osman was much more of depression position. For me it is possible to identify with a person who may have some distasteful views and violent ways. However, Alhaji Osman is someone who cares for his family. This in the words of Clarke (2008) is a classic depressive functioning.

As Klein (1937) emphasises, the paranoid-schizoid position is not the only way in which people face a threatening world. She continues that depression position involves the acknowledgement that good and bad can be contained in the same object as in the case of Alhaji Osman (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). In all of this, I also brought my own paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions to the research setting as my childhood struggles, religious and polygamous family background formed a strong connection with Alhaji Osman's life world (see Layton, 2004; Stopford, 2004). On the one hand I needed to ask him questions, on the other, I was in danger of pushing him into corners. I don't think Alhaji felt comfortable telling me about how bad his father was. I felt it could be something that he had been worried about from childhood to date. Honestly I did not also

feel comfortable about that. This suggests a collusion (Clarke, 2008). But this could also highlight a situation of co-production of data.

I identified strongly with Alhaji Osman's story and his struggles in life. I saw myself somehow in him as he talked about his childhood and how polygamous his family was. I had a similar experience as a child from a Muslim family of four wives and fifteen children. I was so resilient just like Alhaji Osman. I hustled from childhood till I got to where I am today. However, growing up I developed hatred for polygamous life style which I think Alhaji Osman has no problem with because he has three wives and many children too like his father. Therefore I could feel the good and the bad sides of Alhaji Osman or his ambivalent nature in me. However, Hollway and Jefferson (2013) caution that there is a danger that Alhaji Osman could become an idealized object to some extent that his defensive and level of denial of beating and treating his children as 'slaves' just as the 'others' he described as encouraging child labour are overlooked to preserve him in his idealised state.

I now turn my attention to the next related and germane theme of child labour as a product of colonialism and globalisation. This is explored as another defensive strategy used by the fishers to perpetuate the use of children in their fishing activities in the community.

5.3 Child labour as a product of colonialism and globalisation

In this Section I draw on Stephen Frosh (2013) (haunting), Sigmund Freud (1923) (disavowal), and other psychoanalytic thinkers to argue that we still harbour pain, frustration and rage with the fact that we were colonised, so we might have developed powerful defensive responses to this situation through the processes of projections, rationalisation, and splitting (Hollway, 2010) in our explications of what child labour is. As a consequence we put all our challenges and problems on the colonialist. We credit ourselves with our success stories without giving any credit, or acknowledging any effort made by the colonialist. I argue, further, that it through this narrative of slavery that the exploitation of children is perpetuated and strengthened. The fishers justified the use of

children in fishing activities, albeit onshore or offshore, by indicating that the practice is what they grew up with. They held the belief that child labour was not part of African culture until Africa encountered colonialism. They maintain that the practice is still ongoing despite all the laws to abolish it partly because of process of globalisation. They argue that globalisation is another attempt to colonise Africa through African elites. These are some of the comments made by the fishers during our interactions:

Me: You kept mentioning educated elite and the white people roles in Ghana. Can you please tell all that it has got to with child labour?

Sapiensa Musah;

> *Brother look I am almost 58 years. I am not a small boy. My father told me a lot about some of these things. The white people introduced to Africa the idea of using children to work for money. As Africans we cared for each other till these people came with their diabolic plans to steal our resources. I am not just blaming them because I am jealous or it pains me. You are educated and I am not, just go look into it well. You will realise that before the white came, we were practicing fostering. This worked well because of our kinship ties and communal nature which make everybody's child everyone's child. This made it very difficult to exploit children till the white came to teach us how to exploit people.*

Atta Brukusu;

> *………the white people came and thought us how to exploit people for their resources. So we are also doing what they thought our grand grand parents. Can't you see that as we speaking they are still exploiting us through you the educated people… that's what I am talking about. They are very wicked people with wicked intention against Africans. Look at our politicians; they are exploiting us every day just like the white man to enjoy life. So are we also exploiting our own children just to survive. So, exploitation everywhere by everybody. Ask yourself who stated it? Put all on the colonial master.*

Akua Seaman;

> *… Child exploitation was not tolerated in Africa at all. The white people use it to get more resources and shipped them into their country. As they were exploiting our people were observing them. Our people saw how good it is to exploit human beings. So here we are doing what the white*

man did to our people. Can't you see that they must be blamed all of that? Whatever treatment we are meting out to these children we learned it from the past. Our colonial master thought our people all of that during the period of colonisation.

Araba Alanta;

……everything evil in this country today was done by them. Look our ancestors learned how to exploit people from them. We of this generation learned from our ancestors. So it is a continuum. It was created by them. Unfortunately every government in Ghana still works with the same people who they know caused and still are causing our problems.

The fishers' comments seem to further suggest that despite the existence of certain practices in pre-colonial Ghana now termed child labour, traditional practices were inimical to its institutionalisation, until the imposition of colonial rule. These suggestions are also strongly held by Agbu (2009) and Ekpe-Otu (2009) who argue that the communal world-view and ownership of children in pre-colonial Africa enabled the use of children's labour by their parents and other extended family members without any form of exploitation or abuse of children until the emergence of colonialism. My understanding is that there was a semblance of cultural practice which allowed children to work but the children were not exploited like we are experiencing today (Agbu, 2009). According to the fishers this was because the kinship ties and communal living systems did not support the exploitation of children in pre-colonial Ghana. These views are also strongly held by Agbu (2009) who argues that the communal world-view and ownership of children in pre-colonial Africa enabled the use of children's labour by their parents and other extended family members without any form of exploitation or abuse of children until the emergence of colonialism.

An anthropological account by Cati Coe (2012) who studied child pawning and its transformation in Gold Coast, which is now Ghana, has noted that parents were not necessarily exploiting their children but rather seeing them as pawns or currencies. For parents it was their way of showing ownership of their children. She argues that kin groups acted as corporate bodies that had rights in and responsibilities to family

members, which they could transfer to another family house or person in return for goods or money. Coe (2012, p. 293) stated that,

> ….with the transfer of a pawn to a creditor came particular rights for the creditor. First, the pawn came to live with the creditor, indicated by the fact that 'staying with' someone was a common euphemism used for pawning…..During this period of residence and labour, which could last for many years, the creditor was responsible for feeding and clothing the pawn. The pawn was supposed to stay with and work for the creditor until the loan or the loan and interest were repaid…

On the other hand these comments made by the fishers may highlight Sigmund Freud's (1923) assertion that the repressed and the disavowed never go away; it is precisely how the fact that they always come back. This might mean that the fishers' conscious defence of *current* child labour exploitation is to normalize it by reference to *customary* practice, as if they are the same and only colonialism/globalisation has corrupted the practice. It could also be understood that this conscious defence of current exploitation of children is, perhaps, itself a less conscious defence, protecting fishers against feelings of shame and anxiety that they are not seeing their children as right's holders. In this way of thinking it might be possible that customary practice itself was exploitative of children, however it is addressed up as culturally integral. At this stage defences could be considered as means for the fishers to shirk their responsibilities (provision of food, protection, ensure good health) to their children. Judith Butler in dealing with disavowals and repressions, drawing on her concept of performativity of gender, argued that 'the opacity of the unconscious sets limits on the exteriorisation of the psyche'. Hence, 'what is exteriorised or performed can only be understood by reference to what is barred from performance, what cannot and will not be performed.' (Butler, 1993, pp. 145-146).

Again, these comments by the fishers suggest that exploitation of children was something passed on from generation albeit that the 'coloniser' started it. This, according to Stephen Frosh (2013), lies at the heart of what he calls haunting. Therefore, there is the need to consider the level of sensationalism and emotions that come with the exploitative nature of child labour. Some people cringe and become so anxious anytime it is mentioned. In my study because the fishers were not comfortable with the discussion of how

exploitative they are, they turned to splitting and rationalisation as ways of defending themselves against any feeling that is bad as regards to talking about child labour in their community. However, my Ghanaian-ness makes me understand where they are coming from as we are all from a postcolonial site, and, perhaps, have a similar attitude towards our colonial master.

Nevertheless, from the fishers' comments, I may argue that the fishers are, to borrow Sigmund Freud's (1894, p. 147) word, "disavowing" the existence of exploitation of children in pre-colonial Ghana before the commencement of colonisation as mode of defence mechanism. This gives an indication of the fishers' refusal to recognise any exploitation of children through child work. As Freud (1894, p.147) further notes "the ego rejects the unbearable idea together with its associated affect and behaves as if the idea had never occurred to the person at all". This may help to understand the fishers. They may have realised that child labour and its associated exploitation is so unbearable. They locate an object and then split and project that unbearable part into the object, in this case the colonialist. This suggests that the fishers tend to behave as if the idea never occurred to them in any way.

Freud (1923), in his paper on infantile genital organisation, gives an analogy of a little boy who sees his sister or mother's nakedness accidentally. The boy realises not everybody has a penis. The boy feels there is something wrong with the mother and his sister. In Freud's (1923, pp. 143-4) own words "we know how children [that is boys] react to their first impressions of absence of a penis. They disavow the fact and believe that they do see a penis at the same time". This analogy describes the fishers' approach to exploitation of children through child labour. This suggests the fishers, just like the boy, maybe refusing to accept what they are seeing or doing. If they do accept, they will find ways and means to gloss over, deflect, or force a contradiction between what they have observed and their preconceptions. This, for instance, makes the fishers blame the colonialist while "blocking out, turning a blind eye, shutting off and not wanting to know" (Cohen, 2001, Back cover) that at present, with the increasing transformation from communal living in Africa to an individualistic capitalist survivalist orientation for

many an African, the child has also become a commodity, and survival has invariably become greater than that of enhancing the welfare of children within the society. They do not also want to know that traditional cultures can give value to children's work, while they sometimes provide a veneer to hide the exploitation of children (Bass, 2004).

Furthermore the continuous mention of *our ancestors* by the fishers may also highlight a mechanism of haunting as in the words of Stephen Frosh, (2013). Even though these fishers had no physical contacts with these ancestors, they still feel this connection. The fishers' comments also suggest the use of repression as an archetypical defence mechanism to help them keep out of awareness of information that evoked the psychic pains of trauma, guilt, and shame (Cohen, 2001). This could also be considered as a way of the fishers in the community experiencing collective trauma (Wicke & Silver, 2009). Collective trauma happens to large groups of individuals and can be transmitted trans-generationally and across communities. By this it could be that the fishers as a group of people living in that fishing community might be feeling traumatised by colonialism, so they are giving voice to collective trauma (Audergon 2004; Wickes & Silver, 2009). This could be explained by the fisherwoman's (Akua Seaman) comment that *it is very painful to think about what our ancestors went through during the days of slavery. We are still going through the same thing today through our own leaders.* Audergon (2004, p.16) explains that,

> Traumatic experience intrudes and recurs. The traumatic experience is not remembered but relived. The experiences of traumatized individuals include both the numbness of cutting off from the experience and the violent replay and intrusion of events in flashbacks, nightmares, visceral experience of the events and body symptoms. Collectively, we participate in dynamics of trauma by both silencing and cutting off the unspeakable events of our history and continually repeating them.

According to Freud (1927) it could also be that the fishers might have had developed neurotic and psychotic reactions toward the discussion of the phenomenon of child labour. Cohen (2001) contends that both neurosis and psychosis express rebellion by the

id against the external world's unwillingness to adapt itself; "but neurosis does not disavow reality, it only ignores it; psychosis disavows it and tries to replace it" (Freud, 1927, p. 185). According to Freud by being neurotic the fishers might be content with themselves by avoiding the reality of existence of the exploitative nature of child labour in pre-colonial Ghana and protect themselves against any discomfort that comes with the mention of that.

The following excerpts represent further comments made by the fishers on the theme child labour as a product of colonisation and globalisation.

Atule Aban;

> *My son, some NGO people came here and explained to us why we are facing serious challenges in managing our economy. They told us is because there is a social order put in place by the white people who colonised us. Look at these whites, they destroyed our beautiful past. Now they want to destroy our future too. Why is it that we have gold, diamond, oil and others but we are still suffering? Answer me. You see these people want us to remain the way they destroyed us. So, that they can continue to milk us forever.*

Mina Akua Komfo;

> *My son I have never been to school before but I understand what is going on in this world now. I listen to radio every day. Politicians and people from NGO come to talk to us on several issues. They all speak in clear Fante. Recently we were told how these white people wanted us to sign some trade agreement with them. These are meant to continue to steal our resources. They want to cheat us. What do we get from all the cocoa, gold and oil that go to them? Politicians tell us every day they are waiting for some help from them, so that they will solve our problems for us. They tell us how Ghana is not an Island. That we are part of the world. This world is seen as one world. What is that? If so we should be allowed to also control things like they have been controlling everything. I don't believe in all of that nonsense. They want to continue to colonise us through our own educated ruling class.*

Charles Gyan;

> *Sometimes we hear the whites say they won't buy cocoa from Ghana because Ghana is allowing the use of children's labour in cocoa production. What is that? Most of these leaders in Ghana did some of the*

cocoa farming as children. Did that kill them? It is so painful and very annoying that we are living in our country but we have no control over what we do. Outsiders tell us what to do. Sometimes I put my radio or television off when I hear some of these things. We need to take control of the world some because we have the power too. We have always been warriors in the past, why not now?

To my mind these comments might reflect a situation in the fishers' lives which Frosh (2013, p. 8) terms as "melancholic aspect of postcolonial state". This means a discomforting present situation caused by a treasurable past felt loss which is beyond recovery and mourning. Like Frosh, I could see a possible challenge here as the fishers' melancholic attachments to imagined lost goods (idealised past before colonialism) come to stand in for progressive attempts to respond to contemporary happenings and arrangements. I am aware that the fishers' imaginary domain can in principle be a source of utopian and radical hope (Žižek, 2000). Žižek (2000, p. 657) argues "such a utopia can be thoroughly liberating". As some of their comments of the fishers indicate, the fishers could see this as a way of challenging their constraints and reimagining their limits in the global stage. The fishers through this melancholia connection could be indicating that they hold unto the ideals of the past (lost ethnic roots or object) while they play a meaningful role in the global stage. Žižek, (2000, p. 659) calls this "objective cynicism" where he says;

> What is wrong with the postcolonial nostalgia is not the utopian dream of a world they never had (such a utopia can be thoroughly liberating) but the way this dream is used to legitimise the actuality of it's very opposite, of the full and unconstrained participation in global capitalism.

However, for me, the fishers' imagination of the existence of the lost ideal treasured past that they think must be 'recovered' is regarded as a myth that has a potential debilitating effects. This, according to Stephen Frosh, could cause the fishers to be violent inwardly and on society, which includes meting out violence on children. I choose to call this 'double destruction'. I, therefore, argue that this could be the hidden underlying 'fueler' of the perpetual exploitation of children in fishing communities despite all the national and international effort to end it like the way colonialism was ended. Furthermore, this creates in the words of Sigmund Freud (1927, p. 355) a "fetish of the lost object", and the belief that the effect of colonialism is still lingering on despite its obvious end.

5.4 Child labour as *shield* against poverty and *a means* for socialisation

This Section further explores how the fishers explain, through narratives of slavery, exploitation and abuse of children in a rational and logical manner that suggest a cover-up for the 'true reasons' of their behaviour (Freud, 1937). Here I explore the possibility that the fishers do that to protect their self-esteem and self-concept (Freud, 1937). I further examine the likelihood that the fishers use processes ranging from fully conscious to mostly unconscious to present their social construct on child labour making it look tolerable, admirable and, superiorly using all plausible means in their quest to 'normalise' the practice. The fishers' aim is to present an external defence against ridicule and judgments from others (conscious), and also to block against internal feelings of guilt and anxiety (unconscious) (Phebe, 2006).

Even though some current studies in some parts of Ghana (see Mariwah & Esia-Donkor, 2011) cautiously conclude that the practice of child labour adds to the income of households and also helps in socialising children, I draw on my data through the lens of psychoanalytic thinkers to argue that these are mechanisms deployed by perpetrators of child labour towards tension reduction (Freud) in order to reduce feelings of guilt and anxiety, and 'stay in business' in perpetuity. I do this by examining the initial comments made by the fishers and, then, consider the fishers' subsequent comments as I participatorily-observed them working with the children both onshore and offshore. The following comments illustrate the perspectives of the fishers on poverty and socialisation and its nexus with child labour in the community:

Atta Soldier;

> *My kid brother, what you call child labour is really going on in this community for a good reason. We are poor people and our children are also poor. The only way we take care of them is to let them work for us so that we make money for the whole family to enjoy life small. So is like a shield for almost all of us against poverty. After all nobody cares for us. Working with these children brings us together.*

Obibini Takyi;

> *I don't put my children through this child labour thing but I don't have problem with those who do it. Is just a way of financially protecting their families. This is also our way of life too. They learn how to help others through work. So the children need to be socialised to understand our way of life. That's all. Take it or leave it!*

Araba Alanta;

> *You an African and you know how we cherish children. They are our investments for tomorrow…The level of poverty in this community is just too much. So most fishers will rather employ their own children to work for them. By so doing, they protect their family against poverty. Through this we socialise and train the children to be well accepted as community members. There is nothing wrong with that. Unless you want to think like a white man. What you call child labour to us is way we inculcate in the children a sense of communism.*

Almost all of the fishers who participated in this study made similar comments. A close look at these comments point to a well thought about plan to equip children with the tools they need to face any form of hardship they may encounter in their lives when they grow up. However, for me these comments are in line with Adlerian view of the fishers as social beings who do not want other people like me (a researcher, fellow Ghanaian, social commentator, and a 'Borga' from UK) to see that they feel inferior by the fact that they exploit their children. So they try to cover up by rationalising their activities through the display of some form of superiority with a claim of training and socialising their children. Adler, (1927) explains that there are number of ways of doing this. The fishers could be overcompensating. This is explained as doing something more than the situation demands. The other is depreciating others, as in the fishers blaming others for all their challenges in life; another is avoiding everything which could expose what we do that society does not approve of. For me, moving from a feeling of inferior to superior could be part of a natural development process in human life. This could be that the fishers are moving from a felt minus to a desired plus (Brett, 1997). This, in turn, could also suggest that the felt sense of inferiority is useful, as the fishers wish to move away from it, and in doing so they develop themselves and society. The felt minus, then, is only a problem when it hinders our progress or when we try to overcome it by seeking a 'desired plus' on

the socially 'useless' side of life like the fishers' exploitation of their own children (Brett, 1997, p. XIV).

The fishers' comments also corroborate Mariwah and Esia-Donkor (2011) claim that children work because their families are poor, and because their families lack productive assets, such as skills, jobs, credit or land. They argue that it is so because households are so poor that the earnings of a child are needed for survival. However, as the livelihoods approach has emphasised, income is not a true assessment of poverty; one may lack financial resources but have access to natural resources, and therefore not be poor (Bene, 2004). Bene (2004) further argues that fishers are not always the poorest of the poor in Ghana. Lange (2000) also argues that through child labour young children have been traditionally considered an extra source of income just to take care of some families' profligate life styles. Furthermore, in spite of identifying of poverty as the driving force behind child labour in many case studies (see Esia-Donkor and Mariwah, 2011; Mariwah and Esia-Donkor, 2011), it is also acknowledged in some cases its impact is very minimal (see Lange, 2000). According to the World Bank (2009) there are countries with similar levels of gross domestic product per capita that differ in their incidence of child labour. For instance, Kerala in India is an example of a poor region with low level of child labour. In Africa, according to a survey undertaken by Findings (2001 cited in Agbu, 2009), the incidences of child labour in various countries had no systematic link with the level of poverty. For instance Zambia with a lower GDP than Ivory Coast, recorded a lower rate of child labour. Likewise the incidence of child labour was greater in Ghana than in Nigeria despite its higher GDP (Agbu, 2009).

For me, the fishers' comments that child labour *brings them and their children together; inculcate in the children a sense of communism; and they learn how to help others through work* depict Adler's social interest/fellowship feeling. In giving a speech about his psychoanalysis concept of social interest/fellow feeling, Adler in 1929 emphasised the need to socialise children in order to inculcate the spirit of helping others, empathy and sympathy and community involvement in them. He intimated that these and other personal attributes are very critical to individual and social health. He spoke of the ability

to see from the other's viewpoint, to contribute through work and volunteerism, to cooperate in solving community problems among others (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). According to Ansbacher and Ansbacher, Adler connected social interest with striving for perfection, a goal of both the individual and the community. Thus Adler, (1933) cited in Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1964, pp. 34-35) said,

> Particularly, it means feeling with the whole, a striving for a form of community which must be thought of as everlasting, as it could be thought of if mankind had reached the goal of perfection. It is [not a specific] community or society [or] political or religious form. The goal best suited for perfection would have to be a goal which signifies the ideal community of all mankind, the ultimate fulfilment of evolution. We conceive this idea . . . as the ultimate form of mankind in which we imagine all questions of life, all relationship to the external world as solved. It is an ideal, a direction-giving goal. This goal of perfection must contain the goal of the ideal community, because everything we find valuable in life, what exists and what will remain is forever a product of this social feeling.

However, this comment gives an indication of what Adler, (1927, p. XIII) regards as "Fictional Final Goal". This is a seeming social interest goal which is considered as an unattainable goal. In the same vein, this perhaps suggest the fishers' use of child labour as a catalyst for socialisation is a fictional final goal, which could have destructive effect on their children. Nonetheless, Adler saw it as a core task of humanity, either collectively or individually. In socialisation, parents as primary agents are customarily obligated to play this all- important role of socialising their children into their social milieu. They are expected to become an important influence on the emotional, cognitive, and social development of children (Lange, 2000). However, fishing business is considered to be too risky and dangerous (FAO-ILO, 2011) venture for children to be taken through as part of a process of socialisation. Fishing involves on board fishing; onshore; in fishing processes; and offshore activities (see Section 2.3). By risky and dangerous I mean fishers going out on the open sea in a small wooden boat, crossing the surf, and losing sight of land and other human beings. Kraan (2009) describes the dangerous nature of the fishing industry. Acheson (1981, p. 276 cited in Kraan, 2009) argues that the sea is a 'dangerous and alien environment', and one in which man is poorly equipped to survive. It is a realm that man enters only with the support of artificial devices (examples boats,

canoes, platforms, generators, fishing gear among others), and on "good weather and sea". In the light of this it is not justifiable for the fishers to make any claim of 'socialising' children in such a "risky and dangerous environment". This claim suggests an attempt by the fishers to rationalise and normalise the exploitation of children in the community. This perhaps further indicates that the fishers' efforts to alleviate poverty and socialise children through child labour could produce significant risk to child safety and well-being. This is in line with Lange's (2000) argument that the socialisation of children and the fight against poverty by perpetrators of child labour is a smokescreen, which bellies the children's working condition and their economic role.

I noticed, listened, and observed the following conversation between Obibini Takyi and his son during my interview with Obibini Takyi;

Obibini Takyi had invited me for an interview session in his corridor. During the session his Thirteen years old son came in and interrupted us. His son said;

Son*:*

Father, give me my money. I am hungry. I worked hard for you for the past two days but you have not given me anything.

Obibini Takyi*:*

Hey can't you see that I am having a conversation with your elder brother (referring to me)? Aboafunu (meaning dead animal), you don't have any respect for me.

Son*:*

You keep using us every day like we are not your children. When we ask you for money, you tell us you don't have it. I am going to inform my mother about this. I need my money now.

Obibini Takyi*:*

You leave here. I don't any money for you now. Anyways go and call your brother to help you scoop the water in canoe. I will see you tomorrow evening.

Son:

I am not going anywhere. We work for you. You take care of other people and you drink with all the money.

At this moment it was becoming so embarrassing for me. So I asked for a permission to reschedule the meeting (my nots). Obibini Takyi looked at me and said;

No! No! No! Sit down. This is what I have been talking about. The children in this community don't have any respect for anybody. They are so disrespectful. If I drink with my money, does it concern you? Stupid boy, you have even reminded me, I have a bottle of beer in my room. Grab it for me.

Son:

Just give me my money. I work with you but my mother feeds me. Why? You don't give my mother anything.

His son left without grabbing the bottle of beer for his father. I thought he was gone. The son showed up when a lady came to ask for money from Obibini Takyi. Obibini Takyi who had told his son that he did not have money for him to buy food a while ago, doled out GH₵ 30.00 to the woman. His son suddenly rushed on us and said,

You see, you said you don't have money for me to buy food but you have money for your girlfriend. So we work hard to make money, you give it to your girlfriend. This was why my mother left you (Researcher's diary, 07/07/2013).

This extract suggests an example of the "life style" (Adler, 1929, p.78) of the fishers who argued that they are providing a *shield* against poverty and *catalyst* for socialising their children through child work. This, according to Alfred Adler represents the totality of the person and his/her personality. This further gives an indication of the fishers' unified and self-consistent pattern of beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, relationships, and actions in relation to the practice of child labour in the community. Adlerians regard this as the individual's way of approaching life. As such, the individual fisher will provide all sort of what Adler refers to as 'safeguarding behaviour' with the sole aim of perpetuating child labour practices.

5.5 Summary

The main points developed in this Chapter suggest the persistence deployment of defence mechanisms (Sigmund Freud) and safeguarding behaviours (Adler, 1933) by the fishers' use of narratives of slavery in their explication of their social construct on child labour. The analysis and interpretation of fishers' social construct of child labour indicates how dramatic psychological mechanisms like 'splitting', projections, and introjections vividly convey the everyday forms of role distancing, compartmentalisation, and segmentation

by which people separate themselves from what they are doing (Cohen, 2001, p.93; Freud, 1940). Parents of the children in the community denied any exploitation and abuse of children through the practice of child labour by treating them like slaves. The fishers pointed at some of their colleagues as engaging in the act of enslaving their children through work. But they were quick to exonerate and distance themselves from such an act against children. The fishers' argued that child labour was non-existent in pre-colonial Africa. So child labour is a colonial legacy and as a result of globalisation. This suggested that this only served as defence against guilt and bad feelings of exploiting children for financial gains. I argued that the fishers' social constructs on child labour served as a ruse or smokescreen that helped to perpetuate the practice of child labour in the community. The fishers normalised the practice of child labour arguing that it is a means of fighting poverty and socialising their children. I explored the possibility that the fishing community studied could not have been the poorest of the poor, and that fishing was too a risky job for children to be ventured into under the pretext of being socialised and trained.

The next Chapter further analyses the fishers' relationship with their children and, national and international laws on child labour.

CHAPTER SIX

FISHERS' RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILDREN AND LAWS ON CHILD LABOUR

6.1 Introduction

This is the second analysis chapter. It is organised under three themes and sections. These themes address both the internal and social lives of the fishers. Data are drawn from the interviews and the focus group discussion conducted for the study. Section 6.2 explores the complexities involved in the nature of violence that characterises the fishers' relationship with their children in the fishing community. This is discussed under the theme; violence to children. Section 6.3 explores fishers' narratives that children are naturally aggressive and violent. Therefore parents need to find ways of redirecting children's violence nature into productive use. This is discussed under the theme; redirection of violence. In these two sections, I shall draw, mainly, on Frantz Fanon's (1968) and Freud (1930) conceptualisations of violence and aggression respectively to understand the narratives and inner life of the fishers in this study. The last but not the least Section (6.4) sheds light on how the fishers further use of narratives of slavery to explain how regulated and controlled they feel in relationship with national and international laws surrounding children, and their interaction with social workers/NGO people who visits them in the fishing community. Under this section, I shall draw, mainly, on Fanon's (1986) notion of phobic objects to understand the behaviour, narratives, and the internal world of the fishers. Section 6.5 presents the summary of all the discussions in this Chapter.

6.2 Violence to children

This section discusses the data concerning how the fishers relate to their children in the fishing community. The main objective is to shed light on how the fishers violently (physically, emotionally, mentally, and discursively) relate to their own children as they

work with them onshore and/or offshore. This is also to bring to light how this contributes to children being put to work against their own wishes or will. I draw on Frantz Fanon's concept of violence to make sense of the fishers' responses. The fishers made the following comments;

Me:
Please tell me about how you relate with your own children in this community.

Atta Brukusu (May 21, 2014):
> *…..I love my children so much. My parents loved me just like the way I am also loving and caring for my children. My parents beat me very well anytime I did wrong. They did so because they loved me. Children of this era are different. So as a parent you need to be aggressive with them so that they know you are serious. Children in this community understand only one language.. {**Me**: Which language?} Beatings….*

Araba Alanta
> *…None of my children can say I don't relate with him or her well. They think I am violent with them. But I think that is exactly the only way I can get them to behave well. These children need tight control by way of some few lashes and stravation… I don't spare the rod to spoil the child…..*

Sapiensa Musah
> *Me and my children are nice and good friends. They know I am Mr no nonsense. As we are speaking I have asked one of them not to come home. {Me: Oh Why?} Yes because he refused to mend my net for me. He knows very well that I hate that. He thinks he is stubborn, I am more than that. How can my own 11 years old boy use tricks on me? I will beat him mercilessly….*

The comments here suggest how the fishers consciously justify the beating of their children to save themselves from embarrassment or to get me 'off their back'. They might have felt embarrassed that I have observed them exploiting or beating their children, so they there was the need for them to save their faces. The comments suggest that children are regarded as what MacLure, Holmes, Jones, and MacRae, (2012) refer to as a "problem to be solved" in a violent manner. Like Fanon (2004), I view violence as a result of the inherent opposition between the fishers and their children. Broadly, this suggests that fishers as parents in the community have put in place control measures

characterised by violence to deal with their children (Fanon, 2004). For me, this suggests colonisation of the children by their own parents (Bhabha, 1994). As Bhabha (1994, p. 70) indicates;

> …. Colonial discourse to construe the colonised as a population of degenerate types …, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction.

This represents the fishers' discipline and control measures over the children just as their parents did to them. As Araba Alanta puts it, *these children need tight control by way of some few lashes and starvation.* This suggests a perpetuation of culture of exploitation and violence against children (Fanon, 1986). Embedded in the fishers comments is that relating well with their children is all about being violent towards children to get them to do what is required of them (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). Therefore when children refuse to do what is required of them, the fishers as parents consider that as a justification to unleash violence on these children (Fanon, 1968). Cartwright (2002) argues that perpetrators of crime, violence, and/or victimising an "other" as a symbolic process, overladen with meaning that is embedded in their pasts. This for me explains the fishers' indication in their comments how their parents used to beat them up anytime they went wrong or refused to work. Added evidence can be derived from the following interactions between me and some other fishers;

Me:
Please tell me more about the nature of parents' violence to their own children in this community.

Mathew Eshun:
> *Please it is not like we parents just get up and decide to be violent against our own children. It is more to do with the frustration with the system. The educated people normally use the police to deal with us as parents disrespectfully in this community. So parents redirect this frustration unto their own children…*

Araba Alanta

> *Educated people who are more violent and corrupt than us in this country have labelled those of us who ask our children to work with us as violent. So we are living according to our label. They steal from the poor and hardworking fishers like us. They use it to take care of their children. They also grow and do same after they have completed school. Our children*

can't get such treatments. This attitude of the educated people makes us feel bad about ourselves. Some of the fishers get jealous about that sometimes. Therefore, we need to force our children to work hard with us to show the educated people we better than them.....

Esi Tawiah

....the way fishers as parents are treated in this community is the same way the fishers also treat their children. We all believe that the only language which is easily understood by all is violence. Look when we ask children to do any work and we don't threaten them, they won't do it. The government does the same to us. The government threaten and arrest people in this community for petty squabbles and misunderstandings. The police will just come and scatter all of us and take our money as bribes...there are strong people here who sometimes meet them with same violence..

These comments suggest the fishers' perception of violence as a "cleansing force" (Fanon, 1963, p. 94). For instance, Araba Alanta's comments that '…we *need to force our children to work hard with us to show the educated people we better than them.....'* gives substance to that.

The comments further suggest that the widely used language in the community is violence. For instance, the fisher woman, Esi Tawiah, puts it this way *we all believe that the only language which is easily understood by all is violence.* This bespeaks of Frantz Fanon's (2004) argument that violence is the only language that a colonialist understands. Like Fanon, the fishers' comment suggests, "…it is naked violence and only gives in when confronted with greater violence" (Fanon, 2004, p. 23). Fanon further argues that the "government's agents use a language of pure violence" in dealing with the colonised people (Fanon, 2004, 4). Consequently, violence becomes not only a sensible recourse, but also the only possible recourse in most situations. Because they inhabit such vastly different sectors, the only communication possible among the fishers, their children, and educated people as leaders is violence. In this situation, the authorities speak to the fishers through violence, and should they wish to reply rather than just passively accept, the fishers have to reply through violence of their own. In the fishers' response to this violence, they extend their frustration on their own children, thereby being self-destructive. As Fanon (1963, p. 18) emphasises,

….you will learn how, in the period of their helplessness, their mad

impulse to murder is the expression of the natives' collective unconscious. If this suppressed fury fails to find an outlet, it turns in a vacuum and devastates the oppressed creatures themselves. In order to free themselves they even massacre each other. The different tribes fight between themselves since they cannot face the real enemy…

Other fishers who were part of the focus group discussion added more perspectives. Two fishers said the following;

Abiba Langu

Massa sometimes most of us are just jealous of the status of the educated people. We call them thieves, corrupt, and criminals without any evidence. We just want to be like them, we wish our children were like them….You see we feel frustrated by all of that.. But you see our fishing business is very lucrative but we don't manage things well….

Ali Baba

…. see, a hungry man is an angry man. The educated people are in charge of all of our resources. Those of us who did not go to school will continue to complain because we feel we are not being given some of the resources. We are always angry with ourselves and our children…our anger leads us into despair even though I believe we need to blame ourselves for all that. This is because our work is profitable. We misuse our monies and then turn our frustration on our children and women in the community…

These comments indicate that the fishers have this perception that the educated elites are in charge and control over all the resources in the country. Therefore, they use the resources as and when they deem it fit to enrich themselves at the peril of the larger population. This suggests that it is a source of worry and frustration on the part of the fishers. This on the face of it fits into Fanon's (2004) argument that colonised people are never permitted to lead fully human lives. As the fisher Ali Baba commented, *"Those of us who did not go to school will continue to complain because we feel we are not being given some of the resources"*. Frantz Fanon describes the envy and fear that this system creates. According to Fanon this 'creates fear within the colonisers realising that the natives only want to replace them and envy within the colonised whom indeed aspire to replace their colonisers with themselves' (Fanon, 1963, p. 334).

Moreover, these comments by the fishers illustrate what I choose to term as 'neurosis of poorness' drawing on Franz Fanon's (1986) work cited in Hook, (2004a, p. 117)

'neurosis of blackness'[3] from his famous work; Black skin, White mask. By neurosis of poorness, I mean the fantasised desire of the fishers to be like the educated elites or leaders that he or she is against. Like Fanon, I consider this as a fantasy. As such, I view the fishers desire to be as rich as the educated elites or politicians that they have labelled as *thieves, corrupt, and criminals*, as a neurotic condition (Fanon, 1986). This also suggests a 'nervous condition' (Fanon, 1990, p. 17). By this I mean, the desire of the fishers to be like the rich educated elites or politicians alienates them from themselves and leads to a splitting of the ego. Since the identification with richness can never be total in the face of the way the fishers manage their financial resources, the fishers like the Negros Fanon refers to enter into a condition or situation in which they turn to destroy their own presence (Fanon, 1967). This is so because they become so dissatisfied with what they have or who they are, so would try anything, including the exploitation of their own children, violence against children to become like the rich. By so doing they engage in self-destructive activities as already explained.

The next section discusses the theme; redirection of violence.

6.3 Redirection of violence

This Section further discusses the fishers' perspectives of violence among their children as they relate with them in the community. The fishers argue that children without strong identification with their parents are more likely to display violent behaviour in the community and elsewhere. The fishers also suggested that putting their children through child labour is a meaningful and creative way of dealing with aggressiveness and violence in children in the community. The following are some of the comments the fishers made,

Atta Soldier

> *………Because we see our children as naturally violent and aggressive, we are worried that they might create problems for us when they go out. You see as a parent you need to always find something meaningful like our fishing work for the child to do instead of wasting his strength on anything useless like fighting others in the street….*

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[3] 'dream of turning white' (that is, the wish to attain the level of humanity accorded to whites in racist/colonial contexts) as it comes into conflict with one's being in a black body, and in a racist society, which make this wish impossible (Hook,, 2004a, p. 117).

Atule Aban
> *.....I always ensure that my children are around me because I want them to know that I am their only hope. So they must identify with me all the time. This is my way of checking on them not to be violent or aggressive. I channel their aggressiveness to better use. I need workforce. So I direct their violence into something meaningful. You might call that child labour……*

Maame Adjoa Dede
> *Children see being violence as very normal way of life. My children need me to be there to suppress that part of them. So that they become well behaved. I need to be there to ensure that their violent or aggressive nature is put into a good use like fishing….this is in order with the way of life of the community….*

These comments suggest that the fishers in the community viewed humans as violent species (Freud, 1930). The fishers' comments reinforce Freud's (1930, p. 85) argument that "men are not gentle, friendly creatures wishing for love". Freud believes that men are rather animals who have 'a powerful measure of desire for aggression that has to be reckoned as part of their instinctual endowment'. Therefore, for the fishers, communal life for the individual constituent elements of humanity requires a deep, 'intentional restriction of many natural tendencies' (Freud, 1930, p. 86). Freud argues that the failure to do so is the only true existential element society consistently faces.

For the fishers, children need to be attended to as a way of ensuring that *"their violent or aggressive nature is put into a good use like fishing"*. This bespeaks of Sigmund Freud's idea of sublimation. By this, I mean a situation in which socially unacceptable behaviour are unconsciously transformed into socially acceptable actions (Freud, 1930). This, according to Sigmund Freud, might possibly lead to a long-term conversion of the initial impulses or behaviours. I choose to call this Violence Transmutation. By violence transmutation, I mean the attempt by the fishers to transform violence or aggressive impulses of their children into creative energy. In other words, it takes the energy of something that is potentially harmful and turns it into something useful. Like Freud, the fishers believe that this process of sublimation is a sign of "civilisation" which allows the children to function "normally" in culturally acceptable ways.

The following are added evidence derived from the fishers' comments;

Mina Akua Komfo

> *.....As a parent you need to help your children to develop a good conscience and integrity by helping them to supress their bad ways before they go out there to create bad name for the whole family. Charity begins at home..... My only problem is in my house my children can't exhibit those aggressiveness. But they will do when they go out there into the community. This is because out there it is accepted for them to misbehave...*

Esi Tawiah

> *...Children need everyday control and surveillance because of their destructive nature. You need to always let them know how bad it is for them to behave in certain unacceptable ways. So, that they will not try such things at all. As a parent make sure that your children feel bad for whatever undesirable acts of violence and aggressive acts they engage in......these are natural with children. So parents need to help them to control that...if not the children can destroy themselves with their own aggressiveness...*

These comments resonate with Sigmund Freud's (1930) argument that humans develop a conscience, or what he calls "super-ego" as a result of repression. The fishers' comments suggest that they believe in ensuring that their children know the difference between *acceptable and unacceptable behaviours*. The children are made to understand that violence or aggressive behaviours are not desirable. So the children must 'repress' that. The comments suggest that fishers' as parents believe that children have a natural urge to be violent or aggressive as already stated. Be that as it may, when a fisher as parent says "NO" to his or her child for exhibiting any act of violence or aggressiveness, the child represses his or her natural urges toward aggression and destruction. Thus, according to Freud, through what he calls "civilisation," in the form of parental repression, thwarts the natural instincts common to the children to be violent or aggressive. Freud further argues that these are turned inwards toward the self and become 'bad conscience'. This makes us feel bad about doing those things we are told not to do as we grow up (Freud, 1930). These also illustrate Sigmund Freud's (1930) argument that aggressive energy could build up and produce illness unless released, ideally in acceptable behaviour. For instance the fisher woman, Esi Tawiah's comment that *….if not the children can destroy themselves with their own aggressiveness...* lends support to Freud's argument.

The fisher woman, Mina Akua Komfo's comment that *But they will do when they go out there into the community….* suggests how the "restraints of civilisation could be loosened allowing aggressive and violence instincts to turn outwards" against others in the community (Freud, 1930, p. 225). The comment suggests that the "external environment" of the child other than his or her home (Mother and father) could be permissive of violence or aggressiveness. In such a situation children of the fishers no longer turn the aggressive instincts toward themselves in the form of a bad conscience, they turn them loose on others in the form of rage and violent actions. The fisher's comment suggests that their children's natural urges to be aggressive and violent could only be repressed when they are home with their parents. It also suggests that the children have their way when they are out of their homes or out of the sight or control of their parents.

Furthermore, some comments from the fishers during a focus group discussion (8rd July, 2014) suggest how children in the community are violently put under surveillance or control by their parents, so that no child can run away from work and be engaging in *fights on the street*. Esi Bortey puts this way: *the government through the police is always watching me just like the way I am always watching my children.* On the other hand, one of the fishers (Akua Tom Brown) puts it this way, "*sometimes some of the fishers over control and monitor their children. So such children end up becoming kuborlos (street child) and stubborn the more.* This brings to mind Freud's (1930) argument that there is no need for the creation of a restrictive surveillance system through merely the ability to suppress the destructive urges of humankind. Freud argues that there is the need to find a method of successfully stimulating the super-ego while suppressing the id, perhaps through a careful balancing act against the ego - the id's rampant desires are too dangerous to leave unrestricted and unregulated. This, however, must be done in a manner so as to avoid the overstimulation of guilt and abuse, and of other control structures, that may trigger revolt, a definitively unwanted, counterproductive, latent behaviours (Freud, 1930).

The next section explores how the fishers' feel about laws surrounding children.

6.4 Regulated and controlled by laws on children

In this Section an attempt is made to further highlight the fishers' frustrations and disappointments with both national and international laws that aim to prohibit and eradicate child labour and other forms of child abuses in the community in particular and Ghana in general. I explore how the fishers regard these laws as Eurocentric and US-centric, and consider them to be an imposition, and a way of 'violently' controlling their lives. Further, in this Section, I discuss the fishers' "attack" on the media, especially the electronic media's interpretation of these laws as an interference on the fishers' relationships with their children. Drawing on Franz Fanon's (1986) concept of phobic objects, I conceptualise that the problems and behaviour of colonised groups need to be considered as an outcome of a double process. Fanon (1986) considers these as primarily sociopolitical and internalised form of damage. I explore how the fear of the 'other' creates anxiety in the fishers rendering them "paranoid parents" (Furedi, 2001). These, according to the fishers, make them feel powerless causing them to feel frustrated, and finally being violent towards their own children and themselves in the community.

To give a background to the analysis presented here, I summarily begin with a recap of some of the Acts and laws on children in Ghana, and international conventions and treaties on Child's Rights Ghana is a signatory to. Prominent among the provisions of the Article 28 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana is the one that states that every child has the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to his/her education, health, and total development (Republic of Ghana, 1992). Furthermore, the Children's Act 560, 1998 of the Republic of Ghana which defines a child as '.... a person below the age of eighteen years', states that a parent commits a crime against the Republic if he or she denies a child of his or her access to 'education, immunisation, adequate diet, clothing, shelter, medical attention or any other thing required for his/her development'. Such a parent 'is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding ¢5 million (£100.00) or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding one year or to both' (Parliament of the Republic of Ghana, 1998). Ghana is a signatory to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990; ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst

Forms of Child Labour Convention of 1999; and the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 (see Section 2.5 for detailed discussion).

During one of the focus group discussion sessions, group members discussed these national and international laws and conventions on children. The fishers discussed this extensively. Most of the fishers were not properly educated or informed about these laws and conventions on children. They stated that Non-Governmental Organisations (Plan Ghana, Children's Ark, Kids Kingdom) and some local language FM/Radio stations sometimes explain these laws, treaties and conventions to them. I asked the fishers to tell me more about the age at which they think children could be admitted to work or to sea with them. The following are some excerpts of the fishers' responses on the 16th August 2014.

Me: Please tell me more about the age at which a child should be admitted into fishing work

Aunty Tagoe,

…. how can we give birth to our own children for someone else to come and tell us the age at which we should let them work? They (NGOs) tell us the type of job our children should do in accordance with Ghana laws and the laws for children of the whole world. We are different people facing different problems even in the same community. Not to talk of the whole world. Look at the children in this community; a ten years old child looks like twenty-five years. Give them any job onshore or offshore, they will do it if they want to do it. Forget about this age thing. Some of you make it look like we are happy that these children work instead of going to school. The whites think because they exploited us, we are also exploiting our own children. Some of us are still in pain because of that Sometimes I go crazy and at the same time confused when I see them around {Me; Who?}. I mean the Europeans.

Bortelley Mansa,

My children started doing hard work at age five. I started at the same age. Here am I. I am not dead. My child will not die because of work. Please you and I who can tell whether my child is strong enough to work or not? The child is mine. I know him or her better than anybody on this earth. I decide for my child because she is my child not your child. You sit there doing nothing and allow these people…{Me: who are the people?}. I mean the white people to tell us the age we should allow our children to work. They should stop dictating to us as to what to do. We are lost. Our leaders have sold the country to them already. They are governing us every day

through our own people. After colonising and exploiting us of all our resources, this White people are still chasing us. *They don't recognise anything we do at all. They will kill us one day.*

Esi Bortey,

We should decide for them some. We are tired with these Oyibo (A Nigerian term for white person) people. Ghana has no laws anywhere. These Whites made them all for us. We need to look within for we have local solution to our own problems. But unfortunately we are still under them anyways. Some of us are not. That's why we still do what they ask us not to do with our own children. You don't feed my family and me yet you have the gut in the name of law and order to tell me what age I should allow my child work for me. What alternative do I have? Will the government and their white friends pay the high labour cost for me? Won dzi won fie asem. (This literally means they should be concern about issues under their care). Please see now we have plenty natural resources but we are still poor. *This is all because of these whites and their wicked intention towards us. They want to finish us with diseases like HIV and EBOLA that's why I hate them.*

These comments suggest the thinking of the fishers that incidentally the legacy of colonialism continues in the form of imperialism into the post-colonial era (Fanon, 1986). The fishers argued that the promulgation of laws through conventions and treaties to ensure the protection of children all over the world by international organisations are all attempts to establish political and economic dominance over Ghana. The fishers believe that being told about the age at which their own children should be admitted into their fishing work is a form of control which is being perpetrated by the West with the help of their local leaders through the process of imperialism (Fanon, 1986). The fishers' comments speak of imperialism as an ideological form of cultural and economic dominance that continues beyond the termination of formal colonial rule (Fanon, 1967).

Furthermore, the fishers' comments give an indication of their resistance to 'universalising forces' and the 'cultural imperialism' of the Western world (Gray, 2005, p. 233). These comments bring to mind Mel Gray's (2005, p. 231) argument that on the international level social work faces a dilemma arising from contradictory processes that have to do with indigenisation, universalism, and imperialism. Like Gray, I argue that indigenisation raises challenges for universalisation and the challenges are compounded by international efforts which can quickly become imperialistic depending on what is

proposed as 'universal'. Some specific comments from the fishers that point to this include; *We are different people facing different problems even in the same community; They should stop dictating to us as to what to do; We need to look within for we have local solution to our own problems; they should let us solve our problem with our own solutions.* Gray (2005) suggested that culture could be used to avoid imperialism but enable indigenisation and retain universalism. As an example of how this is achieved she cited Tsang and Yan's (2001) work in China where culture played a role in universality in social work without being tagged as an application of Western notions. The implication here is that solutions to the child labour menace need to be localised so as to fit local context paying equal attention to both the psyche and the social life of the fishers (Hollway, 2009). This is so because the fishers are so attached to their *own solutions and local solution to our own problems.* This for me resonates with Fanon's (1986, cited in Hook, 2004a) development of the notion of internalisation to highlight the strength between the psyche and social context by which the socio-historical reality is married with the psyche or subjective reality.

Fishers' comments like *Sometimes I go crazy and at the same time confused when I see them around; They will kill us one day; and They want to finish us with diseases like HIV and EBOLA that's why I hate them* represent the feelings of fear against these 'phobic objects' (Fanon, 1986, p. 154). These phobic objects stir a sense of subjective insecurity within the fishers which, according to Franz Fanon, incurs feelings of dread or fear. From a Fanonian perspective it could be that the fishers consider the *Europeans* or *Whites* as phobic objects whose ideologies dominate conventions and treaties to *regulate* and *control* them in their relationship with their own children.

This further suggests Fanon's explanation of emotional components of phobic objects as having both the qualities of fear and revulsion rooted in the sense of subjective insecurity (Fanon, 1986). These comments also may also demonstrate that *Whites* or *Europeans'* activities do also stir up powerful irrational reaction from the fishers (phobics). As Fanon (1986, p.155) emphasises, "in the phobic, affect has a priority that defies all rational thinking". Fanon (p.155) continues that in some phobic reactions, the phobic bestows the

phobic object 'evil intentions and…the attributes of malefic power'. In this sense the fishers endow the *White* or *Europeans* and the *local leaders* with wicked intentions through conventions and treaties to negatively affect their beliefs and practices regarding how they use their own children in their work. For me, in such a situation the fishers exaggerate the looming danger of a phobic object with colossus power to destroy them and their culture as a whole. Therefore, they are always paranoiac firmly holding the belief that someone has an evil intent against them. This helps the fishers to defend themselves against their own insecurity (Fanon, 1986).

Other comments were also made. This examined further the enlistment of their children in their fishing activities at a very tender age instead of going by what has been stated by national laws, ILO and other international organisations of which Ghana is a signatory. The following are some of the comments made by the fishers:

Abambiri Ekow;
> ………. *you see now those who are not educated in this country think original but educated ones like you and our politicians have colonial mindset. You the educated people think when you accept the white people's ways, they will also accept you. No way! We are now directionless….Some of us will always forcefully reject any foreign law adopted by the government…*

Alhaji Osman;
> ….. *The media is a means to achieve the white people aim. Every day on FM stations we are told how to relate with our own children and that our ways are against international practices. Are those international whatever part of our practices and beliefs? These media people have forgotten that they went through the same situation like our children…When they get on radio instead of speaking Fante throughout the programme, some will be talking and behaving like the whites..twea..you think the whites will see you like them?*

Atta Brukusu
> ……*You see how smart the white people are. They know how to rule us from where ever they are. They decide for us everywhere they are. They use our people to rule us and throw away our culture. Now we can't think on our own. We eat, think, dress and sing like them……… Nonsense! So sad and painful that all the education you people are receiving is not helping you to know the mindset of the whites. …..we the uneducated will always forcefully reject the educated people and their white bosses..*

The fishers behaved in a way which suggested that they were economically precarious, so it is possible that they behave defensively because they knew they had action was against the laws of the state. I recognise this by the fact that I observed that foreign nationals used trawlers and more sophisticated means of fishing in the same area that the fishers in the community also fish. They use very traditional forms of fishing. This in a way could push the fishers into the use of illegal ways of fishing and their inability to hire labour.

However the fishers' comments might concur with Bulhan's (1985, p.189) assertion that 'the uprooting of psyches from their culture to their insertion into another, in which the basic values [are] pro-white and anti-Black, elicits a victimisation difficult to quantify, but very massive'. Fishers' comments like, *some of us will always forcefully reject any foreign law adopted by the government…*(Abambiri Ekow); *I am violently rejecting all of that*…(Alhaji Osman)*;* and *we the uneducated will always forcefully reject the educated people and their white bosses..*(Atta Brukusu) fit into Freud's (1930, p. 130) argument that any attempt to overly influence the individuals through 'such structures' without their input will inevitably be opposed by them. For me, the fishers' comments further suggest that the fishers regard the educated elites as holders of less power and influence within the international arena. Be that as it may, the fishers believe that the educated elites and their foreign counterparts who wield greater powers pursue the collective sating of domestically restricted desires, inevitably causing conflict and further demonstrating humanity's latent aggressiveness (Fanon, 1986; Freud, 1930). The comment by the fishers also suggests feelings of entrapment: cannot go back to tradition/cannot go forward to a global identification and lifestyle. Abambiri Ekow puts it this way; *so they plan with our educated people to wipe away our way of life.*

The thinking of the fishers reminds me of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's (1994, p.79) argument that colonisation of the people and their culture is an attempt to 'colonise their mind'. For me, this is exactly how the fishers feel. They think international laws are meant to colonise their way of life. The fishers hold the belief that their own people are being used by the West to cause a change in their cultural practices and beliefs which have stood the test of time (Fanon, 1986). The fisherman, Abambiri Ekow, makes a comment to the

effect that the educated elites have planned with others through laws to wipe away their lives, and that they have nowhere to go suggests feelings of entrapment- fishers cannot go back to traditions or go forward to a global identification and lifestyle. The fishers raise questions about the whites behaving as if civilisation is their preserve. So, that they, the fishers, have nothing of that kind. Fanon (1986, p.34) raised similar issues when he said;

> *When I meet a Russian or a German who speaks my language badly, says Fanon, speaking from the position of the white French-speaker, I try to give him the information that he requests, but at the same time I can hardly forget that he has a language of his own, a country, and that perhaps he is a lawyer or an engineer there. In any case, he is foreign to my group, and his standards must be different. When it comes to the case of the [black man] ... nothing of the kind. He has no culture, no civilisation, no 'long historical past'* (emphasis original).

The fishers further challenge the monolithic and/or hegemonic drifts of imperial forms of dominant worldviews accentuated by imposition of standards fashioned out by some few white men and women of the West and the North America (Hook, 2004b). The fishers' comments like *you the educated people think when you accept the whites ways, they will also accept you; some will be talking and behaving like the whites…….. you think the whites will see you like them,* bespeak of Wyrick's (1998, p. 29) argument that 'black people, then, abandon themselves individually and collectively in quest of white acceptance. The quest is inherently and ultimately futile; it results primarily in solidifying deep and disturbing feelings of inferiority'. These comments also give an indication of an incessant feel of conflict among the fishers as colonised men and women. This kind of dissonance, according to Fanon (1986, cited in Hook, 2004b, p. 97), happens between 'ego and culture, self and society'. This supports Fanon's (1986) comment that some black subjects want to become white so as to be considered as a real human being. They also master white language and enjoy a white way of living. Fanon (1986, p. 44) concludes 'one is white above a certain class'. For the fishers, European fashions, figure of speech, accents, modes of dress act as a mark of class for educated people and some media people. This, according to the fishers, gives educated people a false hope of being equal with the whites. The fishers agree with Derek Hook's argument that if one adopts the culture and language of the Europeans, it does not mean such a person could be

embraced by the colonising culture. Fanon considers all of these dynamics as pathogenic. By this Fanon meant these cause people to have a deep seated sense of inferiority complex and split identity which is always antagonising itself causing what Fanon calls 'pathologies of liberty' (Fanon, 1990, p. 83).

More so, my understanding is that when the fishers talk about their *practices and beliefs* they mean their culture. I argue that the fishers' continuous use of their children in their fishing activities as part of their *practices and beliefs* is a way of maintaining and sustaining any relations of power between them and their own children. Comments like we *are the bosses of our own children* suggest this relationship. This agrees with Tully (1995, p. 7) who argued that the reason for 'preservation of culture' is to 'maintain a set of power relations'. However, one should not lose sight of the fact that the fishers might be considering their culture as 'historically created system of meanings and significance' regarding activities and social relationships that remain fairly static, such as the way fishers treat their children (Parekh, 2000, pp. 143-144). I agree with those who view culture from the postmodern perspective in terms of it being 'continually changing and evolving' (Dean, 2001, p. 625). Tully (1995, p. 11) argued that cultures 'are continuously contested, imagined, reimagined, transformed, and negotiated both by their members and through their interaction with others'. This leads Parekh, (2000, p.144) to conclude that culture could be 'internally varied, speaks in several voices, and its range of interpretive possibilities is often indeterminate'. Thus, for me, the fishers could be using culture to defend themselves against their guilt of over working their own children (Clarke & Hoggett, 2009).

The fishers were asked whether parents should be penalised for their inability to provide for their children in conformity with, for instance, the provisions of the Children's Act 1998 which states that parents should, among others, provide their children with their medical needs, shelter, food, and clothing. For a prison term or a fine awaits any parent who is not able to do that. Or parents should be panelised for their child's death or serious injuries when it is as a result of parents' act of neglect? The fishers made several comments. The following are some extracts from their narratives: Sangwa Atta;

> *.... we are also like children to government, the caretaker of all our resources. What has the government done for us? The first to go to prison or be fined should be the government. You see we told you our politicians copy just anything the West is doing. I am yet to hear that someone has been arrested because he could not provide food for his child. Those NGOs and FM stations who explain these laws to us, tell us that in Europe the state takes care of children…….. If you are not careful they will go create problems somewhere for you. I am always afraid of my children going out.* You might think you have taken adequate steps to protect your child, but if the child is so determined to do what he or she wishes, what can you do?

Abiba Langu;

> *……I think the government needs more prisons. This is because in Ghana it is normal for parents to punish children by depriving them of food. These laws are so frustrating and annoying to listen. …….Look do you know that television and video are have negative impact on children. I don't allow my children to watch television because of the violence. The media people talk too much. They are all part of life but…the shooting and kicking are too much. I don't also like it when my children go out to play and make themselves so dirty. I am always also scared that they might come home with injuries. This becomes financial burden……*

Akua Tom Brown

> *……….. they are stealing and enjoying with their families. They say free tuition fees; trust me it's useless…. …forget about the free feeding program, I don't allow my children to eat that kind of food. I am afraid the contractors might feed the children with maggot-infested food. The children are always sick because of that food…no body in his right frame of mind will imprison me for not being able to provide adequately for my children? I am afraid that they could be injured. My children are always indoor after we have all finished working on our fish. I am scared some useless adults in the community will impregnate them…If I were educated I would have taught my child home rather than allowing to go to school. They just go there to play and get hurt every day.*

These comments suggest that some of the fishers as parents are always so anxious about their children's vulnerability anytime they go out to play or have fun with others. For these fishers, their children should always be working or staying home to avoid injuries and fomenting problems outside their homes. Based on this, I argue that these fishers are experiencing what Furedi, (2001, p. 24) calls 'Paranoid parenting'. In this community, anxiety over potential harm to children encompasses nearly every aspect of children's

lives (Brito, 2000). The comments further depict fishers as parents who are exposed to variety of child raising stressors that impact the psychological functioning of both parents and their children in their day-to-day life in the community (Bonab & Koohsar, 2011).

Comments by Fishers such as laws are *frustrating and annoying* demonstrate how some of these laws, conventions, and treaties regarding children contribute to anxiety among parents. A comment like *I don't allow my children to watch television because of the violence….the media people talk too much* supports Furedi's (2001, p.11 original emphasis) argument that 'panics about children's safety are interpreted as 'media- led' and television is accused of making parents unnecessarily apprehensive'. They create a culture of fear in society (Brito, 2000). My understanding is that the fishers as nurturers and sole providers for their children are particularly susceptible to being swept up by overblown fears of harm to children (Brito, 2000). Therefore, the fishers are encouraged to blame laws and television because, in a world where they already feel pretty powerless, yet another outside influence on their children is experienced as a threat to their authority over their children (Furedi, 2001). The worries expressed by the fishers are in line with Furedi's (2001, p.55) argument that the media and so called 'experts' have ruined parents' confidence through interference in relation to how they should parent and additionally 'talk up' risks and dangers. This makes parents overly fearful for their children (Furedi, 2001, p. 116). However, there is the suggestion that the media and laws about the protection of children are not necessarily the problem but the fear of the "other" is what is making these fishers paranoid parents. This is evidenced by comments made by other fishers during an interview;

Mathew Eshun;

> *…you see sometimes is not about what the law says or the media does. It is also about just the fear of other unknown people interacting with your children through any means. You become afraid and worried…because you need children safe always. So that they will help with your work.*

Sapiensa Musah;

> *….Look the laws which are normally interpreted by the media are so good. Just that they are too foreign. I don't want my children to know these foreigners and their morally corrupt ways….Like I told you the other*

time. Our in this part of the world is the fact we don't have government.
The educated elites have failed all our children. They too corrupt. Every
day you hear news of corruption. Al these affect the life of children in this
country…

These comments re-enact Furedi's (2001, p.5) assertion that parents usually make use of words like 'scared' and 'frightened' to describe their feelings about their children, and they value these children for their 'productive value' and as 'objects of sentiments' (p. 97). These comments further show how antsy the fishers feel about external influences in their relationship with their children. The fishers' comments resonate with Bass's (2004, p. 53) argument that "corrupt leaders and poor oversight among the educated elite have crippled the ability of African societies to get ahead economically".

The fishers also made comments suggesting how they feel controlled and regulated through their relationship and interactions with social workers/NGO people who visit fishers in the community to help them handle their social problems.

> **Me**: *Please kindly tell me about the people who come here to assist you as*
> *to deal with your social problems. Tell me about how they treat you and*
> *how you want them to treat you when they visit this community.*

Atta Brukusu

> *…the NGO people who come here to help us with our social problems*
> *regard us as old time people. Because they are educated and we are not*
> *educated they look down upon us. They have been influenced by the white*
> *people just like all the educated elites in this country…we have also been*
> *told most of these people are working for the white people…[Me: who told*
> *you?]…Oh please why are u behaving like you don't know… well the*
> *same people (NGO staff) have been telling us. You know we are not in the*
> *cities, so we don't know much… Our problem with these NGO people is*
> *that when they come here, they expect us to determine how we want our*
> *social problems to be handled and solved. We also expect them to say*
> *something because they have been to school and have degrees, we don't*
> *have that.*

Abiba langu

> *…those who come here tell us they are working with NGOs. They are*
> *always well dressed, so when you see them you will know that yes these*
> *are educated people. But you see, they are modern people who have been*

> *Western-influenced… they see themselves as modern and we are traditional. Some of them don't want to drink from our cups…….give them food, they will reject it...give them chair, they clean like 10 times before they sit on it……they have all been influenced by the western way of thinking. [**Me**:how did that happen?] they were taught all of that at school……. Some of us understand that the world is changing so we need to also change our ways. But the way those NGO people come around and try to force it on us, it won't work. We need some respect and should be done gradually.*

Obibini Takyi

> *……the NGO people tell us that they are just helping us for God sake. Some of them even tell us there is department established by the government to help us but because we are not in the big cities like Accra, Kumasi, and Takoradi no one from that department comes to us. This is exactly why I respect these NGO even though they are not sensitive to our cultural values and needs… As members of this community we regard most of those educated NGO people who come to help us as gossips. This is so because they like reporting us to the police, and they also discuss us on radio..... the fact is we have our own local ways of dealing with our social problems or quarrels. We call on family heads, elders and the community chief for an arbitration and settlement… we prefer this to going to the police. The NGOs don't like that. They always want to use the white man's laws against us..... They make us feel very regulated and monitored because they report whatever they see or hear in this community to the police. By so doing they destroy our families……..*

These comments suggest that the fishers regard some of their members and elders in the community as traditional actors when it comes to finding solutions to social problems. It also gives an indication of fishers positioning social workers/NGO people as *modern people who have been Western-influenced*. This suggests an image of two subworlds; subworld of traditional actors which is associated with African tradition, and the subworld of professional social workers. This suggests an existence of power relationships between the fishers and social workers/NGO staff who visit the fishing community to help fishers and their children. Avendal (2011) argues that this creates binary oppositions which are crucial for constructing otherness; putting fishers in the periphery, and placing the social workers/NGO staff who represent the West in the centre (see Fanon 1967; Loomba, 2005). The fishers' comments suggest that because social workers/NGO people apply their professional social work knowledge which is influenced by the Western social work knowledge, the fishers and their traditional leaders feel

'othered' and disrespected (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013; Lupton, 1997). Thus the fishers associate social workers/NGO people with being modernised while considering themselves as the opposite of the social workers/NGO people.

The fisherwoman, Abiba Langu, continues that,

> *……look our elders among other traditional leaders meet anytime there is any misunderstanding between and among families. When a child is abused, we have our own ways of punishing the abuser after he or she has been judged by our elders of the community. No time for the police. The NGO people like the police and so they deal with them. The police takes too much money and waste our time with adjournments. NGO people think our community elders don't follow the national laws because they are not educated enough to do so. These people don't respect our customary laws and beliefs. The white man laws that they want us to apply make us feel regulated and controlled by both d whites and the educated Ghanaians..that's all….Our community elders settle disputes through mediation, provide emotional, financial support, settle disputes, and give advice. ………*

The fishers' comments suggest that traditional actors in the fishing community who deal with social problems comprise traditional religious leaders, community elders, family heads, extended family members and chiefs (community chief and chief fisher). The fishers' comments suggest that these community leaders play their traditional roles when they meet to proffer solutions to social problems in accordance with the community beliefs and practices. It also shows that the leaders of the community have earned the respect of the community members and so they take their decisions seriously. The fishers further suggest that social workers/NGO staff regard their viewpoints as superstitious. The fishers give indication that their leaders draw on traditional norms and social value systems settle disputes in the community. This could mean the use of police service and formal court systems are not well embraced by the community members. This comment suggests that social workers/NGO people who go to work in the community are not culturally sensitive to the fishers and their children. This means they do not understand these fishers enough. Being culturally sensitive means the acquisition of information about a person or a group of people in order to understand their world and how they see things. This resonates with Gray's (2005) and Dominelli's (2008) argument for

contextualisation and acknowledgement of clients' cultural systems, and adjusting the social work interventions to fit that context. The comment to the effect that those who come to the community to help do not know that some problems are caused by spirit and do not believe in that because they are university degree holders suggests that the fishers feel that social workers/NGO people who visit the community regard themselves as well enlightened than them.

6.5 Summary

There is an indication that the relationship between fishers and their children is characterised by physical and emotional violence as they work onshore and offshore. Children are considered as problems that need solution through beatings and being shouted upon by their parents. Children are put under control by their parents. The fishers suggested that just as their parents disciplined and controlled them, so are they also going to continue to do the same to their own children. Fishers as parents believe that they are justified to beat their children if the children refuse to do what they are supposed to do. The fishers consider violence as a form of therapy that could help to suppress violence (Fanon, 1963). Fishers also consider violence as a language that children easily understand. For the fishers the use of violence is not only proper but also leads to the achievement of results in their relationship with their children. The fishers hold the belief that they are made powerless and impoverished by the educated elites who also treat them violently. They believe this makes them feel frustrated and makes them vent this frustration violently on their children.

The fishers suggested that children are naturally born violent (Freud, 1930), and that child labour becomes a means of dealing with the violence and aggressive nature of children. The fishers suggested that children are more likely to be violent if they are not always close to their parents who help to redirect their aggressiveness into better use (fishing). The fishers suggested that children regard the environment outside their home as permissive of violent. So they could be as violent and aggressive as they want outside their homes. The fishers suggested that violence is an unacceptable behaviour. The fishers believe in transforming children's violence into creative energy. The fishers

suggested that there is the need to develop the good conscience of children by repressing children's violent and aggressive nature. The fishers also suggested that they put their children under surveillance so that they don't go about fighting other children on the street. The fishers as parents further believe that putting their children under surveillance helps to suppress their violent and destructive nature.

The fishers suggested that international laws through conventions and treaties meant to protect and safeguard children in Ghana are to help outsiders to establish political and economic dominance over Ghana. The fishers consider any attempt by outsiders to suggest a specific age at which children could be admitted into any form of work as a way of controlling parents of children. They believe that the West is governing them through their local leaders. They suggested that it is an attempt by the West to colonise their minds with the help of their leaders (educated elites) (Fanon, 1986). The fishers further suggested that the educated elites want to be accepted by the West. So, they behave like white people. However, some of the fishers argued that adopting Europeans' culture and language, does not make one European (Hook, 2004b).

The fishers regarded their local leaders/educated elites as powerless within the international arena. As a result, the fishers are against 'universalising forces' (Gray, 2005, p. 231). The fishers suggested that there should be a local solution to their local problems. The fishers' comments as regards the West suggested that they considered the West as phobic objects having both the qualities of fear and revulsion rooted in the sense of subjective insecurity (Fanon, 1986). Some of the views expressed by the fishers suggested that they were defending themselves against their insecurity in relation to how they perceived the West and their local partners. The fishers suggested that they would not approve of any foreign laws that do not take into consideration their opinions and way of life. The fishers suggested that the educated elites with the help of the West through laws work against the fishers' desires in the community. This for the fishers leads to an inevitable conflict and aggressiveness among fishers and their children. Furthermore, it is part of the beliefs and practices of the fishers to engage their own children in their fishing activities as a means of maintaining and sustaining their power

relations with their children. It is also suggested that the fishers use culture as a way of defending themselves against the act of using their own children for their fishing activities. Some of the fishers gave an indication of their fears and worries when their children leave home to go play with others. Comments made by some of the fishers suggested that national and international laws caused anxieties and worries among the fishers as parents. The fishers feel regulated and controlled by the activities of social workers/NGO workers who visits the community. They argue that those workers have little or no knowledge of the community's way of life and social values and norms. The fishers believe that social workers/NGO workers are imposing Western ways of handling social problems on them. They however acknowledge the need for change but believe it should be gradual, and that social workers need to be respectful and culturally sensitive.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FISHERS' INDENTITIES AND HOW THEY CONSTRUCT THEIR CHILDREN

7.1 Introduction

This Chapter is divided into four themes under four sections. The data analysed in this Chapter are drawn from the interviews (FANI method and in-depth interviews), focus group discussion and the observation conducted for this study. Section 7.2 explores the theme, powerless fishers who don't matter. On this theme, I draw mainly on Franz Fanon to understand the workings of power relations and how others position the fishers from the fishers' perspective. Section 7.3 discusses the theme, children as problems and troubles. To make sense of how the fishers' position and talk about their children in the community, I draw on Sigmund Freud (1926, 1937) and Franz Fanon (1968). Section 7.4 discusses the theme, being a fisherwoman. I draw from the works of a gender scholar, Judith Butler, who argues that identities are brought about through their performance (Butler, 1990) to make meaning of how both fishermen and women regard women and their roles in the fishing community. Finally Section 7.5 explores the theme, fisherwomen's negotiation of their identities. I draw mainly on Sigmund Freud to analyse the data in order to shed light on how fisherwomen resist the authorities and control of their male counterparts. All of these themes are discussed in the context of how they influence child labour in the community. The summary of the whole chapter is presented under Section 7.6.

7.2 Powerless fishers who don't matter

This Section explores the perspectives of the fishers on how educated elites, local politicians and other people regard and construct them in the community. In one of my usual participant observational sessions on the 3rd June, 2014, I observed and noticed the following during my participation in the distribution of premix fuel,

> *It is about 10am and fishers have gathered waiting patiently in a queue to*
> *get their share of premix fuel to power their outboard motors. Present in*

the location were fishermen, "fisherboys", local political leaders, the chief of the community and some of his elders, the chief fisherman and few of his elders, and some well-known businessmen. The fishermen and "fisherboys" were the only people in queue. I was also in the queue with my group…….. I thought those of us in the queue will be served in accordance with how we queued. To my utmost surprise, those businessmen in their SUVs and their local political friends started giving orders as to who should be served and who should not be served. My group members realised a change on my face. One of them asked me,

Group member*: what is the problem? Are you surprised?*

Me*: Why are they serving them? They were not in the queue. We have been in the queue far too long under this baking sun. Please tell me about that.*

Group member*: Massa (Master) this is how we are always treated by people who are educated. They wear their coats and speak and behave like whites giving orders anyhow. They see us as powerless fishers who don't matter at all…they think we are non-entities. Honestly speaking fishers are nobodies to these people. They are so powerful because they went to school and we did not. They use their education to cheat us, making us (fishers) and our children suffer. One funny thing is that they see all of us as nobodies, even though we have among us rich fishers, especially our women.. The educated control everything…. God is watching us….*

Me*: Please can't you report them to the chiefs?*

Group member*: Massa you are funny…hahahahaha.(He laughs) No fisher can report this big people. The educated elites and local politicians treat the chiefs so well that, they side with them against us. We don't have any helper. We have no powers at all. I used to come here always angry because of these things. They know what they are doing is wrong but they don't care. This same people will turn around and blame us to the white people that we are lazy.*

Me*: Oh Okay can't you come together and report to the police?*

Group member*: Please are you not a Ghanaian? The educated elites and the local politicians have bought the police. They (Police) are sometimes brought here to beat us and intimidate us. Forget about the police, please…through these same police laws are used to control everything…they are all representatives of white people…*

(Researchers' Diary, 3rd June 2014).

This conversation between the fisher and me suggests how the fishers in the community have been positioned as *ordinary fisher folks* which "requires the embodiment and subordinated performance" of a fisher identity in relation to *educated elites and local politicians* (Dunne & Ananga, 2013, p.202 cited in Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). The comment suggests the fishers believe that education makes one *so powerful* and authoritative in a community where most of the inhabitants are illiterates. This accords with Adzahlie-Mensah's (2013, p. 160) finding that "knowledge in the school" is important signifier of authority and power. The Fishers' comments support Fanon's (1968) argument that power and education are important elements in the constitution of identities. They suggest how these can be used as oppressive tools.

The comments suggest that power relations in the community are played out in such a manner that the fishers feel educated elites and local politicians at the community level are systematically undermining them. Fanon (1968) argues that persons are definingly shaped by power; and persons sustain relations to power. This further suggests that the fishers are involved with individuals in a community in which subjection to practices of 'othering' is a mark of social suffering (Hoggett, 2008). The fisher's comments, *we are powerless fishers who don't matter* and *we are nobodies,* directly point to how the fishers perceive themselves as 'colonised bodies' (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2011, p.406) indicating Adzahlie-Mensah's (2013, p.161) idea of 'deep and tragic sense of powerlessness' in the fishers' relationship with educated elites and local politicians in the community. This suggests the fishers are trapped within their situation.

The comments, *this same people will turn around and blame us to the white people that we are lazy,* and *they control everything,* suggest there are specific configuration of power, of real material, economic, cultural and sociopolitical conditions that continually celebrate and empower the educated elite/political leaders and continually denigrate and dispossess the fishers in the community (Fanon, 1968). The comment *they wear their coats and speak and behave like whites giving orders anyhow* connects to Fanon's (2004, p.49) argument that,

> The leaders of the nationalist party are frequently Westernized into having negative attitudes toward the peasants, and peasants may be suspicious of the nationalist bourgeoisie because of the latter's adherence to Western cultural forms, as in their dress and language.

Comments by the fisher suggests that, through the enactment of laws, police are used as 'technologies of control' to regulate and control them as discussed in Section 6.4. The fishers do not see themselves as well respected members of the community. This is so because they feel the educated elites and local politicians wield so much power that even the police cannot deal with them decisively (Adler & Adler, 1998). The comments by this fisher indicate that fishers in the community feel marginalised – they are not respected and treated equally as 'other' Ghanaians. As a marginalised group, members do not have the option of not identifying with that group. They have that label thrust upon them, and are treated as members of that group regardless of whether they identify with it or not (Weird, 2014).

The following are other evidence derived from the fishers;

Me: So, tell me about how others see you in this community.

Abambiri Ekow
> *…….. because we did not go to school…Look we are NOT called upon for any decision making in our community. But trust me one day they will see me as powerful somebody. [Me; So please what does it mean to be powerful somebody?] hahahahah make more money and be part of decision making in the community…. You see the educated elites, politicians, and the community chief can just call on the police to undertake a swoop in this community without informing us. What is happening here is so frustrating, trust me.. We have all the natural resources.*

Atule Aban
> *Now whatever we are engage in, in this community, we keep watching our back to see if we are being watched by the educated elites or the local politicians. [Me: Oh Okay]. Please don't think that we do anything wrong to our children. We do right things with our children. But the educated elites and local politicians do wrong things to us the fishers. Anyways, we are afraid they will come with their holier than thou attitude to condemn us, the good people who truly love Ghana. They steal everything from Ghana and turn around to blame us and regard us as powerless and*

nobodies. They are the guilty ones who have made life so difficult for everyone in this country. They say we are nobodies because we are not educated. For me I agree with them sometimes. If I had gone to school I would have also been stealing with pen like they are doing…and I will be using the police to beat people up in this community some but you see I am powerless nobody who will become somebody one day. [Me: please how will you that?] By making money and controlling others like the educated elites and politicians do,

Atta Soldier

……….. they take pictures of us. Show them to the whites for monies. Yet they see us as nobodies. Shame! I am here, poor and a millionaire in my poverty with the hope that I will matter one day. With some of us is just that we did not manage our monies well. We spent too much money on women and other useless things. By now I should have owned like five houses…Because of this I know I am a non-entity in the mind of educated elites and the politicians….hmmmm….. after all I did not go to school like them. I don't have properties. But you know what… these people treat us in wrong ways too much. Some of us are now desperate and frustrated…Yes one day we will make a positive movement from powerless to powerful somebody. [Me: please tell me what you to do be powerful somebody] Oh having a lot of money and living a good life like the politicians

From the perspective of the fishers, deeply embedded in these comments, there are elements of scapegoating (Fanon, 2008, p. 150) at work in the community. The fishers suggest that educated elites and politicians are projecting blames on them. The fishers suggest that the educated elites and politicians do that as a way of avoiding the feelings of guilt and taking responsibility for the hardship they have created for all in the country through corruption. Abambiri Ekow's comment that; *for the educated elites and the politicians fishers are always the bad people. We are the devil himself… because we did not go to school"* suggest that in the fishers' social relations with educated elites and local politicians in the community the fishers are regarded as 'the Wolf, the Devil, the Evil Spirit, the Bad Man…' (Fanon, 1986, p. 146). However, my understanding at this point is that the fishers might also be scapegoating in their attempt to avoid their responsibilities to their own children by arguing that educated elites and politicians "*have made life so difficult for everyone in this country* and regard them (fishers) *as nobodies* and *non-entity".*

Atta Soldier's comment that *"we spent too much money on women and other useless things. By now I should have owned like five houses…"* lends credence to my argument. This comment suggests that the fishers do make enough money from their fishing activities but they mismanage their finance as they suggested in Section 5.2. The fishers' comments that they are not included in decision-making processes in the community point to their readiness to be part of the administration of the community and all the activities that affect them and their children. This exclusion makes them feel that they are not regarded as complete members of the community. Therefore, considered as *"powerless fishers who don't matter, nobodies, and non-entities"* in their own community. The comments to the effect that educated elites and local politicians use the police to brutalise members of the community without any recourse to the fishers suggest a power relations which can be 'essentialised' (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013, p.161) into aggressive and "macho" masculinity representing the educated elites and local politicians, and the fishers being an embodiment of feminised masculinity (see Butler, 1990).

The comments by the fishers suggest an unbalanced social power relation between the fishers and the educated elites and local politicians which also manifest itself in the relationship between the fishers and their own children as discussed in Chapter Six. The suggestion here is that the fishers treat their children in similar ways they (fishers) are treated by the educated elites and local politicians in the community. However the fishers become defensive by utilising what Fanon (1968) calls Manichean thinking when the issue of unbalance power relations between them and their children is raised. In this case, the fishers have split their experiences and relationships in the community into binary opposites. One that is *right* (with their children), and the other, that is *wrong* (with educated elites and local politicians) as is reflected in Atule Aban's comments. According to Fanon these divisions sustain and legitimise each other and lead to self-perpetuating cycle (Fanon, 2004).

These comments highlight how the fishers discursively construct themselves or position themselves in the community. Their comments suggest that they agree that they are

powerless fishers who don't matter and/or *nobodies and/or non-entities.* This is exemplified by the comment, *because of this I know I am a non-entity in the mind of educated elites and the politicians….hmmmm.. after all I did not go to school like them.* This is so because they think they did not go to school and amass properties like the educated elites and local politicians have done. This gives an indication of how the fishers have internalised an "inferior" position compared to the educated elites and local politicians, and the Whites/Westerners they referred to in Chapters Five and Six. This gives an indication of fishers who have become so *desperate* and *frustrated* in the face of all their experiences in the community in particular and Ghana in general, as in the words of Atta Soldier; *some of us are now desperate and frustrated.* This can be understood by reference to Fanon's (1986, p. 59) argument that 'the ego is driven to desperation by the amputation of all its defence mechanisms'. In such a situation, according to Fanon, the fishers' identity becomes so enfeebled, and they become fixed in a pathological condition. The resultant effect of the fishers' condition is what Fanon refers to as 'affective erethism' (Hook, 2004a, p. 41). This according to McCulloch (1983, p. 67 cited in Hook, 2004a) is an immense form of hypersensitivity considered as 'a pathological condition arising from the colonial experience which includes a crippling sense of inferiority, a perpetual nearness to rage'. This finding resonates with Fanon when he says 'If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process: primarily economic; subsequently, the internalisation, or better, the epidermalisation of this inferiority' (1968, p.13).

The fishers' comment suggests their acknowledgement of schooling as an empowering resource. However, they have a 'limited and narrow' understanding of schooling as a tool of empowerment (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). This is so because the fishers believe that when empowered, one could exercise authority and power over others. Even though the question of self-value, and of merit arises whenever the fishers come into contact with educated elites and local politicians (Fanon, 1968), they still strongly believe that they are what I would call *poor millionaires* following the fisher, Atta Soldier. This is as result of the fishers' comments that they are surrounded by, and living in abundance of natural resources which they could also make effective use of to help them move from being

regarded as powerless to powerful somebody. The fishers suggest that to be constructed as *powerful somebody* means *to be part of decision making in the community, controlling others like the educated elites and politicians do, having a lot of money and living a good life like the politicians.*

7.3 Children as *problems* and *troubles*

This section explores how the fishers construct and talk about their working children in the community. The following are comments by fishers regarding the positioning of working children in the community;

> **Me***: Tell me about how you see children in general?*

> **Atta Brukusu**
> *Children are generally lazy, problems and troubles. That is why the bible tells us not to spare the rod and spoil them. The bible envisages how difficult children are. That's why the bible tells us not to spare the rod.*

> **Me**: *Can you please tell me about a problem or trouble child?*

> **Atta Brukusu**
> *Problem children don't behave well. They will go out if you say don't go out. They are very lazy and always will say they are tired. They will hide and run away from work. All that they know is to stay out deep into night and be enjoying what are only meant for adults…hahahhahhaahhhaha [laughing]….*

> **Me***: Please can you tell me more about what you meant are only meant for adults?*

> **Atta Brukusu**
> *Oh yeah I mean in this community parents have hard time dealing with their children going to have sex with other children in Kiosks and uncompleted buildings. Children get pregnant anyhow in this community.*

Atta Brukusu's comments suggest the fishers' attitude and perception that children are innately born as *problems* and *troubles.* In that regard the parents might be thinking that they must always find ways and means of dealing with these *problem and trouble* children (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). In this sense, the fishers perhaps regard the children as emotionally and imaginatively unregulated by the faculties which govern social

behaviour in the community (Lall, 2013). The comments further suggest that the fishers' deal with their *problem* and *troublesome* children with the *rod* as suggested in the Bible. This implies that children in the community are beaten so as to stop them from being *problems and troubles*. Another fisher (Mathew Eshun) explained that children have always been problems from conception. He holds the belief that God has shown the way to deal with this kind of problems. He concludes that God's way is all about caning the children to make them do the right thing. As he puts it,

> *Massa (Master) the Bible which is the voice of God knows very well that children are troubles and problems. Children before they were born were problems and troublesome in the womb. God tells us how to stop children from being problems and troubles. God's way is to cane the children. That's all.*

This comment suggests that the fishers hold the belief that children come into this world as *troubles* and *problems.* This perspective might be strengthened by one of the fishers (Mina Akua Komfo) response to my question about fishers' further thoughts about the *troubles* and *problems* nature of children. Her response was that;

> *My son, children are truly troubles and problems in this community. But I have to explain something to you, my son. These children copy whatever they observe in this community. They don't have good models here. If a child refuses to go to school because he wants to go fishing or feeling lazy, other children will just do the same. If the adults in the community behave well, children will behave well too. ……. Children are asked to leave during meetings or decision-making. We silence them with threats and beatings………So the environment the child finds himself or herself in and the parents of the child also contribute to the troubles and problems children. There are some irresponsible adult males who also impregnate some of our girls. Some irresponsible women also arrange with some adult males to have sex with their children for fish or money. The children are observing all of these anti-social behaviours….. Such parents sometimes turn around to blame their children for something the children have not done. All of these affect the child in the community. They are just fed up with life. So they need someone to blame. The closest are the children. The economic hardships in the country influence parents to behave in this manner too, my son.*

These comments suggest that even though the fishers identify their children as innately *problems* and *troubles,* they do also hold the belief that the environment and the nature of

relationships among children and their parents also contribute to the children being *problems* and *troubles.* The comments to the effect that children are not provided with any good models in the community suggest that for children not to be identified as *problems* and *troublesome* children, the adults in the community ought to appear to these children as appropriate models. The comments to the effect that some male adults impregnate girls suggest that irresponsible adults beget irresponsible children. So do the comments that some women give their own children out to have sex with men for fish or money. The comments further suggest that children are not allowed to be part of decision making at both family and community levels. Children in the community are just doers of what their parents tell them to do without any right of asking questions.

The comments that children are asked to leave anytime adults are to make decisions that affect everybody in the community or in the family highlight power relations which in the words of Adzahlie-Mensah, (2013, p. 161 emphasis in original) could be "essentialised into violent 'masculine' authoritarianism" which goes with being an adult or parent and " 'feminine' submissiveness" which comes with being a child. Similar argument can be made of comments like *we silence them with threats and beatings.* Mina Akua Komfo's comment that *parents sometimes turn around to blame their children for something the children have not done. All of these affect the child in the community..* suggests that *parents'* inability to help their children to define their place in the larger community affects the identity construction of these children. The fisher's comment also lends support to Fanon's (1968) argument in Black Skin, White Masks, that underscores the role power plays in the constitution of our identities and how this is often an oppressive force.

It is similarly implied that the fishers' failure to successfully assist their children to define their place in larger society inevitably produces various harmful consequences for both the children and the environment in which they live (Lall, 2013). On the other hand the fisher's comment that, *they are just fed up with life. So they need someone to blame. The closest are the children* suggest that the fishers' construction of their children's identity as *problems* and *troubles* could be a form of defence to their state of helplessness or

frustration with social structures and systems in the country as a whole and the community in particular (see Freud, 1895). This is explained by the fishers attempt to project their frustration as elements of their ego onto their children as the 'other'.   By so doing the children end up internalising that which is projected making them *problems* and *troublesome* (Fanon, 1968).   Fanon (1968, p. 113) illustrates this internalisation of projection, "my body was given back to me sprawled out, distorted, recoloured, clad in mourning in that white winter day. The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is ugly". Considering this from the perspective of Melanie Klein, Fanon's thinking and reference to breaking up bodies to being sprawled out, with their sociogenic consequences, are the result of the processes of projective identification (see Klein, 1946).

The comments by the fisher suggest that the fishers make their children in the image of their projections, literally forcing identity onto and into the children. This is supported by Mina Akua Komfo's comment that to the effect that some *irresponsible adults* engage in sexual relationship with these children, and the comment that *we silence them with threats and beatings.* This illustrates Fanon's argument that "…the white man has woven me out of a thousand details….I was battered down with tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects, slave ships…." (1968, p. 112).   However my understanding on the other hand is, as already discussed in Chapter Six, the fishers are trapped by both economic processes and by powerful projective mechanisms that both create and control the children as the "Other" (Clarke, 2008).

The following are other comments by the fishers;

Me: You mentioned the fact that other fishers have been advising others to stop or desist from identifying their children as problems. Please kindly tell me more about the efforts being made to help parents to desist or stop regarding their children as *problems or troubles.*

Bortelley Mansa
> *….Seriously we are making effort towards that. This is because we are all mature people. We do encourage each other as parents to begin to put ourselves in the shoes of these children. So, that we will be able to understand them and show some respect and recognition to them as human beings like us. The problem is most of us label these children as*

problems and troubles so that we will have the reason to use them in our work…simple. That must stop! But you see some of these children are so tough. No matter what we do to them, they don't give up. As parents, we need a change of attitude towards our children.

Sangwa Atta

We are the parents of these children and so can do anything…Massa (Master) we just need to see these children like ourselves. We don't like the way educated people and our leaders treat us, yet we treat our own children like they are nobodies to us. For me I always tell my colleagues fishers that we should regard our children like ourselves and not the other. If we don't, then we won't respect them. This I think will help us to desist from exploiting them. Most of these children are able to survive our man handling of them. This helps some of the children. The children know very well that they are regarded as problems if they don't work for us. Secondly, in our days as children we were hardworking and respecting but children of these days are problems and troubles.

Abiba Langu

The whole fact is that we are going through some pain and hardship because educated elites and politicians don't respect us. They have stolen all our monies for only their wives and children. Yes they say our children are also born problems and troubles. They don't like work. They always want us the parents to work for them to enjoy…….We will be able to live peacefully with these children if we accept and understand them as children who have a lot to learn and be great adults one day. We should stop putting all the anger we have against our failed leaders on our children like we have all been doing in this country.

The comment, *we should stop putting all the anger we have against our failed leaders on our children like we have all been doing in this country,* could suggest how the fishers get rid of emotions that cannot be tolerated. The fishers may be dividing up and separating off what psychically is seen as good from bad. In so doing the fishers split and evacuate the bad, getting rid of the anxiety that the good will be contaminated. In the words of Melanie Klein this could be termed as a paranoid phantasy (Frost & McClean, 2014). The fishers' anger against their *failed leaders* might be bad feelings that have been projected outward onto their own children, so that a sense of good might be maintained, and the other is objectified (Gadd, 2006). In this case both their children and *failed leaders* are the objectified others. This is also exemplified by the previously mentioned notion of scapegoating, -the fisher folks concur with comments like "*in our days as children we were hardworking and respecting but children of these days are problems and troubles*".

In this situation children are forced to psychically take in the anxiety, fear and guilt of the projecting fishers. The comments suggest how the fishers use a mechanism Klein (1940) terms as projective identification which makes the fishers ascribe all forms of inferiority to the "other" (children)-I am not like that, it is not me or my situation.

The comment, *we are the parents of these children and so can do anything,* suggests that psychical processes are integrated with social situation in which the fishers as parents have the power to project onto, define and control the identities and beings of their own children. The comment made by the fishers to the effect that the "*educated elites and politicians don't respect us. They have stolen all our monies for only their wives and children"*, and comments like "*children are born problems and troubles. They don't like work. They always want us the parents to work for them to enjoy*," illustrates pervasive and destructive resentments on the part of the fishers. This for me also could imply that the fishers as parents have deprivations and grievances which make them feel aggrieved, angry, and shamed- feeling bad about themselves, in other words-which then becomes that "bad" which is split off and projected onto the children (Hoggett, Wilkinson, & Beedell, 2013). The resentment here is very enduring and structural than a passing and relatively easy to shake off (Hoggett et. al., 2013). This is stoked by a sense of rejection, abandonment, and losses which are all projected onto the children (Freud, 1930).

Comments to the effect that children ought be respected and recognised by their parents suggest the fishers' readiness to reconstruct the identity of their children in the community. The fisher, Sangwa Atta's comment that, *.... for me I always tell my colleagues fishers that we should regard our children like ourselves and not the other. If we don't, then we won't respect them,* exemplifies that. This further suggests that fishers want to regard their children as significant "others", and not "nobodies". Furthermore, the fisher, Bortelley Mansa's comment that, *….we do encourage each other as parents to begin to put ourselves in the shoes of these children. So that we will be able to understand them and show some respect and recognition to them as human beings like us,* suggests the fishers' preparedness for a "psychic change" despite their beating and continuous enlistment of their children in their fishing activities in the face of the national

and international laws against the practice (Gadd, 2006, p.179). I therefore argue that these comments suggest that fishers are prepared to desist from engaging their children in fishing activities in the community.

Comments from fishers may illustrate how they agree with Gadd (2006) that in order for the fishers to desist from beating their children or enlisting these children as symbolic "other" in their fishing activities, the fishers have to reclaim the psychic parts of themselves that are projected onto these children. For instance comment from the fisher Bortelley Mansa that ....*most of us label these children as problems and troubles so that we will have the reason to use them in our work…simple. That must stop!* and comment from the fisher Abiba Langu that, *we will be able to live peaceful with these children if we accept and understand them as children who have a lot to learn and be great adults one day* suggest an agreement with Gadd's (2006) argument. Comments to the effect that children are able to survive and stand their parents' man handling suggest the children are able to withstand and survive their parents' hostile projections. This supports Jessica Benjamin's (1998) argument that offenders could desist from perpetrating an act when they are confronted by the capacity of those they construe as other to survive their negative projections, whether physical or psychical. According to Gadd (2006), this enhances the chances of psychic change among their parents. This may connect with Freud's (1930) manic-depressive patients overcoming of their melancholia as they gradually came to accept that the parts of themselves they had psychically invested in relationships with deceased were not completely lost. In this situation, the projected parts of the manic-depressed patients were reclaimed and reinvested in new relationships.

To develop a further nuanced understanding of how the fishers can change from identifying their children as problems and troubles, and also exploiting their own children for financial gains, I asked the fishers to tell me how this change can come about.

Me: Please tell me more about how this change can come about for a peaceful coexistence between fishers and their children.

Esi Bortey

> *Our children are our children. Let's handle them with care. We need to feel the children's pain as human beings like us. Let's put ourselves in their shoes. We should understand that we are similar in so many ways. When we do that the children will feel respected and they will in return respect us as their parents. Let's do something about our mindsets. The mindset dictates to the body what to do or say to a child.*

Akua Seaman

> *…….we need to recognise these children as human beings with same blood like us. Especially the men should take it easy on these children. As a woman I know how challenging it is to be pregnant but men don't know. This is why women are always so worried about their children than men. Men don't care………These children recognise the fact that we are their parents. So whatever we say, they do. But most parents are taking undue advantage of that…..*

Atule Aban

> *We should all understand that we have all been children before. But not all have been adult before. We are all human beings. Let's identify ourselves with our children and respect them. The fact is most of these children are replicas of their parents. If we all understand this, then we will develop positive feelings towards these children. After all most of these children respect and recognise us as their parents.*

These comments suggest that the fishers have mental processes that make them feel that parts of themselves are similar and compatible with their perceived qualities in their children (Benjamin, 1998). Comments to the effect that children are parents' replicas, children have blood like all other human beings, and that parents and children are similar in many ways suggest that these fishers identify with their children. This for me resonates with Gadd's (2006, p. 182) argument that "we are able to identify with another person's feeling even though our social identities are quite different". I also believe that we are able to identify with others even when our ages are different. Comments to the effect that the children respect their parents suggest that the fishers feel recognised by their children. This is in tune with Benjamin's (1998) argument that people feel recognised adequately by another whom they are able to recognise as a sovereign other. I argue with Jessica Benjamin (1998) that this could facilitate a psychical change in the relationship between the fishers and their children.

The fisher Akua Seaman's comment, *as a woman I know how challenging it is to be pregnant but men don't know. This is why women are always so worried about their children than men,* suggests that father figures are considered to be invulnerable precisely because they are emotionally unavailable (Gadd, 2006). The fishers also give an indication of their readiness for a change of mindset. I, therefore, argue that elimination of child labour may not happen without the psychic survival of those "othered" by the practice (Benjamin, 1998).

7.4 Being a Fisherwoman in the community

This Section discusses the gender identities based power relations, and the roles fishermen construct for fisher women as well as how the women position themselves in the community. In so doing, I examine the everyday fisherwomen experiences as significant for their identity production and gender differentiation and their implication for child labour in the community (Butler, 1990).

During my first day meeting with the chief and his elders to negotiate access to the community and its people, there was no woman among the elders. So I became so curious and interested in knowing why there was no woman at that meeting. But during my meeting with the chief fisherman and his elders for the same reason on the 10th May 2013, there was only one woman who was referred to as the 'Konkohenmaa', meaning the queen of petty traders, representing all the fisher women in the community. She was the leader of all the fisher women in the community. During our interaction, this woman made an attempt to contribute to the discourse. But one of the elders signalled her to keep quiet by saying,

> *Hey hey hey woman, keep quiet! Let the men deal with him. We need to know everything and then we might ask you to come in with your question.*

Pondering over this comment and other observations led me to delve into Fisherman-Fisherwoman identity-based power relations in the community. The elder's comment suggests that fisherwomen have other experiences in their relations with their male counterparts. The following are some of the comments fishermen made about fisherwomen and other women in general in the community.

Me: Please tell me about your notion about womankind in general in this community.

Atule Aban

> *…Is in the Bible…women were created with a rib from a man. They cannot be compared in anyways to us, men. This explains why we the men are always heads of our homes, no matter our financial position…….*

Atta Brukusu

> *...God created women to be under men. Our customs and traditions support that. We can impregnate women but they cannot impregnate themselves. No matter how rich a woman is, she will still need a man to impregnate her for a baby…..this is nature…*

Obibini Takyi

> *…when a woman buys a gun, she hangs it in a man's room. This is because the man is the head, and supervisor of the woman…. This is a biological arrangement made by God… Women are women by birth and nature…*

The fisherman, Atule Aban's comments point to the unequal power relations between men and women in the community. He refers to what the Bible (Genesis 2:22) says "….and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman…" to suggest how women are made out of men. This for him makes a man whether rich or poor the head of every home and all-important relative to woman. Atule Aban further suggests that because of the Bible's position, women cannot be compared in any way to men in the community. This brings to mind Kessler, Ashenden, et al.'s (1985, cited in Dunne, 2007, p. 502) idea of "gender regime" constructed through community and religious beliefs which position and regulate everyday life and normalise unequal power relations between men and women. The fisherman, Atta Brukusu's comments also depict this. He says women are meant to be under men.

For Atta Brukusu, no matter the social status of a woman, she still needs a man to make her complete as a human being. These are all sanctioned by his customs and traditions. Obibini Takyi corroborated further by saying that *when a woman buys a gun, she hangs it in a man's room* suggesting that the man is the head of the house, and also a *supervisor of the woman.* He further suggests that women occupy their position by virtue of their biological make- up which according to him is God's arrangement. These comments help

to make sense of men's apparent contempt for women as the normal outcome of what Freud (1933) refers to as masculine Oedipus complex, through their identification with their father's masculine superiority and the consequent view of women as penis-less (inferior) creatures. In this way Freud demonstrated the intertwining of psychological and social forms of gender oppression (Chodorow 1989). Similar arguments have been made by Butler (1990) who stresses the importance of understanding how social practices of a given culture are transmitted to its members and how the individual internalises the power relations, sex roles and psychodynamics of the family.

The following is a one-on-one interaction I had with one of the fishermen informally at his home.

Me: So what do you think about women and how they were created?

Sapiensa Musah
> *…We all know that women were created to help men and give birth for us, the men. We all know that men are so important, that's why God gave men penis and women did not get it. We all know that pregnancy becomes impossible without men. They are important but cannot be compared to men. That is how it is by nature, and by cultural practices.*

Me: Please tell me about the importance of women in your everyday life in this community.

Sapiensa Musah
> *…Oh my brother, I am not saying that women are not important. At least without them, we cannot get a womb for foetus to form. But the fact is by birth, nature and traditional practices men are ranked first before women. It has been so before we were all born. Every society's work is to protect this God made arrangement between men and women for the sake of respect and peace…Women understand this arrangement. That is why when women give birth to their own children, they always want to be with the girls, and boys are encouraged by their mother to be with their father….*

Me: Tell me about any specific role you think without women's help fishing business could grind to a halt.

Sapiensa Musah
> *…look my brother, we all know that women are very good at managing money than men. They finance our fishing activities in this community.*

They buy all our catch and sell to others. They can perform some wonders anytime a family is grieved; I mean they provide the money for funerals among others.

The fisherman, Sapiensa Musah's repetition of the phrase *we all know that* suggest to me that his responses, perhaps, represent the dominant discourses men have about women's position in the fishing community. Sapiensa Musah's comments reveal symptoms of how the fishermen regard the importance of their penis relative to women (Butler, 1990). His comments also suggest the fishermen's feelings of being superior to women. In so doing, the comments assume men's superiority in sexuality; it assumes of biological determinism and neglects the symbolic significance of the penis, and social influence on individual difference (Butler, 1990). His comments illustrate how femininity is construed vis-a-vis masculinity, or more precisely, femininity is to be articulated in the context of male and the opposition of male and female. This for me represents Sigmund Freud's (1933) reified notion of man as norm and woman as the 'Other'. This further bespeaks of Freud's idea of penis envy, which views the penis as important in unconscious life (Butler, 1990).

The fisherman's comment also resonates with Freud's expositions on anatomical differences which, according to Chodorow (1978), are loaded with relations of superiority and inferiority. These comments are confirmed by Freud's overall view of women. He constructs women as shameful beings, narcissistic and vain, with less sense of justice than men and with no notable contribution to make to civilisation (Freud 1933). However, the fisherman's (Sapiensa Musah) response to my second question reveals, for me, some conflict in his responses. The fisherman mentions the womb of a woman which is needed to carry a foetus which forms a baby. The fisherman suggests the capability of women to give birth as very important and critical. Despite the fisherman's realisation of the importance of the womb of a woman, he continues that "*by birth, nature and traditional practices*" men are ranked ahead of women. This suggests an assumption of male sexuality as the complete, and the capacity of women to get pregnant and give birth as an insufficient alternative (Kittay, 1984 cited in Mahtani, 2011). As a response to my last question, the fisherman suggests that fisherwomen provide the men with money

to get their fishing business going. The women break bulk and sell to others. Women provide the monies for the day-to-day running of businesses and their homes because they can manage money better than men. This resonates with Stets & Burke's (2000) argument that one cannot only consider women's vital contributions towards keeping society operating, but also their potential to succeed in other, non-traditional and arguably greater social duties. In her Rereading Freud on Femininity or Why Not Womb Envy? Eva Kittay (1984, cited in Mahtani, 2011) addresses this issue where she also makes an argument about men's envy towards women's sexuality and distinctive capacities. She calls this Womb envy (see Eva Kittay, 1984 for further reading).

The fisherman continues to suggest that men's perspective of women in the community is not ahistorical. Women have been 'subordinated' to men in the past till today. He suggests that before he was born, that has been the normal practice. And that it is an arrangement made by God. For him this needs to be maintained for peace to prevail. These comments support Butler's (1990) argument that gender identities are performed and accomplished over a period of time. This happens through gender-specific routine behaviour in which forms of femininity and masculinity and sexual identity are produced and regulated (Swain, 2006). This implies a psychical reproduction of subordination of women in that fishing community. The comments also suggest a situation in which women in the community have been made to accept their position without raising any question. From the perspective of the fishermen, the women in the community regard their situation as very normal. I argue that this normalisation is an agentic process that ensures the regulation and accomplishment of sexual identity (Dunne, 2009 cited in Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013). This also explains why Sapiensa Musah made the comment to the effect that women are always with their girls and the boys are always with their fathers.

The suggestion is that mothers are able to help their girls to identify with them, and fathers are able to also help their boys to be masculine by identifying with them. As Blakemore, Berenbaum, & Liben (2009, p.206) remarked, "Simply identifying one's own gender is enough to begin to motivate the child to learn about and behave in a way that is

consistent with that gender". Chodorow (1978) also argues that mothers are more likely to relate to their sons as different and separate because they are not of the same sex. At the same time, they experience a sense of oneness and continuity with their daughters because they are of the same sex. As a consequence, mothers will bond with their daughters thereby fostering femininity in girls. Simultaneously, mothers distance themselves from their sons who respond by shifting their attention away from their mother and toward their father. Through identification with their father, boys learn masculinity. More informative, was my conversation with the fisherman, Alhaji Osman.

Me: Please Alhaji how do you see women?

Alhaji Osman
> *………look, somewhere in the Quran, a disciple of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) asked him, Prophet your mother and father which one should be respected first? The Prophet said your mother. This question was repeated three times. The Prophet answered your Mother. The question was repeated the fourth time. That was when the Prophet mentioned your father. This means God and the Prophet hold women in high esteem. So why can't humans do the same? Women and children are treated disrespectfully in this community and in Ghana as a whole, why?....These same women keep our families together. The most shocking are my fellow Muslims who are supposed to copy the Prophet's lifestyle of treating women with chivalry and what the Quran says about respect and equality for women… in this community you see an uncle taking undue advantage of his sister's child …*

Me: Please tell me how men treat women in this community.

Alhaji Osman
> *Astaghfirullah (An Arabic word which translates to seeking forgiveness from Allah). Most of the men here treat them as if they were created second to men. Most men beat their wives and children every day in this community. Some men will deceive some women with money, impregnate them and leave them alone with their children in poverty. So these children will be roaming about and stealing fish and doing all sort of things just to survive because nobody cares for them…Men should not forget that heaven lies at the feet of all women…*

Me: So, Alhaji please tell me about your notion of how women were created.

Alhaji Osman

> *Allah (God) created women like anyone of us here. We are the same. As for me I think human beings have just used language to show difference between us. These days women can do whatever men can do and do it better.*

These responses from Alhaji Osman give an indication of him as a Muslim polygamist, who was so passionate and worried about how men positioned women in the community from an Islamic perspective. The fisherman's comments resonates with Prophet Muhammad remarks that, "Heaven lies at the feet of mothers" (Moustafa, 2013, p.181). The Prophet told fathers that, if their daughters spoke well of them on the Day of Judgment, they would enter paradise. Islam teaches that men and women are equal before God (Hasan, 2012). Alhaji Osman's comments render credence to Gustave Le Bond a prominent French thinker's argument that Islam is not only about respecting women, but rather, Islam is the first religion to teach about honour and respect for each other regardless of gender (see Al-Sheha, 2000). However, the fisherman, Alhaji Osman makes a comment that suggests his lamentation about the way women and children are being disrespected in the community and Ghana as a whole even though they *keep our families together.*

The fisherman is highly surprised that Muslims in the community are not showing the rest of the community members how to respect and love a woman based on what the Quran says and the exemplary life style of the Prophet (pbuh). Alhaji Osman's response to my second question suggests that women in the community are battered and sexually abused by men. He further suggests that some men do impregnate some of these women without taking care of their responsibilities. The suggestion is that such women become single parents and struggle with poverty all alone taking care of their children. Alhaji Osman's comment reveals how some of these children end up becoming child labourers and street children. Alhaji Osman's comment, *in this community you see an uncle taking undue advantage of his sister's child,* suggests that some adults who could be uncles or neighbours could exploit children who find themselves in such situations as a source of cheap labour. His narratives and expression of surprise resonate with me as a Muslim and a Ghanaian. My father had four wives and we were all living in a Muslim dominated

community. I observed and experienced how my father and other Muslim fathers maltreated their wives and children in the community. Growing up as a Muslim, I was taught about how the Prophet treated his wives and children with an attitude characterised by chivalry, egalitarianism, love and respect.

His comments further suggest that Islam stresses the importance of equality for all. This is further emphasised as it relates to gender equality in particular. In his response to my third question the fisherman indicated that Allah (God) created men and women in the same way. He suggests that none is higher than the other. He adds that men and women have used language to show difference between them. This bespeaks of some of the arguments made in Butler's (1990) Gender Trouble. For instance she challenges the assumption that masculine and feminine gender identities correspond with male and female bodies. Butler further argues that male and female themselves are socially constructed. So there is nothing "natural" about everybody being defined in terms of the other. The fisherman further emphasised that in terms of performance of any task, men and women could prove equal. The following are the fisherwomen's perspectives on how they are positioned and their experiences as women in relating with their male counterparts in the fishing community.

Ama Congo
> *…For me there is nothing like Female and Male. We are all human beings before the creator. Just as whites are not superior to blacks, so is it that women are not superior to men, vice versa. Some Men behave as if they were with God when He created the world, and decided to show difference between man and woman by coining the words MAN and WOMAN. These words are just constructed by human beings. All of us matter in this world….we used our own words and interpretation to make it look like males matter more than females…This has been done for a very long period so it has been accepted by all as if that is how God made it….*

Araba Alanta
> *…now I think it only in this part of the world that men see themselves as different from women. We hear in local language news about men becoming women and women becoming men in the West and America. That should tell you that one could be whoever he/she wants to be just by some of the things you do, your gestures and the way you dress. Just that in this part of the world our cultural practices and religion frown upon*

women behaving like men and vice versa. But it is possible elsewhere according to local news on radio…we all need to understand that male or female is just a language. If we do that, we will all leave respectfully with each….

These comments suggest the strong belief women have in equal gender identity. The fisherwoman, Ama Congo, for instance holds the belief that Men and Women were created in the same manner and that none could be considered inferior in relation to the other. She seems to argue that the difference between man and woman is just 'man-made' via the use of language and interpretation. Ama Congo further suggests that this practice has gone on for ages to the extent that it has been accepted by all as normal. Her comments were corroborated by the fisherwoman, Araba Alanta's comment that suggests that men see themselves as different from women *"only in this part of the world".* She seems to suggest that cultural and religious practices have been used to create this difference. The fisherwoman cites local radio stations as a source of her news about how the man-made difference between men and women is being closed in the West and elsewhere. These comments highlight and demonstrate Butler's (1990) belief that any identity is the system of logic of power and language which generates identities as a function of binary oppositions. These binary oppositions of the self and the other hide their own workings by making those identities appear to be so natural (Butler, 1990).

The fisherwomen's comment to the effect that being a male or a female is a product of society and creation of language, and that human beings must understand that and move on, illuminates the argument that gender is merely an inscription of discursive imperatives. In other words gender is an elaborate, socially constructed fabrication (Butler, 1990). As Butler (1990, p. 140) describes,

> Because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender create the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all. Gender, is thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the tacit collective agreement to perform, produce and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those productions.

The following are extracts of my conversation with one of the fisherwomen on the 21st July, 2014 at her house.

Me: Please tell me how your male counterparts treat you the females in this community.

Akua Seaman

> *…Everybody in this community has been made to understand that we are nobodies in this community. Women and children are treated like second human beings who come after men. Only men take decision for all of us in this community. When they invite us, we only go there to say yes to whatever men have agreed on. But when they need money, women become their saviours, can you imagine? Most of these men say we are strange, wicked, dangerous and very cunning in our dealings with them.*

Me: Please tell more about the issue of women not being part of decision making in the community.

Akua Seaman

> *…….We the women and our children are not allowed to talk because we are considered as not all that human. The men do not count us as normal human beings like themselves just because we don't have penis like them…Even among children; boys feel they are stronger and wiser than girls. Fathers will always choose boys over girls anytime there is any work to be done for money. As women, if we are to talk, we are told what we can say and cannot say, can you imagine?........ All the women are just living in a culture of silence and fear of men…trust me…all the women will tell you the same thing.*

Me: So how do you feel about women's situation in this community?

Akua Seaman

> *…Every woman in this community is getting frustrated. We are all created as human beings like I said. Man, woman and our children need to become one to face any challenges in life. We all have blood running through us. If you cut me now with blade, you will see blood. If you cut any man now, you will see blood. We should think of this sameness and live together in this community peacefully and respectfully with one another… Women in this community know that men will always use the bible to show the difference between men and women to their advantage…. they tell us our behaviours have no place in normal life….*

These comments from the fisherwoman, Akua Seaman, suggest a visible and invisible control of women and girl-child voices in the community (Butler, 2004a).   The fisherwoman's comment to the effect that women are not regarded as normal human beings in the community suggests the level of 'Otherisation' in the community (Clarke 2008). This for me suggests the women in the community feel men regard them as strange and behave out of 'normal life' during group or community meetings. From a

sociological perspective, these comments show how groups become what Smith (2005) prefers to call 'retail trading' places for patriarchal identities.

The fisherwoman's comments to the effect that women in the community are not allowed to speak their mind, be part of decision making and/or be told what to say may support Judith Butler's argument that the issue of what can be speakable is not only related to the contents of messages. But it is also closely related to the issue of who can be counted as human or whose lives can be counted as lives (Butler, 2004b). In particular, Butler (xix-xx) notes the extent to which the mode of invisible censorship serves as "the line that circumscribes (not only) what is speakable (but also) what is livable". In her response to my third question, the fisherwoman tells me how frustrating it is to be otherised by men. She is worried about the fact that women have been perceived to be different based on gender and religious conception of human. The fisherwoman's comments suggest the women's awareness and recognition of the inevitable interconnectedness and interdependency of our lives. The fisherwoman illustrates how men and women as well as children need each other in order to live liveable lives (Butler, 2004b). These comments are also in line with Butler's argument about the way in which human beings are tied to one another, even in the form of loss and vulnerability. She reminds us of the simple truth that we can be injured and that others can be injured as well. She concludes that this human condition of interdependence and vulnerability should be the basis of reimagining-instead of destroying-the possibility of community (Butler, 2004b).

The Fisherwoman's comment to the effect that men in the community see them as dangerous may be defence or a means for men to justify the identity they have constructed for women in the community (Butler, 2004a). Akua Seaman's comment to the effect that men also tell and behave in manner that convey a message to boys that they are stronger and wiser than girls could also contribute to the psychical reproduction of oppression of women, and exploitation of children (boys) in the fishing community. The fisherwoman's use of phrases such as *everybody in this community*; *everywoman in this community; and Women in this community* suggest that the constructed identities of these women and the situation they find themselves are common.

7.5 Fisherwomen's negotiation of their identity

This Section discusses how fisherwomen cope with the ways they have been positioned in the community by their male counterparts. This Section specifically presents data on how these women navigate all these identities and their strategies of resistance to their male counterparts. It also focuses on how this influences child labour in the community.

One of the several instances when I observed and noticed women negotiate their identity with their men counterparts was on the 9th June 2013 at the house of one of the fishermen, Sapiensa Musah. It was Sunday after church service. I was having a one-on-one interview with Sapiensa Musah on the issue of the distribution of premix fuel and its attendant problems. In the course of our interaction Sapiensa Musah's wife (Esi Tawiah), who also happens to be a participant to the study, interrupted (Researcher's Diary…),

> Oh *my God what did you just tell the kids, papa Musah? Before I left for church I asked them to pack and spread my smoked fish in the sun. On my way back from church I saw them in your canoe working. According to them you saw them doing what I asked them to do but you shouted on them to stop mine and do yours. Why have you been doing this to me? You behave as if these kids are not my biological kids. This is getting too much for me. So you want to control everything in this house. Okay continue. Never come to me for any financial assistance. Look for your own money to invest in your own business please. It's enough!*

Sapiensa Musah became quiet for some time and looked at me briefly. He shook his head in disbelief and looked at his wife and said,

> *Learn to be patient with things of this nature. So how many times do you want these children to come between us? If you are mad with me because of that, fine. Tomorrow is Monday and school day for the children but I will work with them instead of allowing them to go to school. If that will make you happy. If you don't want that then withdraw that statement. Otherwise they wont go to school.*

His wife looked at him angrily and left. Sapiensa Musah then turned at me and said,

> *I am the man of the house. How dare you a woman tell me what to do? I have always been the breadwinner, whether she likes it or not. I won't cut a tree and allow the tree to be taller than me, no way. But the threat…the threat of not giving me any money again is very disturbing to me. I am*

even confused. Now she is showing me money power. Eeeiii fear women oooo my brother. This is what all the women in this community do to us anytime we stamp our authority as the men of our houses.

A week later I met Esi Tawiah to get insight into what went on previously between her and her husband. I asked her,

Me: You were so mad with your husband. So you said a lot of things. Among them was that you are not going to give him any financial help again because of what happened. Please tell me more about women giving their husbands financial assistance in this community.

Esi Tawiah

> *……………Women in this community are fed up with using money as power to resist their husband's authority. The idea is that we give them the financial assistance, so that they won't for instance take our boys to sea. Because it is very dangerous out there. But they do it anyways after taking our money under the pretext of seeking the help of other adults. Using money this way is now evil because it is impoverishing us and is not giving us the desire results. This is because we give the money for a purpose but we don't achieve it. But we keep doing the same thing as if we have been charmed by our husbands. This is very worrying and makes fisherwomen so anxious about the well-being of their boys who are always taken to this dangerous sea. Look If you ask me why we keep giving monies to our husbands despite not getting the results, no woman in this community can give you any answer……………*

This extract suggests that fisherwomen in the fishing community make use of money as strategy for negotiating their gender identities, and for challenging the authority of their male counterparts in the community. The fisherwoman used money as "agentic force" (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013, p. 190) to counteract her husband's authority over her. However, in my second meeting with the fisherwoman (wife), her comments suggested that the unconscious was at work in her behaviour (Frosh, 2013). The fisherwoman complains that fisherwomen in the community are becoming worried and anxious because they don't understand why they keep giving their husbands financial assistance for a particular purpose, which is not being achieved. Yet they continue to give them.

But the comment from the fisherwoman suggests that what sends shivers down the fisherwomen's spine, perhaps, is not the return of the infantile repressed, but the

beckoning from the future (Frosh, 2013). For instance the fisherwoman talks about being worried about the future of their children on the dangerous sea, and she was also anxious about getting impoverished because of the way she gives out monies to the husband. So, that the husband puts a stop to taking their sons to the dangerous sea for fishing. The women of the community keep giving the financial assistance to their husbands. Yet the men keep going to the *dangerous sea* with their sons. As one Fisherwoman (Esi Tawiah) puts it, b*ut we keep doing the same thing as if we have been charmed by our husbands.* This begs the question; why are the fisherwomen continually repeating what is not helping them achieve their goal? For me this exudes a potential muddle of various actions and motivations. Esi Tawiah's comment to the effect that no woman in the community could tell why fisherwomen continue to give their husbands financial support even though they are not getting any relief from them, and that it could impoverish them. This could be understood in reference to Freud's argument that,

> If we take into account observations such as these, based upon behaviour……….. and upon the life histories of men and women, we shall find courage to assume that there really does exist in the mind a compulsion to repeat which overrides the pleasure principle (1919, p. 23).

Stephen Frosh explains the fisherwomen's situations as an attraction to disruption. In agreeing with Frosh, this could be a way in which the fisherwomen put themselves in the position of facing dissolution, even as they struggle to remain sane (see Frosh, 2013). To Frosh, human beings do not always seek this out. But this does not stop human beings from running into danger. So the fisherwomen's continuous giving of financial help to their husband's without achieving the desirable effect could be something unconscious, recurring continually without hesitation or cease (Frosh, 2013). The fisherwoman's comment to the effect that fisherwomen in the community have been left anxious about their children (Sons) illustrate Freud's (1919) argument that anxiety is an adaptive response to disruptive or dangerous situations which in a way helps to mobilise defences against it. As a result, I argue that without anxiety the fisherwomen could fall prey to the danger itself, with no preparation (see Freud, 1919). However, Freud makes it clear that anxiety could get out of hand.

On the other hand, the fisherman's (Husband) comment to the effect that he feels

threatened and worried about the way his wife thinks of denying him of some financial assistance suggests that women's income has given them some power in respect of control over their family, and could earn them a place in decision making in their family. This result conforms with what the literature says about the role of money in respect to marital power. It suggests that women's earnings have increased their control over money in the marital relationship (see Pahl, 1989). This could provide women in the community with a means of resisting, and navigating their identity. Some men have responded to their wives' employment by taking on a greater share of domestic labour burden (see Coltrane, 2000).

However the fisherman's comment that he will not allow the children to go to school if the wife goes on with her threat illuminates how men's power is preserved in the absence of their economic powers in the fishing community (Tichenor, 2005). This also suggests that children are put to work the more when women resist their husbands' authority through the withdrawal of their financial assistance. I argue, therefore, that there could be a relationship between fisherwomen's refusal to give financial assistance to their husbands (fishermen) and fishermen's use of children (boys) in fishing at high sea. So if their wives deny them any financial help, making it difficult for them to employ adults, they fall on the labour of their children as discussed in Sections 6.2 and 6.3.

As a result, fisherwomen's use of money as a form of power to resist their men's authority could become weak. However, the fisherwomen continue to give financial assistance with the intention of getting their husbands to stop going to sea with children (Sons), which never happens. This suggests that the disturbance that the uncanny generates is not always a source of aversion; quite frequently it generates interest, the thrill of something odd and troubling, even the excitement of being made anxious (Frosh, 2013). This might explain, in a part, the fisherwoman, Esi Tawiah's comment to the effect that fisherwomen are worried and anxious, and are not achieving the aim for which they financially help their husbands but would continue to do that. The disruption in the lives of these fisherwomen as they navigate their identities in a way negatively affect their daughters. The fisherwomen explain that they usually vent their frustration and

disappointment with their husbands' on their children (Daughters) during the processing of fish at their sheds. They claim their worries and anxieties are therefore directed at someone who has nothing to do with it because they are always closer. For instance the fisherwoman Ama Congo commented that,

> *Our situation makes us talk to our daughters anyhow even when we as mothers are at fault. We always deal with our worries and frustrations with our husbands' by blaming these innocent girls who work with us. This is because we are always with these girls at our sheds working on fish together. I get more worried when I do that because my daughter is very hard working and I see her as my complete copy. But unfortunately I blame her for my own wrongs...hmmmm.... this is very confusing and worrying.*

This further suggests that the fisherwomen do also make use of projection in which unwanted elements of themselves are expelled and deposited into their daughters who are regarded as external others as I discussed in Chapter Six. This further highlights Freud's discussion of projection in his work; Beyond the Pleasure Principle, with its invention of death drive as perhaps the primary motivating force in human psyche; And also in his work, The Uncanny (Freud, 1919). Thus, in the course of his theoretical analysis, Freud (1919, p. 248 emphasis in original) commented,

> Since the uncanny effect of a 'double' also belongs to this same group it is interesting to observe what the effect is of meeting one's own image unbidden and unexpected…It is not possible, though, that our dislike of them was a vestigial trace of the archaic reaction which feels the 'double' to be something uncanny…

The fisherwoman's comment to the effect that her situation is so worrying and confusing suggest that the fisherwomen are being haunted by what they cannot bear (Frosh, 2013). As Gordon (1997, p. 54 cited in Frosh, 2013) drawing on Sigmund Freud writes,

> Freud's haunting experience consists of his looking into a mirror and seeing an alienating figure that turns out to be him too. Freud's context is the uncanny feeling that is produced by an encounter with a double, a feeling that is not exactly that of fear, but more a kind of unhappy shiver, a dislike at being brought face to face with something slightly disreputable…

The following are other comments which are also very informative,

Me: Please tell me how you overcome your husband's control over you.

Maame Adjoa Dede

> *…I don't really care about some of these things. I used to get worried about the way my husband sees me. Whether he saw me as his wife or just there to help him financially. Yabre (We are tired). Now I am neither here nor there. Life goes on. Men will always be men, and they will always look at us as different people who must be controlled everyday… I gave up on my resistance to his ways because he sees women as dangerous species who must be watched very carefully. All over in this community, women are considered the most dangerous.*

Me: So, tell me how you protect your sons from following their father to sea.

Maame Adjoa Dede

> *Hmmmm…the fact is that my two sons and my three daughters, as well as I are under the control of my husband. We are always at his mercy. This world will always be a man's world like I said. My husband complains about everything I do. Men are always using tricks to control us. They give all sorts of excuses and reason just to always be the boss.*

These comments suggest that some of the fisherwomen have gone through a lot in their dealings with their husbands in the community. So they have now given up any efforts to resist or negotiate their husband's authority and the way their husbands see them. For example the fisherwoman's use of the Fante term "*Yabre"* suggests that she is not even considering negotiating her identity anymore because she feels frustrated anytime she attempts to negotiate her identity. The comment to the effect that this world is a man's world and will always continue to be so suggests that some of the fisherwomen have accepted their established gender roles and norms in the community. Her comments also suggest that some of the children in the community have no ways of coping with their fathers' control and regulation. Therefore, children could be used for work at any time their fathers deem fit.

However, I suggest a follow-up study to investigate children's psyche in respect to their identity negotiation strategies in the community. The fisherwoman's comment that her husband regards women as *dangerous species that must be watched carefully* highlights Stephen Frosh's (2013, p. 16) argument that "The complete otherness of some other

species, their illimitable wildness, invites our attempts at colonisation precisely because it is so unbearable". This is so because the fisherwoman's comment suggests that fishermen in the community believe that their female counterparts' attitudes or behaviour as women are unbearable.   This suggests that women have a certain mindset that gave them a need for subjection to men. It further suggests the need for women to be governed and controlled by men. However, the fisherwoman, Maame Adjoa Dede's comment that *men are always using tricks to control us. They give all sorts of excuses and reasons just to always be the boss,* give an indication that this is just a form of victim-blaming attempts at self-justifying forms of explanation (Fanon, 2004).

7.6 Summary

The main points developed in the first Section of this Chapter indicate that fishers believed that education makes people powerful, and that knowledge is an important signifier of authority and power. They believe that with this educational power and knowledge, educated elites and local political leaders have undermined and marginalised them (Fishers). The fishers thought educated elites and local politicians project blames on them in order to make them feel guilty of all the challenges confronting them in the fishing community. Fishers feel they are not considered as complete members of their own community. So they feel they have been rendered nobodies, non-entities, and people who don't matter. Some of the fishers accept their position as powerless people who don't matter because they did not go to school. They feel frustrated and desperate because of their experiences in the community. However, they are prepared to be part of decision-making in the community that seeks to better their lives and that of their children. Analyses of some of their comments suggest fishers have split their experiences and relationship in the community into binary oppositions. The fishers regard the way they treat their own children (shouting, beating and blaming them for everything) as good and consider the way they are being treated by educated elites as bad. These fishers explored the idea that resources that could help move them and their children from powerless nobodies to power somebodies in their own community surround them.

Issues highlighted in the second Section of this Chapter suggest fishers regard their children as naturally problems and troubles. Fishers believe their children are emotionally and imaginatively unregulated by faculties in human beings which deal with social behaviour (Lall, 2013). They believed it was their responsibilities to deal with these problems and troubles through the use of rod as suggested in the Bible. Some of the fishers believed that even though their children are innately problems and troubles, children's identities are also associated with their social environment and their relationship with their parents. I examined the possibility that the fishers' construction of their children's identity as problems and troubles could be a form of defence due to their state of helplessness or frustration with social structures and systems in the country as a whole and the community in particular.

I further examined the possibility that fishers might project their frustration as element of their ego onto their children. In so doing the children end up internalising that which have been projected onto them, making them problems and troubles (Fanon, 1968). These fishers believe that children in the community have no adult role models to look up to in order to shape their lives well. Children are not assisted by their parents to define themselves in the community. The analysis showed that children are not allowed to be part of decision making at the family or community level. In agreement with Frost and McClean (2014) I realised that the fishers dealt with their emotions that could not be tolerated by dividing up and separating off what could be regarded as psychically good from the bad one. Some of the fishers considered their children as objectified others while others showed their preparedness to regard their children as significant others. This for me signified their preparedness for a psychic change directed at putting a stop to going to sea with children to fish. Exploration of some of the data showed that some of the children were able to withstand the hostile projections of their parents. It also highlighted the fishers' capability to identify with their children regardless of their age difference and circumstances.

In the third Section of this Chapter other points were also developed. Prominent among them are that; the fishermen considered themselves as superior to their female

counterparts in the community. They regard themselves as the norm and their females as the other (Butler, 1990). Their comments suggested an assumption of male sexuality as complete and women's possession of womb and giving birth as insufficient (Mahtani, 2011). Some fishermen hold the belief that God arranged women's position in life. Men believe the women in the community accept their position as second to men. I argued that this way of thinking leads to a psychical reproduction of subordination of women in the community.

However, some of the fishermen believed that women and men must be treated equally and with same respect. They continued that children are to be treated respectfully as well. These fishers believed that the difference between man and woman is socially constructed and is brought out by performance (Butler, 1990). Further analysis of the data suggested that women in the community are beaten and sexually abused by men. Some men impregnate some women without taking care of their responsibilities. Products of such relationships become child labourers and street children. It also suggested that boys usually identify with their fathers and girls with their mothers in the fishing community. Some of the fisherwomen also believe that culture and some religious practices have created the differences between men and women in the community. They also believe the difference is as a result of activities of members of society and language. Fisherwomen suggest a control of girl-child and women voices in the community. These women suggest that men in the community consider women as dangerous, strange and wicked people that men should be careful of.

The last but not the least Section developed points that suggested that some fisherwomen in the community negotiated their identities by using money as their source of power. Money was used as an "agentic force" to counteract their husbands' control and authority (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013, p.190). Analysis of fisherwomen's comments suggested that fishermen got financial assistance from their wives on condition that they do not take their sons to sea which was considered as dangerous. Fisherwomen also used this as their bargaining power to be part of family decision making. However, fisherwomen were worried and anxious about their continuous extension of financial assistance to their

husbands' which did not help to them to achieve their aim of causing their husbands to stop going to the dangerous sea with their sons. I argued that this action of the fisherwomen could be unconscious (Freud, 1933). They were also worried that this could impoverish them yet they could not stop giving out their monies to their husbands. Further analysis suggested that fishermen's power is persevered despite the reduction in their economic powers in the fishing community.

I examined the possibility that children could be put to work the more when women resist their husbands' authority through the withdrawal of their financial assistance. Fishermen do that as a way of revenge and a show of their powers. This made the fisherwomen frustrated. Their comments further suggested that fisherwomen extended their frustrations and disappointments with their husbands' onto their daughters during the processing of fish. As a result, I explored the possibility that fisherwomen could project unwanted elements of themselves onto their children due to their worries and anxieties. I suggested the possibility of some of these fisherwomen being haunted by what they could not handle (Frosh, 2013). A further exploration of fisherwomen's comments suggested that some of them gave up their efforts of negotiating their identities. I suggested the likelihood that these women might have accepted their established gender norms and roles as assigned to them in the community. Their comments also suggested the inability of some of the children to negotiate their identities or develop any strategies to cope with their father's authority an

CHAPTER EIGHT
HOW I POPOULATED MY INTERNAL WORLD

8.1 Introduction

This Chapter takes a retrospective look at my emotional engagements with the fishers during the fieldwork and analysis of the data. The main focus is on my subjective feeling in the way I related to the participants in particular and members of the community in general. I reflect on how micro-political issues such as researcher-fisher relationships, insider-outsider characteristics and authorial visibility became implicated in the research process, and also shed light on how I negotiated the complexities involved. The data here are mainly drawn from my field notes that I made in my research and journal logs. I also draw on informal conversation between the fishers and myself, and interviews and observations I conducted for the study.

The four sections focus on the possibility of examining how I populated my internal world with thoughts and feelings, fears, and fantasies that, perhaps, drove my behaviours toward the fishers. The focus is also understanding the concurrent dynamics of the internal mind interacts with the external/social and internal/psyche worlds of the fishers in the fishing community. The first section specifically discusses how I became emotionally engaged with the fishers as an insider/outsider researcher. The second section explores how both the fishers and myself became defensive towards each other during our interactions. The third examines how I felt nervous interviewing the fishers despite the power relations imbalance in my favour. The last but not the least section discusses the shame that consumed me as researcher. Following this is a section that summarises the discussions in this Chapter.

8.2 In/outsider emotional engagements

In this Section I reflect on researcher-participants feelings towards each other. Here I focus on how I navigate the dual experience of being both an outsider (researcher) and an

insider (ex-child, My Ghanaian-ness), and how both experiences became implicated in the research process. I entered this research setting with multiple identities or selves (see Preface). Against this backdrop, I considered myself as an insider. I also regarded the study area as my own community. For instance when I met the community chief and his elders in our first meeting to ask for their informed consent, the chief said,

> *………But you see, as an educated person and someone who is living and studying abroad, we hope you will not be throwing your weight about and looking down upon my people. Excuse me; you all become so stupid and foolish in thinking that you know better than us, just because you are now mingling with whites and studying abroad. If you behave that way, I will ask my people to throw you out of this community like a dead goat………*

The chief's remarks led me into getting so anxious about how challenging researching inside your own community could be. His comment to the effect that people who go abroad to study and mingle with whites become so foolish and stupid, and *to throw you out of this community like a dead goat…*, might have affected my mood and temperament in the room. As a consequence, I started thinking of how to defend myself from any 'emotional torture' from the fishers. As tradition demands, I could not utter a word until he had finished 'insulting' me. I thanked him for the "insults". He looked at me and said, *You are different.* But judging from the demeanours and body language of the elders, I observed they were not happy with the invectives and insinuations made by the chief against me. They all tried to assuage my feelings as I outwardly kept my calm in their presence. I pretended all was well although within me was an uncontrollable anger and rage.

This is because I experienced the chief's attitude towards me as an attack on my personality. I felt unrestrained to hate him and attack him back but for the fact he is the chief of the community, and the fact that customary laws forbid us from insulting chiefs. It was not easy for me to separate out emotional responses from reasoned difference with the chief (Hollway, 2008). My situation may suggest a re-enactment of how Hollway (2008) felt when she was scholarly attacked by Frosh and Baraitser (2008). So like Hollway, I drew on Wilfred Bion's idea of containment by living "with these feeling for a while, believing that it is better to try to process my experience of "the chief's insults

directed at me "than evacuating the bad feelings" by insulting the chief back, which could have affected my relationship with members of the community as a whole (2008, p. 386). Bion (1984) argues that thinking well is an intersubjective achievement and helps especially when one feels under attack. Bion (1984) argues that thinking well helps people who feel under attack, and it is a product of intersubjectivity. On the other hand, I also tried to "… induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (Hochschild, 1983, p.7). This assumes knowledge of, and places a value on, what a 'proper' state of mind might be (Beedell, 2009).

My position as an insider and outsider in the research setting proved to be both of help and a hindrance. Logistically, being an insider was hugely helpful. However, I was shocked to realise that I was not after all conversant with some relevant cultural norms and traditional knowledge of my 'own people'. This was because I took them for granted. This made me so anxious and worried. This played out during the recruitment of the fishers for the study. When I met the fisherwomen for the first time, I was offered a cup of water to drink. But I respectfully rejected the cup of water because I was not thirsty. One of the women looked at me and said,

> *What a shame a Ghanaian rejecting a cup of water from his host? What an abomination! Well may be he regards us as dirty people. He is an educated tall man from the Queen's country. So, he does not need our type of water. Hmmmmm….. He wants Voltic water (A brand of bottled water perceived to be for the educated and rich people).*

Another woman said,
> *I am shocked. White people come here to do research talk to us, eat and drink our water. Look at Ghanaian who knows everything about us and speaks our language, is bluffing and insulting us. He feels too big, thick tall man and very hygienic than us.*

These comments suggest my refusal to drink the water was regarded as very offensive and untraditional, especially coming from a Ghanaian who have had some part of his childhood in the same community. This episode destabilised and saddened me heavily. The shame was all over my face. The fact is I was being honest with them by respectfully rejecting the offer. But my action was interpreted in the context of the norms and

traditions of the fishing community which I had taken for granted. It is against the fishers' culture for a visitor not to accept a cup of water. My refusal of the offer meant my rejection of their way of life. Even though I agreed that my attitude was unacceptable and pleaded for their forgiveness, within me I felt denigrated and humiliated. I felt the fishers over stretched it and made a mountain out of a molehill. At some point I felt I should just get up and walk away. To my mind I was just being myself in all humility but the fisherwomen saw me differently owing to that single act of saying 'no thank you' to an offer of a cup of water. The 'right' action was for me to accept the cup of water and take a sip. After that I could keep it by my side or give it back to them. Nevertheless, this did not deter the fishers from talking to me. To address this traditional slip on my part, I quickly asked for a cup of water and half of a grilled fish. This act filled the shed with laughter. I suddenly became their 'darling boy'. Esi Tawiah who later on became a participant said, *this is what we want from you. Now you are close to us.* Honestly, I did not feel comfortable eating the fish because I don't like grilled fish. But I had to take it as a way of pacifying the fisherwomen. By this gesture I was trying to avoid any situation of being regarded as an 'anglicised Ghanaian' which could in many ways affect my relationship with them.

There was another incident that questioned my insider position leading to me getting frustrated and less confidence on the field. I met the chief fisherman to make an arrangement to go to sea with a group of nine adult fishermen and three 'fisher boys'. It was a mix bag of feelings initially ranging from being so elated to being confused and sad. I was antsy, felt joyous and anxious because this was my maiden journey on sea to fish. As we were discussing this, I was making notes of sensory details and other spoken words transpiring among us. Here some of the children were jokingly making fun with the whole highly anticipated fishing expedition. The chief fisherman realised my facial expression depicted someone looking so distraught, unsafe, and completely empty all of a sudden. So he shouted at the children to stop telling me such fearsome stories about the happenings on sea. He made it clear to me that, look *you need to buckle your amour because we would be going far deep sea.*

Again, I took my relationship with the chief fisherman for granted. His comments hit me hard emotionally. I thought we were so close and cordial to the extent that some of these traditional practices could be glossed over without any repercussions. But I was so wrong. As a Ghanaian, I have always been aware that when an adult is speaking to you as a young man, all that you have to do is to listen. But before the meeting I had informed the chief that I had wanted to record whatever would transpire during the meeting. He objected to that idea. He, however, agreed that I could write down everything. So, I thought I was doing what I had been permitted to do. At some point the chief fisherman was visibly shaking whilst talking to me. This made me feel like I had done something sacrilegious. He was wondering how possible it was for me to be afraid of the sea. For him, I was showing off like '*all the educated people*' do in Ghana. Frankly speaking on my part I was facing a dilemma. I did not know what to do at that moment. The chief read different meanings into my mood and attitude as I was sitting right in front of him. The chief fisher looked at me and said.. *look at your attitude and your foreign behaviour.* This, perhaps, explains how affect powers and intertwines with cultural circuits of value as some get marked out as disgusting and others as exemplifying modern virtue (Ahmed, 2004; Skeggs, 2010; Skeggs & Wood, 2009). It also suggests that the chief regarded me as more of an outsider than an insider because of his perception of me as exhibiting '*foreign behaviour*'.

When I left for my room I entered this experience into my journal. I wrote (23rd June 2014), for instance, *so Shaibu, does it mean you know nothing about your people or this was a genuine mistake. I am even beginning to doubt myself as an insider anyways. I think I am more of an outsider* (My note). The entry in the journal suggests my being an insider researcher was not enhancing my depth and breadth of understanding of the fishers in a community in which I also lived some time ago till age eleven. What was even more frustrating was the fact that I continued to live and work in the Central Region of Ghana where this particular fishing community is located as I explained in the Preface. In the journal I showed clearly that I had not been able to master my feelings very well. I recall agreeing with the chief fisherman that education could create distance between me as an educated Ghanaian and the fishers as uneducated Ghanaians. This could be my first

conscious experience of projective identification (Freud, 1937). This concept somehow illuminated the subtle but powerful ways in which I could be nudged, seduced, or coerced into occupying a particular position in relation to the fishers (Clarke & Hoggett, 2009: Hollway & Jefferson, 2013).

Furthermore, at some point I felt so bad that the chief made me look so stupid in the presence of these children. I felt I should be treated with respect after all I am a Ghanaian and one of their own. I felt that was my inalienable right. I behaved as if they owed me that. But given this a deep thoughts, I realised the chief has been more helpful to me than I had been thinking about. I realised I was so interested in the negative sides of the chief's attitude towards me. Thinking well helped me to hold unto what was valuable in the chief's over all attitude towards me when I had always been interested in all the things I disliked about his attitude. According to Hollway (2008, p.389) by thinking well, as noted by Bion, I might have been able to "move beyond turning" the chief's attitude towards me into "a wholly bad object, entailing reciprocally locating all the 'good' in my own position and thus reproducing an unhelpful" relationship between myself and the chief.

One of the fisher women (Ama Congo), who became so close to me to the extent of giving me free fresh fish made the following comment,

> *You have never given birth before so you will never understand us. Just come and join us here now and feel the heat in the kitchen. These children can make you think of committing suicide. I don't blame outsiders like you. You sit somewhere and judge everybody. I don't even know whether some of you think at all. You, I know you don't have any responsibility. You did not suffer to gain.*

Ama Congo suggests that I don't have any responsibility in life. I believe she made this comment against the backdrop of me not having a child to take care of. I felt insulted and humiliated, once again, by that comment but I had no response to that. Owing to our sociopolitical discussions on radio, people who don't agree with us think we are always in the position to judge them. So her comment that we *judge everybody* did not come to me as a surprise. I anticipated that. However, there were some fisherwomen whose

comments convinced me that I was emotionally safe in the community in relation to my insider-outsider positionalities in the community. These women I believed showed me great love and care. They regarded me as their son but a distant one. I was always in a joyous mood anytime I scheduled to meet these women. These women put me in this mood because they were so friendly and considered me as their son. Nonetheless, I was so careful not to idealise them (see Clarke, 2008). For instance   said to me,

> *……..My son never give up in life. If you had continued to stay here, you could have become like anyone of these good for nothing young people in the community……*

Another fisherwoman, Araba Alanta, also said,

> *…….My son well I call you my son because you one of us. You understand us better than anybody who has never stayed here before. Hahahahaha….. I know I am not your biological mother. But I just like the way you humble yourself and talk to us………*

I felt these comments from these fisherwomen were so heartwarming and reassuring. The comments from these two suggest that I am an insider but at the same time an outsider. An example is the comment, *if you had continued to stay here, you could have become like anyone of these good for nothing young people in the community. Now you are no more with us*. They think because I am no more in the community with them, I need to learn more from people of the community. They also advised me to becareful and cautious as I would be meeting people who could be mean to me when I least expected. I felt these two were so open and honest in their interactions with me. I frankly believed these two gave me all the hope and inspiration I needed to work in the community. Often, after an interview with these two fisherwomen and other two fishermen, I felt so privileged by the shared confidence and ease of our relationship and rapport.

But I also felt burdened by the irresolvable dilemmas and stresses they exposed. Considering the extent to which they accepted and treated me, I sometimes felt unsure about the genuineness of their closeness and their love for me. I often get flustered about how this was going to negatively or positively affect my work. At some point I was worried that I might be bias against those whom I perceived as fishers who made me feel bad by misinterpreting their comments during data analysis. But I was somehow able to

avoid this because I crosschecked whatever they said with them. They offered positive feedback. I also engaged in disciplined bracketing and detailed reflection on the subjective process, with a close awareness of my personal biases and perspectives, aimed at reducing the potential concerns associated with insider membership (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007).

In all of these instances, my main aim was to get more rapid and complete acceptance by the fishers, banking my hopes on my childhood experiences and my Ghanaian-ness, so that there may be a greater depth to the data that I was gathering (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). With this in mind I stayed so opened and approachable to the fishers emotionally and physically. They could tell me anything they wished, as they were all older than me. My interactions with these fishers were handled with honesty and openness. I noted openness and honesty in their reactions towards me, and meaningful information was shared. In the end, the fishers gave me positive feedback about the whole process. My experiences on the field taught me how to stay honest, authentic, open, deeply interested in the experiences of the fishers, and developing full commitment to accurately and adequately representing the fishers experiences (Jaspal, 2009). My understanding was that as human as I am, I might be full of overlapping, confusing, ambivalent, mixed, and sometimes contradictory goals, motives, desires, thoughts, and feelings. Because of these features of the human experience, I believed others might sometimes be able to see through the complexity in ways that I could not. Furthermore, others external to the community might be able to appreciate the wider perspective of the fishers' experiences, with its connections, causal patterns, and influences. Reflecting on all of these took me through a gamut of emotional roller coaster but also dread, anxiousness, trepidation, intrigue, complacency, and curiosity throughout my stay in the community (Beedell, 2009).

I noticed that my emotional engagement with fishers as I tried to navigate my insider-outsider stances could be necessary and inescapable; "both burdensome and beneficial;" both "problem and solution" (Finlay & Gough, 2003, p. 3). As an insider sharing some of the characteristics of the fishers understudy (example my Ghanaian-ness, Childhood experiences, Speaker of the local language) or an outsider to the commonality shared by

the fishers like being parents, fishers, and coming from the South of Ghana, my personhood as a researcher, including my membership status in relation to the fishers participating in the study are very important and ever-present part of the whole study (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). My inability to navigate the dynamics of these relationships led me to become defensive in my relationship with the fishers. All of these produced defences that I explore in the next section.

8.3 We are defended subjects

In this Section, I discuss how anxieties and other feelings that might have taken hold of me and the fishers made us so defensive in the whole research process. Being anxious is argued to be an inherent human condition. As a consequence, this is capable of producing both a defended "me" as a researcher and defended "fishers" as a participants (see Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). One of my first participants (Alhaji Osman) gave me the initial hint of how defended we were all going to be in the whole research process. Ahaji Osman had a fascinating life story, and was an extrovert. He was also very open and honest in his interactions with me. The first day I met him, he made it clear to me that there were certain areas about his life, and of the community that he would not want us to discuss. His argument was that such stories were capable of making the whole community as well as himself and his family objects of public ridicule. He was worried and afraid of revealing intensely personal information to a known social commentator who could sit on radio and make such a revelation a subject for public discussion on radio. He said,

> *.....the issues you want us to talk about are very sensitive, I hope you know that? Hmmmmm… you know how Ghanaians can talk. I am ready to tell you a lot but not everything because I don't want our challenges and problems to be on radio every Sunday. You guys are always talking about the ills and filths in the various communities in this region. I know you to be one of them. Despite the fact that you have assured us of keeping the community's name and our names out of your work, I still think that as human as you are, everything can happen. Please don't misunderstand me. I admire the genuine trust and rapport you have with all of us, and your efforts to help uplift this community. Most of the fishers like you because some knew you from your childhood in this community. But like I said you are a Ghanaian…Ghanaian talk too much. Ghanaians will always tell others whatever they see or hear….Abaa. Anyway, I am not an*

exception because I am also a Ghanaian like you….

The fisherman's comments suggest that my position as former socio-political commentator on radio and television in the region was a threat to their readiness to divulge and share with me all the information needed to produce knowledge in relation to child labour in the community. The comment, for me, was indicative of how low the fishers' confidences were in me even though I had, like the fisherman said, *….assured us of keeping the community's name and our names out of your work.* Not only that, I assured them of their privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and had their informed consent in accordance with the University of Sussex ethical guidelines as discussed in Section 4.7. However, I felt he contradicted himself by suggesting that he admired the genuineness of our relationship and the level of trust. Suggestively, I reasoned that this could be a typical case of a 'defended subject' referred to by Hollway and Jefferson (2013, p.42). This fisherman had other fishers who corroborated his position. The following is a comment by the fisherwoman Akua Seaman when I asked her to tell me more about her monies and the death of her son during fishing.

Me: If you quite remember the other time you told me about how you used to have plenty money and then you became poor after the death of your child who died after being sick for a long time because he was beaten. Please tell me more about that.
Akua Seaman
> *…Please some areas are no go areas. I trust you hundred percent but as you know this world has become something else. You say something to someone, the person takes it to others everywhere. Everybody is GBC (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation) in this country. We can talk but know your limit. All my house problems should not be known like that…..*

Another fisherman (Atta Brukusu) also added his voice when I asked him,

Me: Please can you tell me more about your drunkard father and your relationship with him?

Atta Brukusu
> *Ah Massa! (Master) are you not the gentleman we usually see on Coastal TV (A television station in Cape Coast)? What are you going to do with all these information about my childhood relationship with my drunkard father? Oh no I can't tell you all of that at all…I beg you. I respect and love you so much because of the way you respect and treat me but I*

can't....and you see, you want to know such personal information about me but you have not told me yours. Fine you told me about being a student research but you ……

These comments strengthened my suggestion that the fishers were in a "defensive mood". In my further reflections on all of these comments which I entered in my journal (27ᵗʰ May, 2013), I said,

> *These fishers have made up their minds to be dodgy with some of their stories because they produce some bad feelings and anxieties. They do not feel comfortable to share with me. They talk about Ghanaians being nosy. Yeah I agree with them with them on that. They also consider me as someone who could expose them and other community members through the use of media. This is because I have been a socio-political commentator before I left for school. This is also true, and we most of the times discussed issues that various communities were unhappy about. However, frankly speaking, I don't think these are good reasons for them to refuse to share all their personal stories regarding children and fishing. Are they planning to hide something? What is even paradoxical to me is the fact that they seem not to trust me, yet they admire the genuineness with which we trust each other and our relationship. What should I do? Well may be I have to tell them some very sensitive personal information about myself in general and, particularly, in relation to how I ended up being a child labourer in the same community. Wait a minute…but I think if I do that, I could end up disgracing myself and my parents, especially my mother.*

This extract from my journal suggests that I was also worried about sharing personal information about myself. This suggested that I was also a defended researcher. The fisherman Atta Brukusu's comment to the effect that he knows nothing personal about me like I wanted to know about him suggests there is an inequality in our relationship. This gives an indication that Atta Brukusu wants to know who my parents are, and how I also became a child labourer in the community. However, I was so convinced that that could negatively affect my mother's reputation. I was also afraid that other people would know more about me, and I might not feel comfortable dealing with them after the research. I knew most of the fishers and they knew me too, so I thought I had to watch what I say to them. We all agreed that Ghanaians could really talk. We are all Ghanaians, therefore, we could spread vital personal information about each other to anybody. Given my relative inexperience position with participants of this nature, it was not surprising

that I was as anxious as the fishers themselves (Beedell, 2009). I noticed I had become a 'defended researcher' (Beedell, p. 107), owing to my avoidance of any emotional engagements with any data that produces anxieties. By so doing I would not be producing the conducive and appropriate chances for fishers to express themselves without any fear (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). Thus, according to Hollway et al. (2013, p. 42) both the fishers (participants) and myself (researcher) had become defended subjects

> … whose mental boundaries are porous where unconscious material is concerned. This means that both will be subject to projections and introjections of ideas and feelings coming from the other person. It also means that the impressions that we have about each other are not derived simply from the 'real' relationship, but that what we say and do in the interaction will be mediated by internal fantasies which derive from our histories of significant relationships. Such histories are often accessible only through our feelings and not through our conscious awareness.

It dawned on me that as a researcher 'I am no more' in any shape or form different from the fishers that I was studying (Walkerdine, 1997, p. 73). Pressured by these incidences, I had to think deeply about how to handle these without bruising the sensibilities of the fishers, so that I could produce rich data throughout the whole of the research process. Going forward, I made a conscious effort in my subsequent interactions with the fishers by loosening up my grip on my emotions (Froggett & Hollway, 2010). I started by organising community clean ups and assisting in the free flow of premix fuel for the fishers. I facilitated and helped to organise meetings between micro-credit organisations with fishers in the community. I called on public officials to help in the management of waste in the community, even though, I felt all of these made me more of an advocate rather than a 'legit' researcher (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002).

I shared my personal experiences as a child in the community, and as an adult living in the Metropolitan capital of the Central Region of Ghana (Cape Coast). This new approach contributed to a more relaxed, equitable, and, eventually, highly productive relationship with the fishers (Beedell, 2009). This strengthened my relationship with the fishers. They saw me as someone who had the total development of the community at heart. For instance this provided the opportunity for the fisherwoman Akua Seaman who

had previously refused to tell me all about the death of her 13-years old son, to 'get up and close with me'. She previously told me that her thirteen years old son did not want to have anything to do with schooling. So he was always fishing with his father who had divorced the fisherwoman Akua Seaman. But later on, I gathered from her that she had told her husband to come back to her as condition for her to provide childcare for her son. But the husband rejected that conditional offer and kept managing with his son. I further gathered from her that her son stole fishing net from a group of fishermen. These fishers beat up the 13-years old son of Akua Seaman. He got sick and was hospitalised till the poor child died later on. Akua Seaman felt that she was the cause of the child's death. This is because she had money and could take better care of her son than her estranged husband. But she did not do that, so she does not want to talk about it to anyone.

There were other fishers who regarded all the assistance I rendered as necessary but not sufficient for them to get emotionally personal with me. For these fishers, they wanted to know more about my parents and my relationship with them just as I wanted know theirs, before they might develop the appropriate trust in our relationship (Beedell, 2009). For instance, the fisherman Atta Soldier said,

> *You have been doing a lot for all of us in this community but the fact is some of us feel very strongly that we don't have to tell you certain things about our relationships with our parents in the past, and now with our own children. If you want the surface, fine. But you, you like going too deep. That is what I am not ready to do. If you are able to tell me everything about your very personal past with your parents, I will do same. You could not even tell us where exactly you live in Cape Coast*

I felt more distressed by these comments. At this stage it had become clear to me that it was not enough to simply reiterate assurances of confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy. I realised it was not also enough to continue to engage community activism, hoping to getting fishers like Atta Soldier to express themselves well motivated by their 'unconscious logic' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p. 34). In my response to the fisherman's comment that I should take him deeper into my past, I wrote in my journal, *"that is too much for me. Upon all the things I have done, I should still tell you all about myself"*. It was obvious I still felt like holding unto some personal information about myself. For instance it was true I did not tell them exactly where I live in Cape Coast.

This is because I was worried this could make them put me in a very high-class living status. At some point I felt duty-bound to come all out to this particular fisherman (Atta Soldier) with some specifics about myself and where I lived so as to reduce my own anxieties and worries (Beedell, 2009). He was particularly happy about my sharing of other personal information on how my father separated with my mother umpteenth times before the death of my father. He became so honest and open with me all of a sudden and told me how at a very tender age his father threw him and his mother out of his house. As a result he could not forgive his father till he died. He realised a connection with my past. This helped to address some of the subjectivities of place and class that were impeding our relationship.

Nevertheless, I felt (and still feel) the burden of how I handled the ethics of these incidences, especially how I handled my mother's feelings and worries. With regard to my mother and how she was implicated in this study, I read and discussed my work with her, so that she could get a sense of how she was represented in the whole text. However, there were other fishers who, from the onset, had no problem with telling me all their stories. They felt safe to confide in me after I had assured them of confidentiality and anonymity. They were so keen to be involved in the study. Most of such fishers seemed to welcome the opportunity to talk about their lives, somehow relieving them, and for some it presented an opportunity to talk in a way they perhaps rarely experienced in their daily lives.

For such fishers, it was "therapeutic" to get some of their worries in life out of them. As one of the fisherwomen (Esi Tawiah) puts it vividly in Fante dialect, *Maminka na mohon tom, na nyama bi y3 ebufu*" which literally translates to, *let me say all and clear things out of my mind, some things are very annoying.* For me, as a relatively inexperienced researcher, they were in many ways ideal and interesting interviewees, open and co-operative, trusting and effusive but sometimes so ambivalent. Some of them even asked me to mention their real names in my final text, so that others would know their "realities". I, all of a sudden, fantasised of being a gifted interviewer and an effective observer. Nonetheless, in the fast flow of rich data accumulation, the current of fear

swept me along. In the next section I explore my fear as in interviewer in the field of study as a student critical ethnographer.

8.4 Being nervous as an interviewer

In this Section I take a critical look at how nervous I was as an interviewer. The focus is on how I worded my questions vis-a-vis my relationship with the fishers. I explore the responses those questions produced, and how these made me afraid of losing it all. This was my first time of using psychosocial approach, so I was somehow haunted by the fact that I was not trained in psychoanalysis, and I was not a psychotherapist. Even though I read educational psychology for my first degree, I felt edgy and anxious about my role as the one asking the fishers questions about their personal lives. I also felt nervous about accessing the fishers' unconsciousness, as I have not been trained to undertake that. In several instances I felt I was a judge in a court of law digging deep into the personal stories of these fishers, so that, I could give my final verdict to which they could not question. I remember one of the fishers, Mathew Eshun queried,

> *Ah why are you behaving as if we are in the Chief's palace or court? You just ask one question and you keep quiet for a very long time. I will talk plenty. You then pick my own words and then you ask me to explain further. "Massa we no dey court!" I beg you.* If you don't stop that trick, I won't talk to you again…just that I don't want to disappoint you due to all the assurance you have given us regarding confidentiality.

His complaints that I only listen to him for far too long and come in very shortly shows my attempt to elicit stories by avoiding "why" questions which I knew could lead to an elicitation of "intellectualisation" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p. 33). His comment also indicate that I followed up using his "ordering and phrasing" to help me get his meaning frame as Hollway and Jefferson (p. 33) argued. However, the fisherman's comment to the extent that he would stop talking to me if I do not engage him in a give and take interaction caused me to be more anxious and worried about the future of the whole approach in my study. On the other hand, his comment that he does not want to disappoint me, gave me a glimmer of hope that he might not carry out his threat. However, this same comment made me feel guilty of putting him in a certain position of weakness, which I felt made me powerful as a researcher as I decide the ways I would be

analysing the data from him and usage of data. Nonetheless, I noticed the fisherman also had the power to decide as to what data to share, how much of the data to share, and place and space for the sharing of his knowledge with me, the researcher. This for me indicates an interchange between me and the fishers in the creation of knowledge.

Yet, I was still apprehensive about the inequality of power relation between the fishers and me. For me, it was very essential to get the fishers to feel that our relationship was equal. As I was continuously so nervous about this inequality, some of the fishers were also nervous about the fact that, I had come from a University in England, which some of the fishers studied fondly refer to as *Ohenemaa ne krom* (meaning the Queen's land). Others were also nervous of my being a social commentator who used to also visit some communities to interview community leaders on some social issues for radio discussion. This was a fact that made me nervous as well. This is because I was always confronted with the fear of the fishers thinking that I might discuss the information they shared with me on radio.

They were worried about what to say or not say to me, and anxious about whether what they were telling me was what I truly needed from them. These only worked to reinforce the power inequality that I felt, even though not easy, should be equalised, and as Bourdieu, (1999, p. 609),

> This asymmetry is reinforced by a social symmetry every time the investigator occupies a higher place in the social hierarchy of different types of capital, cultural capital in particular. The market for linguistic and symbolic goods established every time an interview takes place varies in structure according to the objective relationship between the investigator and the investigated or . . . the relationship between all the different kinds of capital, especially linguistic capital, with which each of them is endowed.

This further meant I needed to have good control of the language I used to interview the fishers. I interviewed the fishers using their own language, which is the Fante language. However, I had challenges explaining certain concepts to the fishers, using Fante even though this language had always been part of me from childhood to adulthood. This did not happen that much in my first interview, which was an in-depth interview. It mainly

happened at the initial stages of the second interview when I introduced the FANI method. The fishers experienced some discomfort with the way I explained certain concepts to them during interview. This became a source of worry and discomfort for me as well as the fishers who were interviewed. From the nature of the fishers' responses I realised, most of my questions were not properly posed to the fishers. So it was a typical case of "garbage in-garbage –out". For instance the following were responses to my questions, which I felt were poorly framed;

Me: How do you feel doing this 'kind' of job?

Atule Aban
What do you mean? I don't understand you at all. Well I don't know.

Me: I mean do you feel happy doing what you do for living?

Atule Aban
Why shouldn't I….your question sounds as if you also look down upon my work.

I posed the first question to the following fishers; these were their responses,

Akua Seaman
My job is not a man for me to have feelings for. Atinka (feelings) is towards the opposite sex.

Atta Soldier
I don't know…Honestly, I can't tell. Do I even have feelings at all? Hahahahaha

I became so frustrated and felt my methodology was not working. So, as a solution, I contemplated on suggesting multiple responses to the fishers as a way of helping them to respond to my not-so- well-formed questions. But I knew that was totally out of order. This is because I felt their chosen responses would have been mine. Therefore, that would not be representative of their "true" lived experiences. I became overly conscious of the need to explore most of the issues for my own curiosity and satisfaction. But this made me feel being pushy with some of the fishers who were being more defensive. Again, I felt I was pressurising the fishers by being very pushy and "raw" in the way I framed and asked questions. I feared the aftermath of that. I was aware that Hollway and Jefferson (2013) had cautioned against the use of "intrusive questioning" style but I had a difficulty

determining whether I was being intrusive or otherwise. An example is the following interview with the fisherman, Atule Aban;

Me: Okay, so are you saying that you don't know what feeling is?

Atule Aban
> *Oh I know but you sometimes confuse me. The other time you asked me about how I feel when I sack my own child out of my house. I said it my choice but you kept asking me more question about that. I did not like it at all.*

Me: Oh now I understand you. I am sorry. But tell me more about that.

Atule Aban
> *Hahahahahaha (laughs)…Eeiiiii my God, about what?*

Me: Hahahahaha (I laugh)… about your son and how you felt after beating and throwing your own child out of your house.

Atule Aban
> *Hahahahahahaha (laughs) you are smart too much. I thought you have forgotten about this issue that I said I did not want us to discuss. But you have managed to bring it back. Eeiiii you this educated people…hahahahahaha… Hmmmmmmmmm…well I did that because he proved stubborn, that's all is there for you to know..*

Me: Oh ok, he proved stubborn by doing exactly what please?

Atule Aban
> *I said that's all…hahahahahahaha I am also smart papaapa (papaapa means very well)*

This way of questioning was somehow informed by, and rooted in my childhood experiences in the community and what I already knew about the topic we were discussing. And the fact that I knew there were more beneath the crust that some of the fishers were not prepared to let out because of the anxieties such revelations produce. They saw the need to defend themselves against such anxieties by being dodgy, so I felt this way of questioning was neither "too direct nor too concrete" and my way of finding solution to "a specific researcher-defined problem", which did "generate a more complex and multi-layered picture" (see Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p. 27). Nevertheless, upon a sober reflection I felt so indifferent, flustered, and guilty about some of these incidences.

In order for me to show how much I cared about the well-being of the fishers in respect to their feelings towards me, which were sometimes not favourable, I had to identify myself with some of their anger against some decision makers in the country. I also had to explain, later, myself very well to any fisher who felt some of my questions suggested I also looked down upon their chosen career. For instance when   Atule Aban commented, *your question sounds as if you also look down upon my work,* I met him later on to assure him about how I hold in high esteem the work he does for a living. I explained to him how my caretaker used to pay my school fees with proceeds from fish sales. Atule Aban was so happy and we together laughed about other issues. He ended up offering me some smoked fish for passing by to explain myself better. I had to do this even though he had consented to be part of the study at free will.

I further became conscious of rethinking my strategy which led to the modification of my questions (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013), so that the questions would be more open for the fishers to respond to without any stress and discomfort. As Hollway ad Jefferson (2013, p.35) argue,

> The best questions require the interviewee to be specific about times and situations………….. Further questions to the main question follow the principle of respecting the respondent's meaning-frames, remaining faithful to the order and wording in which they presented their associations.

This meant there was the need for me to assist by being specific, unambiguous, and precise with my questions for the fishers to produce their responses. It largely depends on how I manage the relationship between us for the fishers to make that decision of responding appropriately. The data became richer when I stopped being so directive and stayed faithful to the meaning frames of the fishers. For instance when I rephrased the previous questions concerning the fishers' feelings about their work, the story was totally different. I asked,

Me: Please tell me first of all how it feels like being a fisher in this community.

Akua Seaman

> *You know what I have been a fisher since my childhood. My father and*

mother did the same work. They did this work with pride and happiness. So am I also happy and proud as a fisher. Without fishers, nobody will get fish to eat. We are so proud of our chosen job even though some educated people talk to us disrespectfully. That is so painful because it makes us feel humiliated all the time…

Me: Please tell me about the pain and humiliation that you feel.

Akua Seaman

Oh hmmmmmm…educated people and local politicians in these community and Ghana in general think that being a fisher is for the low life. But do you want to know something? I am asking you, do you want to know!

Me: Please tell me, I want to know, please.

Akua Seaman

Some of us the fishers are richer than the so-call educated people and local politicians who just stealing from our hard work and sweat in the form of taxes. These same people turn around to look down upon what we do for living and pay our tax. Sometime some of us feel like we are not human beings because of the way we are treated by these educated people. That is my pain. It is so annoying…

I became convinced that it was my responsibility to ensure the quality of data the fishers' choose to entrust me with. I also realised and believed that if these interviews were to be done by others, it would have been just different but not necessarily worse or better (Gilmour, 2009).

In traversing this particular part of my research journey which, I felt from the onset, had so many pitfalls and knots all over, I became so elated when I chanced upon Hollway and Jefferson's (2013, p. 24) perspective that "all research subjects are meaning-making and defended subjects", who are capable of interpreting research questions personally. I used this as my guide while on the field as a student critical ethnographer. I explore my shame as a participant observer in the next Section of this Chapter.

8.5 My shame as an observer and how I coped

This Section explores how I got shamed by some of the activities I participated in while observing the same activities. I discuss the various ways I used to cope or deal with my shame as an observer. The following is an observation and my feelings while participating in the distribution of premix fuel[4] to fishers on the 4th July 2013.

> On the 4th July 2013, which was on Thursday, I was with a group of fishermen I joined to work with. We had planned to leave for fishing at about 7:30pm. That very day we had no premix fuel. So we had to be at the point where premix fuel is usually distributed. Four members of the group were selected to be there to get us the fuel. I elected myself to be part of the four and I was accepted into the group. We left for the Landing Beach Site (where the fuel is distributed). When we got there, there were other fishermen queuing for the fuel. So we joined the queue with our big barrels. I observed so many children who were supposed to be at school at that time of the day in queue. Because of the heavy nature of the barrels and big gallons, I thought the children would not be able to take these barrels and big gallons to their shelters. I was amazed at what I saw. The children rolled the barrels full of fuel to their sheds without any qualms or problems. Anyways, as we were in the queue, it got to our turn. I noticed the presence of some well-respected men in the community some driving their own cars and others being chauffeured. They were in their cars while giving orders. A well-built man got of his Toyota Hilux and demanded some particular people in the queue should be taken care of first. I looked at him and then asked one of my team members: who is he? He said: 'a fisherman, politician, and a businessman. He buys the fuel in large quantities at the expense of all of us and then resell it later at a higher price'. I was dumb founded. I just said 'oh okay'. It got to us. We got served. I thought we were taking all to our shed. But my team members had a different plan for the whole premix fuel we have been served. We rolled everything into a canoe. I asked: 'are we taking all to sea'. One of them told me not to worry about that. A different group took that canoe away. Somewhere I never knew until later on. Myself and my team went back to the distribution point again to hustle for other barrels of premix fuel. The other canoe that came for the first barrels of fuel brought these empty barrels to us. We got those ones too filled and rolled to the shore again. This time I was so hopeful that we were done. We are no more going to get other empty drums or barrels. We pushed everything into another empty canoe. That canoe also left with the 'booty'. I became so apprehensive and suspicious of what we were doing. I noticed I realised I was helping to perpetuate an illegality. One of my team members had a

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[4] Premix fuel is a blend of fuel made for use by the fishing industry in Ghana. It is just like gasoline but with an octane number of 82. It is dyed blue to differentiate it from other fuels. It is highly and heavily subsidized by Government to make it affordable to the fishing communities.

phone. I heard him say 'we have sent four. Two more left'. He ended the call and picked another call: 'Hello uncle, ok we are coming for the last two'. At this point I realised there was someone representing us (my team) at the point of distribution of the premix fuel. This person was in charge of what we were doing. I made an attempt to know where all of these were going. Nobody would answer me. I was ordered about like a child. We went for the last two barrels of premix fuel to be shipped to somewhere I have never been told.

Momentarily I had a clash of personalities-as a Ghanaian and a researcher. I had two voices talking to me from within me. One says this is unethical and illegal for you as a researcher to be lending your support to, and the other says you are a Ghanaian, you know very well that this is systemic, and is very normal. This is everywhere and every level of our national life. I paused and asked myself: do you even know what is really going on? As I was thinking about what was going on, I noticed a group of fishermen carting barrels of fuel into a big boat. They covered them with some wooden slabs. I saw two of the children I met in queue placing the slabs on the barrels of fuel in the boat. All of a sudden I became so ashamed, angry and mad at the same time. I looked at my team members and told them I am tired. So, I can't continue with them. I went straight to my room because I felt I was drowning in shame knowing very well that the fuel was being smuggled and I could do nothing about it (Researcher's Diary, 4th July 2013).

The fishers along the coast of Ghana largely depend on premix fuel for their fishing operations. Therefore to make them have access to premix at a reduced cost meant improving their livelihoods and constantly keeping them in their jobs as fishers. However, this extract gives an indication of how fisher folks among others are collapsing a system of premix supply that could generate enough funds to cater for the critical needs of these same fisher folks and the community in general. The extract suggests that much of the premix fuel which has been heavily subsidised is bought at cheaper prices and smuggled by sea to Ghana's neighbouring countries like Togo, Ivory Coast and Liberia among others to be sold at higher prices. Most of Ghana's neighbours have not subsidised their fuel for their fisher folks. The rationale behind this arrangement, even though others think it is for partisan political purpose, is to help cushion these fishers economically. However, the same fishers who stand to benefit from these subsidises are the same people *buying them at low and selling at high* to fishers in other countries. My comment in the extract to the effect that I had two voices speaking within me with one saying it is

unethical and the other saying this is the way it is in Ghana shows how I fell on rationalisation as a defence due to my inability to report the whole act to the police or the assembly (Freud, 1937).

According to Freud when people are not able to deal with the reasons they behave in particular ways, they protect themselves by creating self-justifying explanations for their behaviours (McLeod, 2009). I knew very well that smuggling of the premix fuel was an unacceptable behaviour. Yet I was helping the fishers to perpetrate such an unacceptable act under the pretext that it is very normal to do that in Ghana. In essence I was only explaining an unacceptable behaviour or feeling in a rational or logical manner, avoiding the true reasons for the behaviour (Freud, 1937). In other words I constructed of a logical justification for seemingly illogical or unacceptable behaviour smuggling premix fuel to Ghana's bordering countries. When I sat down to re-read through all that I observed and wrote in my research diary, at some point I realised I unconsciously made excuses to avoid my intense feeling of guilt and shame (Freud, 1937). This is because I later on thought I could have reported this unacceptable behaviour to the regional police command without being known. I felt so ashamed of myself as a Ghanaian and researcher having been part of this wrong doings. I thought it was my duty as a responsible citizen to report this to the police or the assembly for their action. I also thought as a researcher I was ethically bound to report it to the authorities. This, for me, was a shameful act on my part because I felt I had connived and condoned with the fishers to smuggle subsidised fuel out of Ghana into neighbouring countries.

The following day (5th July 2013) I met one of the group members. The following is an informal conversation I had with him,

Jambo: *Yas saooo (Yes sir)*

Me: Oh yea how are you?

Jambo: *By God's grace I am great, just that I need money…. Hahahahahaha*

Me: Hahahaha but I thought you made a lot of money yesterday at the fuel distribution site.

Jambo: *Oh no, we are only boy boy (boss's boy)*

Me: Oh Ok, so where were the fuels taken?

Jambo

> *You (referring to me) left us because you did not like what we were doing. I know. ...transported to Togo, Liberia, and Cote d' Ivoire.*

Me: Oh no…hahahahaha..Please tell me more about it

Jambo

> *Hahahahaha why are you behaving like you don't know what I am talking about. Massa (Master) this whole buying them at low and selling at high thing is very political. Is about NDC and NPP (These are the two major political parties in Ghana). Is about which is in power and who controls our resources. In this community we have two factions in accordance with these two parties. When your party is in power, you 'chop'. When they are out of power, you manage small, small till you come back. The fuel is very cheap here. So, we buy as if we are going to fuel our canoes and boats. We send them to Togo, Liberia and others for higher sales. Is a very normal business…*

Me: Oh ok tell me how normal business it is. Especially for everyone including the chief, I mean the community chief and chief fisherman.

Jambo

> *The chiefs are all part of the business. They have people who buy and send them to these countries and sell for them. We are all in it together. Is a very normal illegal business. You are a Ghanaian; you know what I am talking about...hahahahaha. Even the people at the assembly and the police are all part of it. They get their share…yeah..*

Me: hmmm, please tell me more about the assembly and the police's role.

Jambo:

> *I mean the police and assembly people can't do anything about it; If you report to them, they will reveal your identity to us. The members of the various committees that control premix fuel are all politicians. We the members of this community are all complicit. Everybody want money to live better life. This has become a way of life for us. Didn't you see the kids? I know is so shameful but what for do. It is all about survival….Hmmmmmm*

This extract gives an indication of how complex the whole issue of smuggling premix out of the community to other countries is. Jambo's comment to the effect that it is a normal way of doing things in the community and also that everybody in the community knows

about such operations suggests that complexities are involved. This suggests a lot about the mindset of the fishers and other community members. It suggest that they don't see anything wrong with this unacceptable behaviour of *buying low and selling high* to other countries whose premix fuel has not been subsidised by their government. It is very worrying and paradoxical for me to hear some of these same fishers complain that government is not assisting them. While on the other hand they keep smuggling out highly subsidised premix fuel to other sovereign countries whose governments have refused to do same to support their fisher folks. For me his comment to the effect that premix is about the two major political parties (NDC and NPP) suggests that these political parties support the smuggling of premix fuel in the community. This suggests an attempt to rationalise these smuggling activities by suggesting that it is political, and that whichever political party is in power has it members being in charge of the control of the premix fuel distribution.

Jambo's comment suggested that some politicians, assembly members, the police, and the chief's involvement legitimised the unacceptable behaviour. My understanding was that these fishers as well as other members of the community were engaging in self-destructive activities. I felt most of their challenges were self-inflicted. Therefore I felt their arguments that they are poor and that structures in the community further impoverish them need to be critically reexamined. Nonetheless, my conversation with Jambo deepened my shame. I felt I was as guilty as the community members owing to my inability to get the police to deal with the smugglers but decided to withdraw from being part of it. After my conversation with him, I felt so embarrassed and ashamed for playing a role in the smuggling and transportation of premix fuel to other countries. I remember how I even struggled to enter this in my journal trying to figure out ways and means to solve this without being given out by the authorities as suggested by Jambo. As shown in my journal on the 5th July 2013,

> *Oh God what a shame. This is so pathetic and embarrassing. I am absolutely saddened by such an act of unpatriotism as exhibited by the members of this community and my good self. The government finds it very prudent to support you by providing the enabling environment for you to thrive in your business. Instead of taking advantage of it positively, you*

rather destroy it by buying the subsidised product at very low price and selling to outsiders at a higher price. What is even so shocking is the fact that the police as well as the chiefs have their share in what is going. Now to whom do I report this? How do I report this without being noticed? What do I do? Honestly, this is one of the moments where one feels so ashamed to be a Ghanaian. Shaibu why don't you just do your work as a researcher and leave the community? Well that could be unethical. I wish I would never participate and observe such unpatriotic acts anymore in this community. Reporting this could be the end of my stay in this village, I know that hundred per cent. Oh gosh..'Eben asem so ne' (Meaning what sort of problem is this?). If well-meaning Ghanaians get to know this, it would be so disgracing to me. I am no more interested in this business of fuel distribution. I will be staying away from such activities.

The extract from my journal suggests that I positioned myself as embarrassed, inadequate and shamed. It also suggests that self-withdrawal was the strategy I used to safeguard myself against further shame and feeling of inadequacy and embarrassment (Seu, 1996). At that moment I was struggling to prevent anxieties, produced by my involvement in the smuggling of premix fuel to neighbouring countries, by protecting my self-esteem and self-concept (Freud, 1937). According to Freud shame is considered to be deeply a painful feeling which is either avoided or could be used to avoid unacceptable painful memories. In my case I avoided shame by "*staying away from such activities".* According to Nathanson (1987) relation of defences to shame is of a complex nature as shame can have the function of defence at the same time that other defences are called upon to protect the self from shame. My entry in the journal further suggests that I had an aversion to directing my psychical energy in such a way that 'unpleasure results' (Freud, 1896, p. 221). This is a strategy identified by discourse analysts as 'everyday empiricist accounting' (Edward & Potter 1992, p. 162), where the facts force themselves on the human actors who have an entirely secondary role (Seu, 1996). Withdrawal is used as a defence to hide from shame (Wurmser, 1981).

According to Seu (1996) this implicitly proposes the existence of a shameful self as a given fact. In my case I decided to withdraw because being shamed was an anxiety I could not handle. So there was the need for me to avoid it by refusing to be part of activities that are capable of bringing about my shameful self. I felt ashamed because my being patriotic was questioned by my involvement in an illegal activity, and my inability

to report to authorities to deal with it. The act of smuggling premix fuel is rejected as being unacceptable to my conscious standards, beliefs, and wishes. Yet I could not expose the fishers who were engaged in the act. I rather helped them to smuggle into waiting canoes and boats. This in itself was a very shameful act on my part as a Ghanaian and a researcher. However, I could have been identified as the reporter if I had done that because of the complex nature and kind of persons involved in the "operation". Honestly, as suggested in the journal I wanted to just concentrate on why I was in the community rather than peering into activities that could lead to being asked to leave the community. So at some point I became so ambivalent and indifferent in my approach to operations of this nature.

The following is another extract from an observation I made as a participant that nearly led to my imprisonment. It was on the 28th May 2014 when I showed interest in knowing those who peddle drugs in the community. I wanted to know whether it was true that most of the peddlers were children.

> *On this day (Wednesday) one of my participants, Sapiensa Musah, asked me if I would be comfortable going to the "Ghetto" (This is a place for drug users/peddlers in the community) to see "things". I agreed. He warned me not to behave like a "Babylonian" (an informant). He said I should behave like a "Real brother man" (To behave like you are wee smoker or drug user). He said, "anyways some of the police people also come to here to smoke with us". Before we left I informed the police about my intention to visit such a place. This is so because I was told that anytime there was any theft or robbery case the police organises a swoop in such an area. So I needed to inform them. But they just gave me an oral approval. We went to the Ghetto at about 11: 15am. I was so shocked and worried for the rest of the day owing to the bizarre and grotesqueness nature of the scene. When I got there I saw both the old and the young. I also saw some women and children. The women I saw were all very young women. I mean very young girls. I did not see any mature woman. But I saw very mature men. I noticed the children were being used as errand boys, drug keepers and sellers on behalf of adults. I did not know their ages but I could guess their age ranging between 12-16years old. Some of the men were as old as my participant. Immediately we got there, one of the drug peddlers who was very young called on my participant and asked whether I wanted some 'stuff' (drug). He said yes. I looked at him. He winked at me. So I quickly recollected all the things he told me. I quickly started behaving like a "Real brother man". I was on the hand so*

interested in secretly counting the number of children in the ghetto. I counted ten children.

One of the children came to me and I asked for money. I pretended as if I had not heard him. I heard some of his colleagues whispering about my being silent. The boldest among them came to me and said "sir the way you are quiet is very dangerous. We are just Ghetto boys and girls doing our own thing". I just looked at him without saying a word. Sapiensa Musah asked me why I was so quiet. I said I was so tired. He realised I was not being truthful. So he said, "I know is because of the number of children you have seen here. I don't like it too but it is about survival. They are too young to be here. But like I said we don't have problem with that. I don't even know what to say". His comment silenced me the more. He looked at me and said, "we are all frightened by your quietness now" (Researcher's Diary, 28th May 2014).

The extract from my diary shows that the fisherman, Sapiensa Musah, was aware that I would feel *uncomfortable going to the Ghetto* where some children were being used as drug sellers or peddlers. The extract suggests that fishers in the community are not protecting and providing for their own children as stated in Ghana's Children's Act 1998. The fisherman's comment that I should not behave like a *babylonian* suggests that he was completely aware that using children in that kind of 'business' is unacceptable by the laws of Ghana. Thus a criminal act was being perpetrated in the community. That comment also meant he did not want me to make any attempt of reporting their activities to the police. His comment to the effect that some members of the police service smoke with them in the Ghetto was an attempt to legitimise the 'business' in the Ghetto. For me it is a means of rationalising and 'normalising' the use of children in the community for the peddling of drugs. The presence of mature men suggests to me the extent to which the members of the community have accepted this 'Ghetto life' a 'normal way of life'.

The fisherman, Sapiensa Musah's comment to the effect that he does not like it when children are seen in the Ghetto but is "*about survival*" suggest an attempt at rationalising the involvement of children in such an activity. He further showed how ambivalent and indifferent he was regarding children's involvement when he continued that, *But like I said we don't have problem with that. I don't even know what to say.* The extract also shows that I became silent in the Ghetto. My being silent made the '*Ghetto boys and*

girls' apprehensive. They wanted to know the reason for that. They thought it was "*dangerous*". But within me, as a Ghanaian I felt we had all failed ourselves and these children. I, all of a sudden, became so quiet because I felt so ashamed of myself sitting in the midst of these children and some irresponsible adults selling drugs (Seu, 1996). This is captured in the following entry I made in my journal about this observation immediately I returned from the Ghetto,

> *How could any right thinking Ghanaian consider this to be alright? Children at this tender age selling drugs with adult regarding that as ok? I am so mortified and shamed as a Ghanaian. These children definitely have no future at all. At least they realised I was not happy with that. So they perhaps understood that I do not endorse any activity that put the lives of children in danger. Anyways why were they all frightened by my being silent? Perhaps they thought I could be reporting them to the police. I was silent because I felt so ashamed of myself of being in the midst of these children drug peddlers. Being silent helped me somehow to deal with my sense of shame at that moment. I felt so humiliated. I was afraid there could be further humiliation if I don't become silent. How do we get a positive change of mind in this community? I need to take some action. But considering the report that some of these guys sometimes work hand in gloves with some of the policemen, I am scared of the repercussions. As a Ghanaian I have heard several news about the police blowing the cover of informants. What if these guys finger me out through information from some policemen? Is it ethically right for me to report them or not to report them? I am totally confused. Talking about ethics, I did not specifically ask for the "Ghetto guys" consents before going there. Was that ethically right? ". I assumed they were all members of the community who listened to the gong beater. Perhaps I should have given a prior notification to the "Ghetto boys and girls" (Researcher's Journal, 28th May 2014).*

The extract from my journal suggests that my being silent was a strategy to defend myself against the shame I was experiencing in the Ghetto (Seu, 1996), so was my position of shamefulness. As shown in the extract from the journal I used silence as a means of stopping further humiliation and shame. This conforms to the argument that shame as a form of anxiety is believed to be evoked by the imminent danger of unexpected exposure and humiliation (see Freud, 1933). The extract further suggests that I considered shame as a deep exposure (Freud, 1930). There I used shame as well as silence to hide in order to isolate myself from the danger of exposure or being further humiliated. This means I used shame as a defence against how these children were being

exploited as drug peddlers fronting for adults in the community. Being silent helped me to distance myself from an illegal activity that I disapprove of (Seu, 1996). However, I realised that I used silence as a power in way that was so contradictory. This is because my intention was to send out a clear message to them that I did not approve of what was going on. Yet I was still in the Ghetto with them. I could not get the police to come after them. This same silence led me away from my duty to report these adults who were in the Ghetto with these children to the police. This supports with the argument that it is very "problematic to analyse silence as a language, whether as communication or as strategy. Secondly, silence as a strategy has very isolating and limiting consequences…" (Seu, 1996, p. 206).

8.6 Summary

Firstly, some of the fishers considered me as an insider and member of the community even though they were aware that I am from the Northern of part of the country. Other members of the community also considered me as an outsider. I had a challenge accepting some of the fishers positioning of me as a stranger. However, I acknowledged that even though I had my childhood personal experience of child labour in the same fishing community, I could not claim to understand the inner and outer live experiences of the fishers regarding child labour. I also realised despite being a Ghanaian, and spending some part of my childhood in the fishing community, I was not that knowledgeable about some of the customs and traditions of the community. Some of the fishers also considered me as both an insider and an outsider. I considered myself as both too. Being both an insider and an outsider proved to be an impediment and very helpful as well. I felt emotionally unbalanced for being considered and considering myself as both an insider and an outsider. I realised that being an insider and an outsider at the same time was "both burdensome and beneficial;" both "problem and solution" (Finlay & Gough, 2003, p. 3). My inability to negotiate this relationship left me anxious and defensive in the ways I related with the fishers. I suppressed my true feeling of anger in order to get the best of the fishers. Nonetheless, I became emotionally well balanced with my interactions with some fisherwomen. Yet, I still felt a bit anxious in my dealings with them. I sometimes suspected their relationship with me. I became conscious of not taking

things happening around me for granted. My experiences at the field taught me to be open and honest in my interactions with the fishers and members of the community.

Secondly, fishers suggested that my position as a former socio-political commentator on radio was a threat to their freedom of expression despite the assurance of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy. However, the fishers gave an indication of their trust in my relationship with them. This suggested to me that the fishers were defended subjects and I was also a defended researcher. I realised as a researcher I wasn't different from the fishers I studied. At some point I felt I was more of an advocate than a researcher in the community. Sharing my deep personal information led to a more open, honest, equitable and a very productive relationship between the fishers and me. Other fishers felt this was not sufficient to make them feel safe to share their personal information with me.

Thirdly, during the fieldwork I felt uncomfortable and worried as an interviewer. As part of the appropriate way of using the FANI method, I made an attempt of avoiding 'why questions' (see Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p.33). But this became a source of nervousness to me as an interviewer. I got worried about the future of the whole process of interviewing the fishers because some of them threatened to stop talking to me. Others were fully prepared to talk to me because they felt they should not make me feel disappointed by their actions. Even though I could communicate very well with the fishers in their own language, I had difficulties explaining certain concepts in that language. Some of the fishers were not happy with the way I sometimes mentioned or pronounced some words in their raw form in the local language. At some point I felt I was giving the fishers too much pressure with my attitude and approach. I later on realised I had to be precise with the wording of my questions to the fishers. I felt it was my duty to ensure that my approach and methods encouraged the fishers to entrust me with their lived experience of child labour in the community. However, I felt guilty that I had put the fishers who did not want to disappoint me in a weak position. I felt bad about the inequality of power between me and the fishers. I felt some of the fishers were not sure of what they were even telling me. At some point I had to identify myself with the

fishers in their verbal attacks on some decision makers in the community in particular and the country in general.

Last but not least, it was shameful for me as an observer and participant in the smuggling of a highly subsidised premix fuel out of the shores of Ghana to neighbouring countries like Liberia, Togo, and Cote d' Ivoire. The fishers, for which government subsidised this, were the same people who smuggled it out. The fishers suggested that it was a common practice in the community for them to buy premix fuel at a cheaper price in Ghana and sell it at higher price in the neighbouring countries. As a Ghanaian and a researcher, I rationalised my inability to inform the police about the activities of these fishers. I defended myself by saying that I was afraid that the police might inform the fishers of who reported their illegal activities to the police. In so doing I provided self-justifying explications to defend myself. I felt I could have involved the police without being noticed. As an observer I felt ashamed of myself due to my inability to report these fishers. I positioned myself as embarrassed and ashamed. I only withdrew from observing and participating in such unacceptable activities in the community in order to deal with my shame. Therefore, I used withdrawal as a defence against shame (see Seu, 1996; Wurmser, 1981). I observed and participated in the "Ghetto life" of community. Children were being used as drug peddlers fronting for adults in the Ghetto. Both fishers and the children were fully aware that their activities were illegal. I was ashamed by the presence of these children in the Ghetto as drug peddlers. So I became so quiet. Being silent in the Ghetto caused some fear in the fishers and children. I felt children in the community have been failed by all of us. Being silent was my way of defence against my shame of being in the Ghetto with the children. Feeling shameful was also a form of defence in itself. The following Chapter presents the conclusion of this study.

CHAPTER NINE
SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION, AND REFLECTIONS

9.1 Introduction

This final Chapter mainly aims at drawing the findings of my main three analysis chapters together based on the main research questions. The goal is to reflect on my theoretical and methodological standpoints, and to make recommendations for social work practice. It is organised in five main sections. The first Section summarises the analytical points of the three analysis chapters with reference to the main research questions as outlined in Section 1.3. This Section also summarises the analytical points of chapter eight which deals with my emotional engagements with the fishers. The next Section discusses the implications of the study. The following Section presents the contributions of the thesis to knowledge. A section that makes propositions for further research follows this. The final Section discusses my reflections on the methodological and theoretical approaches to the research.

9.2 Summary of findings

The aim of this study was to explore fishers' social construct of child labour in Ghana drawing on psychoanalytically informed psychosocial concepts and ideas. This study emphasis on both the fishers' social (external) and personal (internal) lives of the fishers regarding their continuous enlistment of their children in their fishing activities in the face of the entire national and international laws criminalising the use of children for fishing in Ghana. The findings are meant to inform social work practices in Ghana. This section draws the main findings of the three analysis Chapters together. The main questions that were explored, and which the findings should answer are:

1. What are the fishers' understandings of child labour in the community?
2. How do fishers' understanding of child labour influence their relations with the children, and national and international regulations of child labour?

3. What identities have the fishers' developed in the fishing community?

4. What are the implications of their understanding of child labour for social work practice?

9.2.1 Use of narrative of slavery

The fishers involved in this study used narrative of slavery in their construction of child labour in the community. By so doing, the fishers end up blaming everyone apart from themselves. One of my arguments in this study is that the fishers construct child labour using slavery and colonial narratives as a defence mechanism to support the use of their children in fishing activities in the community. By so doing the fishers exonerate themselves and blame others like colonial master and educated elites for being the cause of fishers' continuous enlistment of their children in their fishing activities. These fishers further do this by arguing that "other fishers" in the community do exploit their children by engaging the children in fishing activities. These claims answer my first research question: What are the fishers' understandings of child labour in the community?

Chapter Five suggested that the fishers in the community conceptualized child labour as a form of slavery work akin to what their ancestors went through during the period of colonialism under the British colonial master. The fishers argued that child labour becomes the consequence of putting a child through work without allowing the child to rest; without giving the child any financial gains; children engaging in drug peddling on behalf of their parents; child prostitution; beating the child to work; not allowing the working child to sleep properly; and shouting and beating the working child. For the fishers in the study, this is exactly what slaves did in the past. They argued that these were forms of abuse and exploitation of children in the fishing community. They suggested that this form of slavery was being perpetrated against children by 'other parents' who were also fishers in the community.

The fishers further claimed that their 'other' colleagues treated their children like slaves because child labour as a practice was handed to them through colonization and, currently, through globalisation. The fishers argued that prior to colonization children

were living happily with their parents in Africa. According to the fishers, the emergence of colonization in Africa led to children being forced by the white people to work without pay, rest, and food. These fishers argued that the labour recruitment of their colleagues is strikingly similar to slave trading which was so profitable during colonization (see also Parker, 2000). According to these fishers they are aware that when the whites came to Africa, they used black adults to lure other black parents to allow their children to be used for work with the promise to remunerate them regularly and/or to provide them with educational opportunities. They were later on sold out as slaves. For these fishers, their colleagues are just doing what the whites taught their ancestors.

On the other hand, the fishers claimed that they also sometimes engaged their children in their fishing activities. However, the rationale behind their engagement is to help train and socialise their children, so that these children could live a fulfilled life like them (their parents). They argued that they do not abuse and exploit their children for profits like the way the others do in the community. The fishers suggested that most of their colleagues were not prepared to pay other adults to help them fish, so they just use their children as free labour. They further argued that such fishers always claim that they were training or socializing their children. The fishers suggested others do so as a form of exploitation of children for profits. They also added that some of the fishers use poverty as a reason for engaging their own children in their fishing activities. However, these same *poor fishers* spend on funerals, festivals, and, particularly, their men usually marry more women or take on more concubines at the peril of the total development of their children.

In Chapter Six the fishers suggested that international laws through conventions and treaties meant to protect and safeguard children are only a means used by the West to re-establish political and economic dominance over Ghana like they did during the colonial period. The fishers regarded their local leaders/educated elites as powerless within the international arena. As a result, the fishers are against 'universalising forces' which does not directly consider their perspectives (Gray, 2005, p. 231). The fishers consider any attempt of suggesting a specific age at which children could be admitted into any form of work as a way of controlling parents. They believe that the West is governing them

through their local leaders/ educated elites. They suggested that it is an attempt by the West to continue to colonise fishers' minds with the help of their educated elites (Fanon, 1986). The fishers further suggested that the educated elites want to be accepted by the West, so they have decided to behave like white people. Some of the fishers argued that adopting Europeans' culture and language does not make one European in anyway (Hook, 2004b).

9.2.2 Violence as a result of powerlessness

The next claim in this study is that, for the fishers in this study, the relationship between them and their children is underscored by violence. This is so because the fishers suggest that their children are naturally problematic and violent. For the fishers these children need to be faced squarely so as to deal with children's violent nature and refusal to work. I argued for the possibility of the fishers presenting this as a way of defending their continuous use of their children for fishing activities. The fishers also suggested that they sometimes do redirect the aggressiveness and violent nature of their children into something useful like the helping their parents with their fishing activities. The fishers argue that laws and regulations on child labour in the community render fishers powerless and frustrated in their relationship with their children. This addresses the second research question: How do fishers' understanding of child labour influence their relations with the children, and national and international regulations of child labour?

Prominent among the ideas generated in Chapter Six is the light shed on how the fishers, in violent ways, physically, discursively, and emotionally relate with their own children in the fishing community. The fishers as parents regard their children as problems that need solution through beatings, starvation, and being shouted upon. These children are put under control by their parents as a means of getting them to do what their parents choose for them to do. Children in the community have been positioned lowest in scheme of things in the community. This in practice could imply that they have remained under the control of their parents who could violently deal with them if they make any attempt of getting out of their parents' control. The fishers argue that the treatment and their approach to their children was in accordance with the manner their parents handled

them as children. Fishers as parents believe that they are justified to beat and starve their children if their children refuse to do what they are supposed to do as their contribution to the upkeep of the family. For the fishers, this is the only language their children understand in the community. This means the fishers considered violence as a language that children easily understood. For the fishers, violence was the main means through which they could get things done easily by their children. In this sense, for me, the fishers considered violence as a form of therapy that they could employ to help their children to "behave well and suppress their violent nature" (Fanon, 1968).

Furthermore, fishers in this study gave an indication that children are naturally born violent (Freud, 1930), and that child labour becomes a means of dealing with the violence and aggressive nature of children. The fishers suggested that children are more likely to be violent if they are not always close to their parents who could help to redirect their natural urges for aggressiveness and violence into better use (fishing). For the fishers, fishing is energy sapping and hard work that requires youthful and energetic people. So the aggressiveness and violent nature of their children could be of help in that regard. The fishers suggested that children regard the environment outside their home as permissive of violent. As a result children could be as violent and aggressive as they want to be when outside their homes. Fishers expressed their anxieties and fears anytime their children left home to go play with others. This was as a result of their belief that their children were naturally violent, and could not be stopped from being violent when they are out of the control of their parents. The fishers suggested the need to transform children's violent nature into creative energy, which for them is allowing children to go fishing with their parents. They further suggested the need to develop good conscience among children by repressing children's violent and aggressive nature. The fishers also suggested that they put their children under control so that they don't go about fighting other children on the street. This for the fishers helps to suppress children's violent and destructive nature, and save them out of problems in the street. Nevertheless, the fishers also considered as part of their beliefs and practices to engage their own children in their fishing activities as a way of maintaining and sustaining their powers over their children.

Violence, for these fishers, is not only helpful in the achievement of positive results and obedience in their relationship with their children but is also regarded as proper and helpful in their dealings with the educated elites. The fishers hold the belief that they are made powerless and impoverished by the educated elites who treat them discursively in violently ways. The fishers argue that this frustrates them and makes them vent this frustration violently on their children. This suggested the possibility of the fishers being violent unto themselves and their children as result of frustration. In Chapter Six, the fishers further suggested that national and international laws caused anxieties and worries among them and their children. This in most cases led to fishers feeling frustrated, and as result children suffered the consequences of their parents' frustrations in the form of violence. The fishers suggested that they would not approve of any foreign laws that do not take into consideration their way of life. This was also because the fishers felt marginalised by the ways these laws were formulated and implemented, and that their perspectives and experiences are not sought on how to deal or parent the children. The fishers further suggested that the educated elites with the help of the West through laws work against the fishers' desires in the community by using NGOs and other social service providers in the community as their mouth piece. This for the fishers leads to an inevitable conflict and aggressiveness among fishers and their children.

9.2.3 *Powerless non-entities*

My proposition under this theme is that these fishers have the perception that they are not well respected and regarded by others who have been through formal education and so are playing leadership roles. For the fishers being a fisher in Ghana means you are a *powerless non-entity*; a nobody or someone who does not matter. The gender of fishers shows how more non-entities they were from the perspective of other fishers, especially the men. My argument is that the fishers harbour these perceptions and feelings as a means of protecting themselves from the "reality" of using their children in their "dangerous" fishing activities. This proposition addresses the research question: What identities do the fishers' construct for themselves and their children?

The main points developed in Chapter Seven suggested that fishers in the study were of the view that educated elites and local politicians project blames on them in order to make them feel guilty of all the challenges confronting them as fishers in the fishing community. The fishers felt they were not identified as complete members of their own country because of their profession as fishermen and women which does not involve any classroom work. As a result they feel they have been rendered powerless and non-entities by the educated elites and their children who have had better life because they have received formal education. The fishers believed that education makes people powerful, and that knowledge is an important signifier of authority and power. They believe that with this educational power and knowledge, educated elites and local political leaders have undermined and marginalised them and their efforts to get better lives for their children. As discussed in Chapter Six, the fishers in such a situation argued that they were just passive recipients of prescribed laws, rules and regulations forcefully imposed on them by those who are educated and are in positions as leaders.

As discussed in Chapter Seven, the fishers contradicted themselves by arguing out how superior fishermen are compared to fisherwomen in the fishing community. In such a situation the fishers, especially the men, were doing what they have always been against emanating from educated elite who they claimed felt so superior because of their formal education. Fishermen regarded themselves as the "norm" and their females as the "other" (Butler, 1990; Dunne, 2009). The fishermen in the study suggested an assumption of male sexuality as complete and women's possession of womb and giving birth as insufficient (Kittay, 1984 cited in Mahtani, 2011). This suggests Sigmund Freud's idea of penis envy. By this Freud argues that women envy men because they do not have penis. The fishermen drew from the Bible to argue that God arranged women's position in life to be second to men. They believed that women in the community accept their position as second to men. To my mind, this suggested a possible psychical reproduction of subordination of women in the community. The fishers suggested that women in the community were beaten and sexually abused by men anytime it was deemed fit. Some men impregnated some women without taking care of their responsibilities. Product of

such relationships becomes child labourers and street children leading to an increase in child labour activities in the community.

Fisherwomen suggested a control of girl-child and women voices in the fishing community. These women further suggested that men in the community considered women as dangerous, strange and wicked people that men should be careful of. This highlighted how fisher women and children were controlled in every space, move, and utterance; and how children in particular were severely punished for deviation by fishermen. However, some of the fishermen believed that women and men must be treated equally and with same respect as human beings of equal standing in life. They continued that children are to be treated respectfully as well. The fishers, especially the women, believed that the difference between man and woman are socially constructed through language, religion, and culture (Butler, 1990). By this the women suggest that culture and religious practices in the fishing community were responsible for the perceived differences between men and women in the community. They also believed the difference is as a result of everyday discourse and the availability of words to describe the difference. The fishers regarded the way they treated their children (shouting, beating and blaming them for everything) as good and as means of childrearing. But they considered the way they were being treated by educated elites as bad. According to the fishers the educated elites treated them disrespectfully, and were discursively violent towards.

As discussed in Chapter Six the fishers regarded their children as naturally *problems and troubles*. The fishers believed their children were emotionally and imaginatively unregulated by faculties in human beings which deal with social behaviour (Lall, 2013). They suggested it was their responsibilities to deal with these *problems and troubles* through the use of rod as suggested in the Bible. Some of the fishers believed that even though their children are innately *problems and troubles*, children's identities were also associated with their social environment and their relationship with their parents. I suggested that the fishers' construction of their children as *problems and troubles* could be a form of defence to justify the use of children as child labourers. I further suggested

that fishers projected their frustration as element of their ego onto their children. As a result, their children end up internalising that which have been projected onto them, making them *problems and troubles* (Fanon, 1968).

The fishers in the study believed that children in the community had no adult role models to look up to in order to shape up their lives. They argued out their inability to assist their children as parents to define themselves in the community. Fishers' children were not allowed to be part of decision making at the family level just as the fishers claimed they were not made part of decision making by the educated elites. This for me highlights how the fishers dealt with their emotions that could not be tolerated by dividing up and separating off what could be regarded as psychically good from the bad one (Frost & McClean, 2014).

Discussions in Chapter Seven highlighted how the fisherwomen, in particular, negotiated their identities by using money as their source of power as against their fishermen counterparts. Money was used as an 'agentic force' to counteract their husbands' control and authority (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2013, p.190). Analysis of fisherwomen's comments suggested that fishermen got financial assistance from their wives on condition that they do not take their sons to sea. Fisherwomen also used this as their bargaining power to be part of family decision making. However fisherwomen were worried and anxious about their continuous extension of financial assistance to their husbands which did not produce the desirable results. They were also worried that this could impoverish them yet they could not stop giving out their monies to their husbands who did not give them appropriate recognition. Further analysis suggested that fishermen's power is preserved despite the reduction in their economic powers in the fishing community. It was noted that children were put to work the more women resisted their husbands' authority through the withdrawal of their financial assistance. The fishermen in the community do that as a way of revenge and a show of their superiority and powers over their female counterparts. As a consequence, the fisherwomen become so powerless and frustrated. This in a long way leads the fisherwomen to extend their frustrations and disappointments with their husbands in the form of violence onto their daughters during

the processing of fish. There is the possibility that the fisherwomen project the unwanted element of themselves onto these children they have been processing fish with due to their worries and anxieties. I felt some of these fisherwomen were being haunted by what they could not handle (Frosh, 2013). A further exploration of fisherwomen's comment suggested that some of them gave up their efforts of negotiating their identities. This suggested that the fisherwomen had accepted their established gender norms and roles as spelt in the community. Their comments also suggested the inability of some of the children to negotiate their identities or develop any coping strategy against their fathers' authority and control.

9.2.4 My shame as Ghanaian and a researcher

This theme does not address any research question in particular. This discusses my positions and how I felt during my interactions with the fishers looking back. My emotional engagements with the fishers as insider and at the same time an outsider were fully explored in Chapter Eight of the thesis. One thread that ran through this chapter was about how shameful the fishers made me feel during my interactions with them as an interviewer and observer.

Even though the fishers in the study were aware that I hailed from the Northern part of Ghana, they positioned me as an insider and member of the community. This was due to my ability to speak the local language (Fante). My ability to communicate with them in their own language was considered very important because it drew us closer and deepened our relationship. My ability to speak the local language was borne out of fact that I was an ex-child labourer in the same community (see Preface). Nonetheless, other members of the community also considered me as an outsider. Such fishers considered me as outsider because they thought I was a Northerner and was only born in the Southern part of Ghana (Central Region). They also felt I have had too much interaction with other people outside Ghana during my studies. The fishers suggested that my position as a former socio-political commentator on radio was a threat to their freedom of expression despite the assurance of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy. These fishers regarded me as a stranger to the community despite knowing that I have had some

childhood experiences in the fishing community in the past. It was a challenge for me to accept being positioned as stranger by the fishers. For me it was so shameful to be positioned by your "own people" as a stranger simply because you have been studying abroad and mingled with "outsiders" outside of Ghana.

As discussed in Chapter Eight other fishers also positioned me as both an insider and an outsider. I, as a researcher, considered myself as both too. I was aware that being an insider and an outsider was 'both burdensome and beneficial; both problem and solution' (Finlay & Gough, 2003, p. 3). For that matter, being both an insider and an outsider proved to be an impediment, emotionally challenging, and beneficial at the same time. In other words I felt emotionally unbalanced for being considered, and considering myself as both an insider and an outsider. I was hit with the reality and the shame of navigating and negotiating these two binaries. At some stage, my inability to negotiate these binaries left me anxious, shameful, and defensive in the ways I related and interacted with the fishers. I sometimes had to suppress my true feelings of frustrations, shame and anger in order to get the best of the fishers. Nonetheless, I became emotionally well balanced with my interactions with the fishers at some point even though I still felt a bit anxious in my interviews and observation sessions. Both the fishers and myself as a researcher sometimes suspected our relationship with each other. I developed the consciousness of not taking things happening around me for granted like I had always been doing from the onset of the study. My experiences at the field taught me to be open and honest in my interactions with the fishers and members of the community as a whole.

The power relation between me and the fishers at some point was skewed to my advantage because the fishers regarded me as a repository of knowledge. They believed that I had the magic wand to cause something positive to happen in their lives. They became so disappointed when they realised I could not do more than interacting with them as part of my research work in the community. Nonetheless, several attempts were made to balance the power and get the fishers to realise that I was all for their good. To do this, for instance, I undertook some advocacy works for the community by contacting the regional and local authorities to help the community with the management of their

waste. In most of these advocacies I failed to achieve the desirable outcome. So the fishers came to the realisation that I was as powerless as themselves. This realisation was also a source of shame to me even though I felt it could reduce the fishers' expectations from me. To further close the power gap between us, I adopted a strategy of sharing my deep personal information which led to a more open, honest, equitable and a very productive relationship between the fishers and me. Even though I ended up washing my dirty linen in the public, other fishers felt this was not sufficient to make them feel safe to share their personal information with me. Nonetheless, I had an indication of their trust in my relationship with them. But this for me, highlighted my argument that the fishers were defended subjects and I was also a defended researcher. I realised as a researcher I wasn't different from the fishers I was studying (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000; 2013).

As a signature of critical ethnographic study, I had to participate and observe the distribution of the government subsidized premix fuel to fishers in the fishing community. Pilfering, smuggling, and stealing at the point of distribution characterised the distribution process. So many children were involved in this exercise. It was shameful for me to be participating in such an act of smuggling fuel at cheaper price to be sold at higher price to fishers of neighbouring countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, and Liberia. I was not aware from the onset that I was engaging in an illegality till I was informed by one of the fishers after we had pushed drums of fuel into a waiting canoe. As a Ghanaian, I rationalized my inability to inform the police about the activities of these fishers. I defended myself by saying that I was afraid that the police might inform the fishers of who reported their illegal activities to the police. As a result, I provided self-justifying explications to defend myself. As a researcher, I felt showing my disapproval of that illegality could mean the end of my study in the community. I felt the need to protect myself by keeping quiet and getting my work done.

On hindsight, I felt I could have involved the police without being noticed. I felt ashamed of myself due to my inability to report the activities of these fishers. I positioned myself as embarrassed and ashamed Ghanaian and researcher. To deal with my shame, I withdrew from observing and participating in the distribution of premix fuel in the

community. Therefore, by way of defending myself against further shame, I used withdrawal as a defence (see Seu, 1996; Wurmser, 1981). In order to further understand how the fishers related with children outside fishing activities, I observed and participated in "Ghetto life" of community. By Ghetto life I mean where drugs and other forms of stolen goods are sold in the community. This kind of life is characterised by the use of children in the community as drug peddlers fronting for adults in an obscure place in the community. I was ashamed by the presence of these children in the Ghetto as drug peddlers. So I became so quiet. Being silent in the Ghetto caused some fear in the fishers and children. I felt children in the community have been failed by all of us. I was gripped by fear any time I made any attempt to inform the police about this. Honestly, I was so concern about my study to the extent that I felt disappointed with myself as a Ghanaian.

It was very discomforting and worrying as a first time interviewer using the Free Association Narrative Interviewing method (FANI). As part of the appropriate way of using the FANI method, I made an attempt of avoiding 'why questions', and making use of the phrasing order of the fishers (see Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p.33). But this became a source of nervousness to me as a first time user. I was ashamed of myself as an academic. I saw myself as a failure and under achiever because of difficulties that confronted in my quest to use FANI method appropriately. I got worried about the future of the whole process of interviewing the fishers because some of them threatened to stop talking to me. This was because the method stirred up a lot of emotions of which I could not adequately handle. Nonetheless, the fishers were fully prepared to talk to me because they felt they should not make me feel disappointed by their actions. More disappointing was the fact that I had difficulties explaining certain concepts in the local language, even though I could communicate very well with the fishers through this same language. The fishers were specifically not happy with the way I sometimes pronounced some words in their raw form in the local language. At some point I felt I was giving the fishers too much pressure with my attitude, approach, and challenges. However, I realised I had to be precise and sensitive with the wording of my questions to the fishers. I felt it was my duty to ensure that my approach and methods encouraged the fishers to entrust me with their lived experience of child labour in community. In the face of this, I felt guilty that I

had put the fishers who did not want to disappoint me in a weaker position relative to my position as a questioner. At some point I had to identity myself with the fishers in their verbal attacks on some decision maker, the educated elites and the West as a way of further courting and maintaining their trust.

Despite my childhood experience in the same fishing community, my understanding of the inner and outer live experiences of the fishers regarding child labour proved to be so inadequate. Before embarking on the study, I was convinced that I was going into an area that I was so knowledgeable about because of my personal experience. I was hit with the reality that despite being a Ghanaian, and spending some part of my childhood in the fishing community, I was not that knowledgeable about some of the customs, beliefs, and traditions of even the fishing community under study.

In the next section I will discuss the implications this study has at the levels of the personal, and social work practice and policy formulation.

9.3 Implications for social work practice in Ghana

One might argue that it would not be appropriate for the findings of this study to broadly inform social work practice and policy formulations in Ghana as a whole. It is worthy to note that merely increasing knowledge is not the goal of this study. Rather the aim was to move toward political actions that redress the injustices found during the study in conformity with critical ethnographic approach (Madison, 2012). Madison (2012, p. 5) observed that the critical ethnographer moves from 'what is' to 'what could be' to contribute to emancipatory knowledge and the discourses of social justice. This is as result of the fact that the study was a qualitative case study largely limited to a particular fishing community in Ghana. However, the fact that Ghana Statistical Service (2014b) reports that fishing communities in Ghana have similar characteristics, particularly in relation to the use of children in fishing activities, it bodes well to draw on the findings of this study to effectively deal with issues concerning children and their relationship with their parents in fishing communities in Ghana. Be that as it may, it would be irresponsible to make any universalising recommendations based on the findings. Nevertheless, the findings speak to the imperative for a critical review of policies on children, practices of

social workers/NGOs, and laws and regulations to address the lingering effects of child labour in fishing communities in Ghana.

From the findings, analysis and the sense I have made about how the fishers make sense of child labour, the implications for social work practice and policy are of two kinds; the implications at the interpersonal relationship level and the implications for organisations in the delivery of social services

9.3.1 Interpersonal or social relationships level

At the personal level, this study has several implications. Knowing that these fishers are defensive there is a lot to be done differently to help them change their behaviour with regard to their children. Social workers/NGO workers need to allow the fishers to get to know them better in order for the fishers to feel confident enough to tell their stories and experiences with their children in the community. Social workers should try to engage with the fishers on equal bases. They should treat the fishers just as they will want to be treated as human beings even if they are behaving very badly. These fishers must be treated with compassion, humility, kindness, and empathy by the social workers. This is done based on the knowledge that these fishers are in difficult subject positions and that they make it more difficult for themselves by defending against taking responsibility, and the social worker is there to invite these fishers to responsibility. By responsibility, I mean the fishers have the sole responsibility of safeguarding and promoting the growth and development of their children. They are also to ensure that their children's rights are recognised and respected in accordance with Article 28 in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana which guarantees rights and freedoms for children, similar to the principles of the UNCRC. The fishers have the responsibility of seeking for the best interests of the child, the right to education and well-being and the right for the child to express an opinion on decisions affecting his/her welfare, the right to protection from torture, exploitative labour and forced betrothal. This is in line with Article 28 which states, among others, that the protection and advancement of the family as a unit of society is to be safeguarded in the promotion of the interest of children. The fishers need be made aware of the four principles that underline Ghana Children's Act; the need to

support the family as the key welfare stakeholder for children; the concept of the State as a parent when a child needs to be removed from his/her natural parents; the recognition of the traditional systems of conflict resolution and conciliation within the community; and the need to increase responsibilities of the child with age (Manful, 2010).

Social workers/NGO workers must be seen by the fishers as being the same as them, not better or powerful than them. There could be an expectation of power difference or hierarchy in the community which need to be addressed by social workers in order for them to be trusted by the fishers. For instance humility, sympathy and kindness suggest a subject position for social workers which seeks to equalise the human relationship social work rather than reinforce the automatic process of master/servant; and subordinate/superordinate. This specifically could help to address the fishers' notion about how powerful educated people behave in the community. But social workers need to negotiate this carefully and effectively so that they do not end up giving too much away of their social work authority. This is because authority commands resources which could be used to help these fishers. But in order to make good use of authority social workers in the community need to show kindness, sympathy and humility. Thus social work needs to approach these fishers with kindness. According to Phillip and Taylor (2009, p. 4),

> Kindness's original meaning of kinship or sameness has stretched over time to encompass sentiments that today go by a wide variety of names-sympathy, generosity, altruism, benevolence, humanity, compassion, pity, empathy-and that in the past were known by other terms as well, notably *philanthropia* (love of mankind) and *caritas* (neighbourly or brotherly love).

Fishers should not see you as dangerous powerful outsider who is going to judge or blame them, so that they will avoid being defensive towards you. Social workers need to show their readiness to bear the vulnerability of the fishers. Social workers could negotiate and mitigate this by the way they respect, kindly treat and listen to the fishers. Before a social worker condemns a parent who goes to sea with his or her child, the social worker might have to stop to consider what it feels like to be a parent in such a society.

The whole processes of this study and its subsequent findings have challenged my understandings of the nuances and complexities involved in the use of children in fishing activities by way of child labour. It has pointedly led me to what child labour means for different kinds of people from different background. It has also challenged my understanding of my immediate environment and how I could emotionally be engaged to people in that environment without being conscious of it. A Social worker/NGO worker in this community could get defended responses like I got from the fishers as a researcher. Therefore there are implications for the ways in which Social workers/ NGO workers are prepared for the emotional and ethical challenges of facing defended responses. There is the need to find ways of containing the emotional and ethical challenges. For instance the social worker sitting there seeing a fisher hit his or her child will have the similar feelings that I as a researcher had. The social worker is not to make a judgemental statement. The question is how can a social worker not make judgemental statement yet he or she is expected to make a judgement? This another dilemma faced by a social worker.

Social workers/NGO workers need to tell a lot about themselves to be believed by the fishers and their children in the community. This helped me to build a good rapport and trust with the fishers and their children. For instance as qua social worker not just a researcher with my intention to help oppressed fishers to get social justice, I had to tell the fishers about how I ended up being a child labourer living with parents other than my biological parents in the same fishing community as discussed in Chapter Eight. However in this same situation the oppressed person is oppressive in her or his behaviour to another person (children), and the qua social worker is left thinking how do I both appreciate the man and his position and yet address him authoritatively with regard to his conduct with his daughter or son. This becomes a dilemma in social work. It is likely that social worker will have same feeling as I have as a researcher in this community. Social workers need the ability to see things from another person's point of view – they need to be culturally sensitive.

In their interactions with the fishers in the community, social workers/NGO workers are

to acknowledge that traditional roles and positions, social values systems, and norms are important cultural rationales. These are to be taken into account in their practice. These workers are expected by the fishers to work hand in gloves with their traditional leaders and elders. For the fishers it amount to being disrespectful if a social worker makes any attempt of finding a solution to a social problem in the community with involving elders and family heads in the community. For instance in this community it is not respectful for me to report an abusive father or mother to the police without first and foremost informing the traditional leaders in the community. It is believed that these elders are competent enough to handle such a case without disorganising the family. If the case is not solved, and if it is serious, it can be sent to the police as the last resort. This is contrary to the values and norms of social work practice in the West where the police is involved from the beginning. Applying same values and norms in this community could lead the fishers to consider the social workers as constructors of images and representations which reproduce colonial images of the West (Loomba, 2005). This creates subworld of traditional people and a subworld of professional social workers/NGO workers. Drawing on the postcolonial concept of hybridity, I argue that social workers/NGO workers could adopt a hybrid position which challenges binary oppositions as exclusive and stable, and show how social workers/NGO workers do not exclusively take perspective as members of the subworld of Western social work. But takes into consideration both the perspectives of traditional actors and the professional social work (West). By this process of hybridity, social workers/NGO workers could reject subworlds as fixed categories and binary oppositions, or at least questions them. Dirlik (1994, pp. 336 cited in Avendal, 2011) suggests, the hybrid position allow local interactions to "take priority over global structures in the shaping of […] relationships".

Another important implication of this study at the interpersonal level is that I have learned that it is critical to always look at issues surrounding children and their parents in a very holistic and all-encompassing manner with a view to identifying the best possible contextualized solutions - such as a clear and unambiguous laws and regulation which takes into consideration the past, social and inner lives of the people that will coalesce to benefit children and their parents. Furthermore, I have also learned to beware of the

danger of drawing a conclusion that gives an indication that you know yourself and other people better when you don't really know. For instance I started this study as someone who thought he knew himself and the fishers, and their way of life and their community as a whole very well. But when I got there, I was proved wrong by myself and the people I interacted with. There were certain customs and traditions that I should have followed but I could not notice them. I had challenges pronouncing and using certain terms in the Fanti language that I have been speaking from my childhood to date. Although these situations may not have held any serious implications, it did highlight my lack of understanding of the local context and my blinders regarding other worldviews as well. I realised I could not be completely prepared for all eventualities; I could only be alert and flexible, ready to notice subtle clues and inquire into fishers' expert knowledge and understanding of their lives and child labour. This attitude and approach enhanced my awareness of the limitations of my own thinking and the need for me to learn about visible and invisible aspects of the 'Other'.

9.3.2 Implication for organisations in the delivery of social services

As discussed in section 2.5, social work activities in Ghana are organised by NGOs, academic institutions, and the department of social welfare. They work with other stakeholders like the Ghana police service, DOVVSU and the formal courts of law. Social work education ought to be organised in a way that avoids the twin risk – firstly risk of social workers saying that the fishers have no responsibility to their children. This means the social workers might end up colluding with the fishers telling them that it's not their fault and that it is to do with colonialism, global dynamics and political economy. The other risk is to be careful of demanding too much responsibility from the fishers. Social workers need to be trained in way that they take a position which could be in the middle where social workers are able to bring the fishers to responsibility. Social workers could play a role of reminding the fishers of the duties to protect their children, feed them properly, and lastly educate them on laws on the rights of children. To do this effectively, social workers need to be trained to be culturally sensitive. By this I mean they need to understand the value systems and norms of the fishers and also try to empathise with them. Therefore social work education should not just give social workers

postcolonial texts, and should not equally encourage social workers to go into fishing communities telling fishers how they have been breaking national and international laws about children and work. Social workers need to know and understand the condition under which these fishers must work with the law. These could help social workers to bring the fishers to their responsibility consciously and unconsciously in the fishing communities.

Ghanaian laws and social work practices, which are mainly informed by international conventions, treaties, laws and Western social work practices, prohibit certain parenting behaviours (those deemed harmful to children and their rights as humans). Yet parents often persist in the use of those behaviours, which are in some ways functional to how life is lived in the fishing industry in contemporary times (and earlier). This is so because the fishers complained that they felt regulated and controlled by these laws and practices which do not take the fact of their lives, and their customary laws into consideration. In order to address this, academic institutions and the department of social welfare that train social workers in Ghana need to train would-be social workers how to work with traditional actors and practices at the community level. Traditional actors are described as community leaders, religious leaders (except for pastors and reverends belonging to Christian churches), family heads, extended family members and chiefs. Their operations are guided by traditional rites, roles, belief systems and norms, and are capable of sanctioning members of the community when they go wrong. Thus they give advice, mediate and function as legislators and courts. Some of these traditional actors give emotional, moral and financial support to members of their communities during hard times. Trainers/institutions need to help social workers with the understanding that traditional actors exercise their power as traditional leaders to maintain social control. Avendal (2010) argues that with social control and traditional norms as a societal base in Ghanaian communities, traditionalists do not use services of formal institutions such as police or formal courts. Earned respect and familiarity are instead the important tools for governing and making people listen to the words of the leaders.

Social work in the community could be organised in a way that these local leaders and social workers work on the same case but in separate ways. They are actors on the same ground, but their actions and activities could be different. Social workers should not behave in a way that could be interpreted by the fishers as an over exercise of power. This whole process may start as involving the work of social worker and a family member. If their efforts are not enough to handle the problem, the extended family or community opinion leaders or elders might be involved. If the case still is not solved, it can be sent to the police. In cases of dispute settling which are not that serious, the fishers could be given the options of choosing between going the traditional way of settling the dispute or settling in formal court. Social work institutions/organisations could train social workers to use traditional methods, technologies and knowledge to understand local cases and to handle them. It offers a greater variety of interpreting and handling social problems, and makes it possible to adapt the work to the fisher at hand. Formal law courts might consider studying the traditional ways of sanctioning traditional norm violations.

As discussed in Chapter Two the absence of strong and sustainable structures in communities to solve their social problems, total development cannot be sustained for all citizens. For the reason that all nations need both social and economic resources to achieve national development, the role of social workers in facilitating the process of development through enabling individuals and societies to reach out for each other through a mutual need for self-fulfillment and social justice is crucial (Rwomire, 2012). However, the findings of this study suggest that for social workers in Ghana to practice effectively they need to develop a full understanding of the psychic defences of their 'clients'. By client I mean individuals, families, clans, ethnic groups, organisations, and communities. Social work places premium on the enhancement of well-being of human beings by helping them to meet their needs and empowering the vulnerable and oppressed (Gray & Webb, 2008). As noted in the literature on social work in Ghana (Chapter Two) social services providers in Ghana are not well empowered to link their services with the needs of community members. To achieve this, social providers in Ghana do not only have to pay attention to environmental forces that create, contribute to

and address problems in living, but also pay equal attention to inner or internal happenings of members of the social context they operate in. In other words social workers need not to unquestionably accept the surface explanations and experiences of their clients.

This study suggest that there could be unconscious processes between social workers and their clients and these processes could affect their practice. Institutions and organisations that train social workers/NGO workers in Ghana need to equip these workers with a means of developing an understanding of themselves emotionally in their dealings with their clients (Fishers and their children). They need to understand that they could be defensive social workers interacting with defensive clients. For instance practitioners could become defensive and develop highly distanced attitude rationalised under the guise of analytic neutrality, avoidance of change, shame, anger or collude with children's parents. They could also be denying their own feelings and be unable to emotionally engage with their clients as I went through (see Chapter Eight).

Social workers in Ghana need to consider how to localise a global or universal solution to a social problem that looks universal. Findings of this study imply that social work profession's principles, values, and practice approaches need to be localised or contextualised taking into consideration the challenges and needs of various communities. This is very important so that the fishers will not condemn social workers services and assistance as imperialistic or attempt to re-introduce colonialism as discussed in Chapter Two. To localise their work means to adapt their work to clients' culture and traditions. Social service organisations and institutions need to ensure that their workers are culturally sensitive, and ensuring that they do not take anything for granted based on the fact that they are Ghanaians. To be culturally sensitive is about acquiring information to be able to understand the world as the client sees it. To attain this, social workers need to socially and psychically investigate fishers' lives, traditions, and values. By doing this, social workers could find out what belief systems and the emotional regimes at play and how they affect the problem at hand. This might also help

the social workers to understand child labour as a social problem from the fishers' perspective.

As shown in Chapter Five, the fishers showed how unready they were to accept anything foreign that does not take into consideration their opinion or perspectives. The fishers in the study used narrative of slavery to shed lights on how laws and regulations surrounding child labour have been imposed on them by the West through their local leaders (educated elites). Thus I argue that for social workers in post-colonial situations, universalisation and globalisation are seen as a new form of colonisation (Gray, 2005) as shown in the literature on social work in Ghana. In this regard Gray and Allegritti (2003), Gray and Fook (2004), Gray and Webb (2008), Osei-Hwedie (2011), and Tsang and Yan (2001) advocate strongly for the indigenisation of social work. Like Gray and Fook (2004), I suggest that there should be approaches to finding a flexible framework for universal social work that accommodates differences, yet pays attention to accountability, responsiveness, and connectivity in social work practices in postcolonial sites like Ghana.

Furthermore, considering the restructuring of the world through international linkages, shifting power relations, demographic change and significant environmental restrictions, (Cook, 2013), I propose that social work practitioners, NGOs, policy planners and actors, and researchers in Ghana should focus on analysing the underlying structural problems by also taking keen interest in the psyche or inner lives of people. Only then could the adverse impact of the total development of an individual could be understood and addressed, as called for by many local researchers (for example Baffoe & Darko-Gyekye, 2013).

Government and policy makers should pay serious attention to the marginalisation of emotional aspects of social problems. In other words a critical and equal attention should be given to both the internal and external lives of people facing social problems. This has been seen as a residual field of intervention often detached from both social and economic policies. As discussed in Chapter Six, the fishers in the study suggested how

poor their relationship with leaders or educated elites is. Beneath this was their feeling of being powerless and getting frustrated leading to being violent to themselves and their children. Additionally, there is the need to shed lights on issues in relation to children's rights, participation and empowerment, gender equity, effects of globalisation, commercialisation, and rural-urban migration paying attention to the feelings and emotions of children and their parents.

The findings of the study suggest that the fishers were interested in being allowed to participate fully in deliberations and matters that affect them and their children, and being allowed to make personal choices and decisions. Social justice and human dignity require that all people be assured a minimum level of participation in the community. It is the ultimate injustice for a person or a group to be excluded unfairly (Avendal, 2011). This implies that social workers in Ghana have a responsibility to ensure that their clients (fishers and their children) are guided and helped to engage in any discussion and deliberation that concern their lives. Social workers in Ghana have to ensure that their clients have access to equal opportunity and meaningful participation. They need to empower individuals and groups to influence social policies and institutions and promote social justice (Kreitzer, 2012). For instance the fishers' comments to the effect that only educated people are enjoying the resources of the country call into action the advocacy role of social workers to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources and opportunities required to meet basic needs and develop fully. Nevertheless, social workers must respect their clients' self-determination -their integrity, knowledge, and choices (Avendal, 2011). This highlights the need for social workers to acknowledge the unequal power relations between them and their clients. Social workers need to negotiate or navigate this power relation asymmetry effectively to the benefit of their client ethically.

The fishers' conceptualisation of violence and description of themselves as powerless non-entities points to the need for social workers to promote peace, and human dignity at all levels- individual, families, groups and communities. My understanding is that the fruit of justice is peace. This is dependent on the respect and cooperation between people.

Social workers in Ghana should promote the responsiveness of organisations, communities, and social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems. Social workers need to act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of both the fishers and their children (Kreitzer, 2012).

9.4 Contribution of the study

The main contribution of this study is that it brings to the fore fishers' perspective, a combination of both social and psychical levels, on child labour and its implications to social work practice in Ghana. By this, I mean the fishers' perspectives were accessed in a way that conveyed inner life as well as outer circumstance (see Thomson, 2007, 2010a). Much is known from existing scholarly research about child labour considering the social and economic circumstances of people who engage children in child labour activities. Little or nothing is known about fishers' perspectives which go beyond the social and economic levels to include the fishers' inner/psychical/internal life or in the words of Clarke and Hoggett (2009), "beneath the surface": the fishers' understanding of child labour; how these fishers relate with their children and the laws about child labour; and how they see themselves within their community. This study drew from a psychoanalytical informed psychosocial theory which is little known to be associated with the study of child labour in Ghana. It is against this background that I, through this study, also add substantially to the debates on child labour, theory and inform social work practice in Ghana. This study theoretically and practically opens up and widens the manner we make sense of child labour in Ghana in particular and Africa in general.

Despite a proliferation of research exploring children lives over the past two decades (see, Thomson, Hadfield, Kehily, & Sharpe, 2012), there is a notable absence of research which explores child labour and relationships between parents and their children from the perspective of the parents in Ghana. Furthermore, whereas positivist and minimalist research generally approach child labour as an 'objective good' that takes accounts of people at the surface value, I, like Thomson (2009), tuned up my mind to a more sophisticated approach to voice and narratives, that does not take what people say at surface value or 'tell it as it is'. But understands as situated and shaped by a conflation of

psychic, historical, social, and "biological" trajectories. As a result, I stayed attentive to both inner and social lives of the fishers; a combination, which allowed me to psychosocially make sense of the complexities involved in fishers' lives.

The study provides evidence that the fishers invest in certain discourses as a way of defending themselves against their vulnerable selves. They unconsciously mask the 'meaning of their feelings and actions' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013, p. 24). This study also focused on the interaction between myself as a researcher and the fishers as participants, exploring how researcher subjectivity can be interrogated as a source of evidence (Thomson et al., 2012). As a consequence, the fishers and myself (the researcher) were defended subjects who showed interest in investing in discourses that protected us against anxieties that support our identities. My proposition is that to inform social work practice in order to address child labour in a very holistic manner, there is the need for an indigenous solution that takes into account both the psyche and the social life of the fishers and social workers. The literature on social work in Ghana as discussed in Chapter Two shows this gap.

9.5 Further research

Although this study is localised in Ghana- a qualitative case study of a particular fishing community of personal interest, it highpoints broader themes for further research by social work practitioners, researchers, and national and international communities interested in protecting and safeguarding children with a target of developing healthy relationship between parents and their children. This study has highlighted gaps in Ghana's efforts towards the elimination of child labour. It exposes a gap in fishers' conceptualisation of child labour taking into consideration their inner life and outer circumstances, and understanding of the relationship between children and their parents (fishers). It also shed lights on how fishers regard laws surrounding child labour, and the identities they construct for themselves. This study, for me, is also a starting point, spotlighting the effectiveness of drawing on psychoanalytical informed psychosocial concepts and ideas for a nuanced analysis and understanding of child labour. Further research could help social workers, NGOs, and other stakeholders with the understanding

of how to effectively deal with child labour and engender cordial and non-violent and non-exploitative relationship between fishers and their children.

The following are the broad areas where additional research would be valuable:

- Exploration of nature and possibilities of social work practices with fishers and child labour in Ghana;

- A psychosocial interrogation of child labour from children's perspectives. This could be studied ethnographically drawing on psychoanalytically informed psychosocial concepts;

- A psychosocial exploration of parents and children's conceptualisation of punishment and violence against children;

- A psychosocial exploration of the construction identities among men and women as parents and how this affects the development of children;

- Developing a psychosocial insight into how educated elites relate with fisher folks in fishing communities; and

- A psychosocial exploration of the processes of making laws and regulations in relation to social problems like child labour. This should include a full examination of the level of participation of ordinary people for whom the laws are made.

9.6 Reflections

In this Section I look back and reflect on the methodological and the theoretical approaches used in the study. Even though I have from the onset of the text of this study expressed my reflections, I surmise it will be appropriate to knit them together under sections.

9.6.1 Methodological reflections

I regard my methodology as an overlapping field or an elastic plane. By this I mean my methodology is symbolically considered as a field in which my epistemological and ontological stance; ethical and macro political issues; and practical and micro political issues interact together. It also has to do with my positions on all of these issues as I

confront them in the study. As a qualitative case study the focus was on the discovery of meaning and, typically, also focused on process and context. On the hand, my critical ethnography as a qualitative approach attempted to examine the way of life (values, behaviour, beliefs) of the fishers through the lens of power, prestige, privilege, and authority (Madison, 20012). This I did as an attempt to respond to an ethical responsibility to address unfairness or injustices and attempts to achieve positive social change in fishing community in Ghana (Madison, 20012). The study was conducted in a natural setting and analysis was inductive, paying specific attention to discourse, expression of feelings/emotions, and behaviour of fishers (Harrowing et al., 2010).

Epistemologically, my approach to this study was far apart from reductionist and minimalist positivistic studies which oppose critical examination and discussion of child labour. My critical ethnographic field research went beyond the study of group and individual fishers as they went about their everyday lives on shore and off shore. That is to say it went beyond what individual fishers told me and what I observed. Venturing into this fishing community, just like a fisher, I had to cast my net widely and broadly. This enabled me to observe with an eye to writing about a range of incidents and interactions with an aim of developing psychosocial insight in such a postcolonial site. I was like an actor in my quest to remember dialogue and movements among fishers. Furthermore I assumed the position of a painter to see colours, textures, shapes, and spatial relations. I sensed moods, rhythms, and tones of voice like a poet. Through my senses, I was able to experience details that were turned into jottings. This was done with active rather than passive verbs. Dialogues were captured verbatim and not summarized to give them their true meaning. It included the fishers' emotional responses to how I observed and interacted with them, fishers' expression of feelings and anger to my questions and body language during interviews and observations. Premium was put on fishers' emotional engagement with my (researcher) emotional reactions and responsiveness to the issue of child labour in the community. I participated in the daily routines of this setting, developed ongoing relations with the people in it, and observed 'beneath the surface' all what was going on onshore and offshore with much interest in child labour (see Emerson et al., 2011).

Before the commencement of the study I thought I did know the setting in an intimate way. The surprises were too many to be counted. I asked myself whether it was appropriate to look closely at something that surprised or ran counter to my expectations. Secondly, as an ethnographer, I wrote down regularly and systematically what I observed and learned while participating in the daily rounds of life of the fishers. Therefore, I created an accumulating written record of these observations and experiences. For me, these interconnected activities comprised the core of my ethnographic research in the fishing community. I provided a written account of that setting with respect to child labour by drawing on such participation. As I engaged in the lives and concerns of fishers, my understanding resonated with Mishler's, (1979, p. 10 cited in Emerson et al., 2011) assertion that an ethnographer's perspective 'is intertwined with the phenomenon which does not have objective characteristics independent of the observer's perspective and methods'. These activities had an effect on the writing of my field notes.

I was confronted with the practical and ethical dilemmas of observing and writing or participating and writing at the same time. I was also faced with the challenge of managing my emotions and feelings so that I observe well and write down my field notes with an effort to ensure that my emotions do not interfere. I was thinking that I might be losing sensitivity to the unique qualities of the community as these were taken for granted owing to my familiarity with the setting. I did not know whether I should manage personal reactions with respect to child abuse or exploitation by denial or simply omitting them from my field notes. This was because I thought I could be destroying the image of my country. Or I should register my feelings, then step back and use this experience to increase sensitivity to the experiences of others in the setting? Should I move beyond my personal reactions to an open sensitivity to what the fishers in the setting experience and react to as significant or important? Should I use sorts of actions, interactions, and events that catch the attention of fishers habitually in the community as clue to these concerns? Should I pay attention to what the fishers attach great meanings? Specifically: What do they stop and watch? What do they talk and gossip about? What produces strong emotional responses for them? What kind of troubles or problems that often generates

deep concern and feelings among the fishers? How do fishers in the community understand, interpret, and deal with such troubles or problems? Generally are these the incidents and troubles that should move me to write down who did what and how others reacted? Is it appropriate and ethical, for me, to talk to those involved and those witnessing the incidents or events about their impressions? I battled with all of these thoughts in my mind back and forth.

Nevertheless, as a student ethnographer I had to immerse myself in the activities and everyday experiences of the fishers in order to observe and understand their social construct on child labour. This I did through my physical and social proximity to the daily rounds of the fishers' lives and activities. I took up positions in the midst of key sites and scenes of the fishers onshore and offshore. For instances I was involved with the women and children carting and processing fish. We removed scales from the fish, salted, smoked, and dried fishes. With the men I was with them on shore and offshore. We stayed onshore for a whole day for 5 times. With offshore, I was with them every day. Tuesdays were days that all fishers were forbidden from going to sea. It is believed to be a resting day for the god of the sea, as well as a resting day for the fishes in the sea. I positioned myself among fishermen and their children as we together patched torn fishing nets and other fishing gears. Here I was seeking a deeper immersion in fishers' worlds in order to grasp what they experience as meaningful and important in general and specifically in relation to the children they work with. By immersing myself, I saw from the inside how the fishers lead their lives, how they carry out their daily rounds of activities, what they find meaningful, and how they do so. In this way immersion gave me access to the fluidity of fishers' lives and enhanced my sensitivity to interaction and process. Immersing myself in the life worlds of the fishers enabled me to directly experience the ordinary and common routines and situations under which the fishers and their children conduct their lives.

9.6.2 Theoretical reflections

My psychosocial theory which is informed by psychoanalysis could be uncritically dismissed as inappropriate because of the challenges inherent in the attempt to replicate

the clinical technology of psychoanalysis in non-clinical environments (see Frosh & Baraitser, 2008; Frosh & Saville Young, 2011). For instance, Frosh and Baraitser (2008) in their shrewd observations of the hope of articulating psychoanalysis and psychosocial studies identified three challenges in such an articulation. They raised concerns about the epistemological and ethical break that distinguishes psychoanalysis' clinical praxis from its role as a means of qualitative or interview methodology. They pointed out conflict in regard to the use of psychoanalytic discourse as a touchstone of authority and knowledge, as - ironically enough for a theory of the subversion of rationality - a mode of certainty, a "master's discourse" (Hook, 2008, p. 398). Last but not the least, is the challenge surrounding a workable notion of the unconscious that may viably link psychoanalysis and psychosocial. Issues have also been raised about use of hyphenated (psycho-social) or unhyphenated (psychosocial) psychosocial.

Like Derek Hook, I believe that psychoanalysis brings a distinctive conceptual frame and a powerful distancing procedure - a potentially subversive reading and listening 'methodology' - to the work of critique. I also understand that there could be 'expert' psychoanalytic interpretations made of the fishers' narratives and attitude (Hook, 2008). Nonetheless, I approached this by remaining vigilant toward the epistemological and ethical incoherence that accompanies attempts to apply psychoanalysis' clinical forms beyond the confines of the clinic (Hook, 2008). In the present study, I informed my psychosocial with psychoanalysis concepts and ideas ensuring that I do not engage in,

> topdown, expert-knowledge epistemological strategies of psychoanalysis, with their apparent certainties about the true nature of human subjectivity, accompanied by an interpretive practice that seems always to know best, or at least to know subjects better than they know themselves (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008, p. 347).

Through this study, I learnt that psychoanalysis could be essential to a psychosocial approach. I realised that, as a body of theory, it shed lights on both myself and fishers' "experiences, actions and subjectivities" which in a way enriched otherwise socially reductive accounts of the fishers (Hollway, 2008, p. 386).

The present study taught me that elements of psychoanalysis could be therapeutic or analytic (see also Frosh & Baraitser, 2008; Hollway, 2008; Hook, 2008). This, according

to Hollway (2008), provides an opportunity for 'non-psychoanalyst' to work and think psychoanalytically. Despite this, I do share the concerns of Frosh and Baraitser (2008) and Hollway (2008) regarding the ethical and methodological challenges a researcher encounters when he or she draws on psychoanalytic technologies outside a clinical environment. Thus, I learnt that without appropriate training and education in psychoanalysis, my understanding of the concepts, ideas and how to deal with ethical issues arising out of the use of psychoanalysis was bound to be limited. Nevertheless, like Hollway (2008, p. 390, Emphasis in original), because I did not undertake my study clinically, "the 'dangers' need to be worked out on the terrain of a research ethics and in the context of questions about the validity of research interpretation". Furthermore, drawing on psychoanalysis did NOT mean I used my feelings to read the fishers' or I read their minds. But it afforded me the opportunity to get a glimpse and insight into the fishers. It also helped me to work with the fishers throughout the research process and the analysis of their narratives (Hollway, 2008).

I realised that the research relationship, rather than any specific data in it, produces anxiety and impedes a sincere establishment of any sense of rapport, intimacy, and trust between me and the fishers in the study (beedell, 2009). Part of the problem in my overall experience of the research process could have been the anxieties I experienced as a researcher. This may have resulted from a combination of the unfamiliarity of the situation and developing worries about the success of my research work (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). This prompted me as the researcher to develop a way of analysing my implication in the production of knowledge. For instance, I was so concerned about the danger of making wild analysis, and the need to be sensitive to power relations as I was regarded by the fishers as an educated Ghanaian elite who is a student from abroad. Nonetheless, I learnt about how to avoid unsophisticated use of psychoanalytic concepts such as transference and countertransference, the need for reflexivity, the continuing challenge of how to talk about inner and outer without falling into a static dualism (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). For example, although I used my emotional responses to help me understand the fishers in the study and my identifications, I was very careful and avoided theorising them as transferences. This was because I felt I was not a trained

psychoanalyst to be able to develop a nuanced understanding of such responses. Secondly, I felt that could be taking too much of psychoanalysis. Furthermore, although I was aware that Paula Heimann cited in Hollway (2008) used the concept of countertransference in everyday world of unconscious dynamics among people, I avoided the concept of countertransference in my data analytic context.

I had the understanding that the unhyphenated psychosocial is symbolically considered as a "moebius strip: underside and topside, inside and outside flow together as one, and the choice of how to see them is purely tactical, just like the decision as to whether to look at the subject from a ''social'' or a ''psychological'' perspective" (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008, 349 Emphasis in the original). Thus I used the unhyphenated psychosocial in the current study. My understanding was that Hollway (2008) incorporates the psychoanalytic subject into both the 'psycho' and 'social' as well. In the current study, I learnt that the social is also psychoanalytically invested and is inhabited by psychic defences (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). For instance the fishers in the study told me how one is well respected when he or she shows up and spends a lot of money during funerals or the celebration of festivals in the community. The fishers became defensive by citing the need for respect as a reason why they will always save money to spend during funerals, so that others in the community could respect them at the expense of providing for their own children.

Personally, using psychosocial helped me to understand that it is very challenging to extricate my emotional responses from my reasoned disagreement with the fishers. I was upset, livid, and very defensive when the fishers identified me with the attitude of educated elites and local leaders. This was because I felt the fishers were mean, disrespectful, and attacking my research work and myself as a fellow Ghanaian. Drawing on psychoanalysis, I understood this to mean that I was being paranoid. This was so because I was clear about my initial thoughts that the fishers were being disrespectful. Like Hollway (2008), I contained (see Bion, 2005) these feelings for some time with the clear understanding that it was prudent to make an attempt to process my experiences with the fishers. Rather than emptying the bad feelings which could strain and mar any rapport and trust between me and the community as a whole. This I believed could also

affect other researchers who might come to the community to undertake research works. My approach was in line with Bion's (2005) argument that thinking well is an intersubjective achievement. For her this is the way to go when one feels attacked emotionally. With a feeling of tenacity of purpose and the fact that I had made up my mind to finish my Ph.D., I was also able to hold on to my experiences which were not palatable. This was also made possible by my realisation of how I only saw only bad side of the fishers as an attack without paying attention to the good side. This perspective assisted me to move beyond turning my experience with the fishers into a wholly bad object. This way of reasoning succeeded in holding both the good and bad in me. As a result, I positioned myself ambivalently instead, in Kleinian terms, a depressive position (Hollway, 2008).

Drawing on psychoanalysis to inform my psychosocial interpretations have been useful in my understanding of fishers' social constructs on child labour. Like approaches such as discursive or social construction, they have limitation of not fixing an issue, yet they add depth and understandings (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). I, therefore, hold both the undesirable and desirable aspects of psychoanalysis as applied in my psychosocial in tension by being confidence about my data analysis, interpretation, and findings, and at the same time recognising its provisionality (Hollway, 2008).

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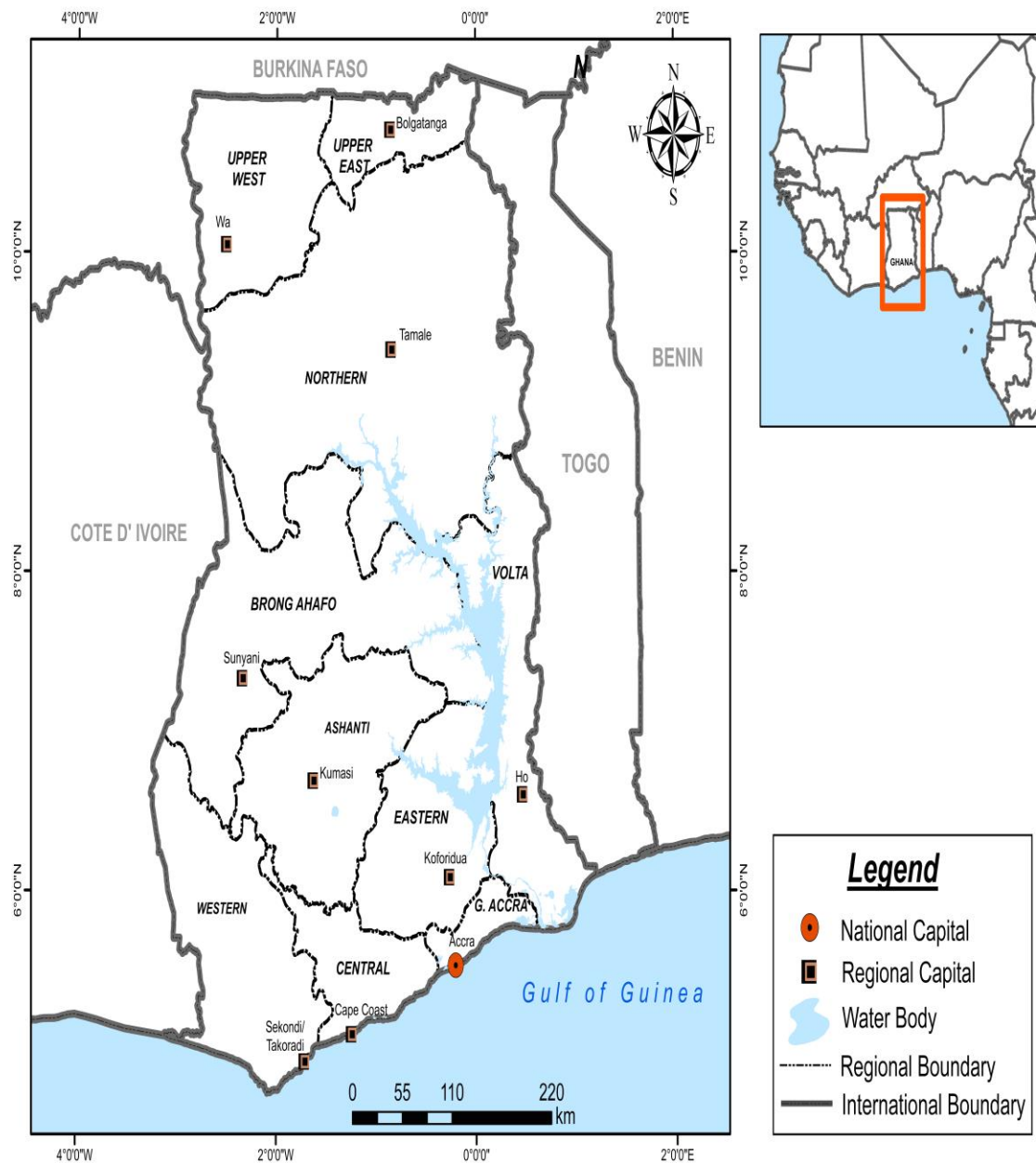
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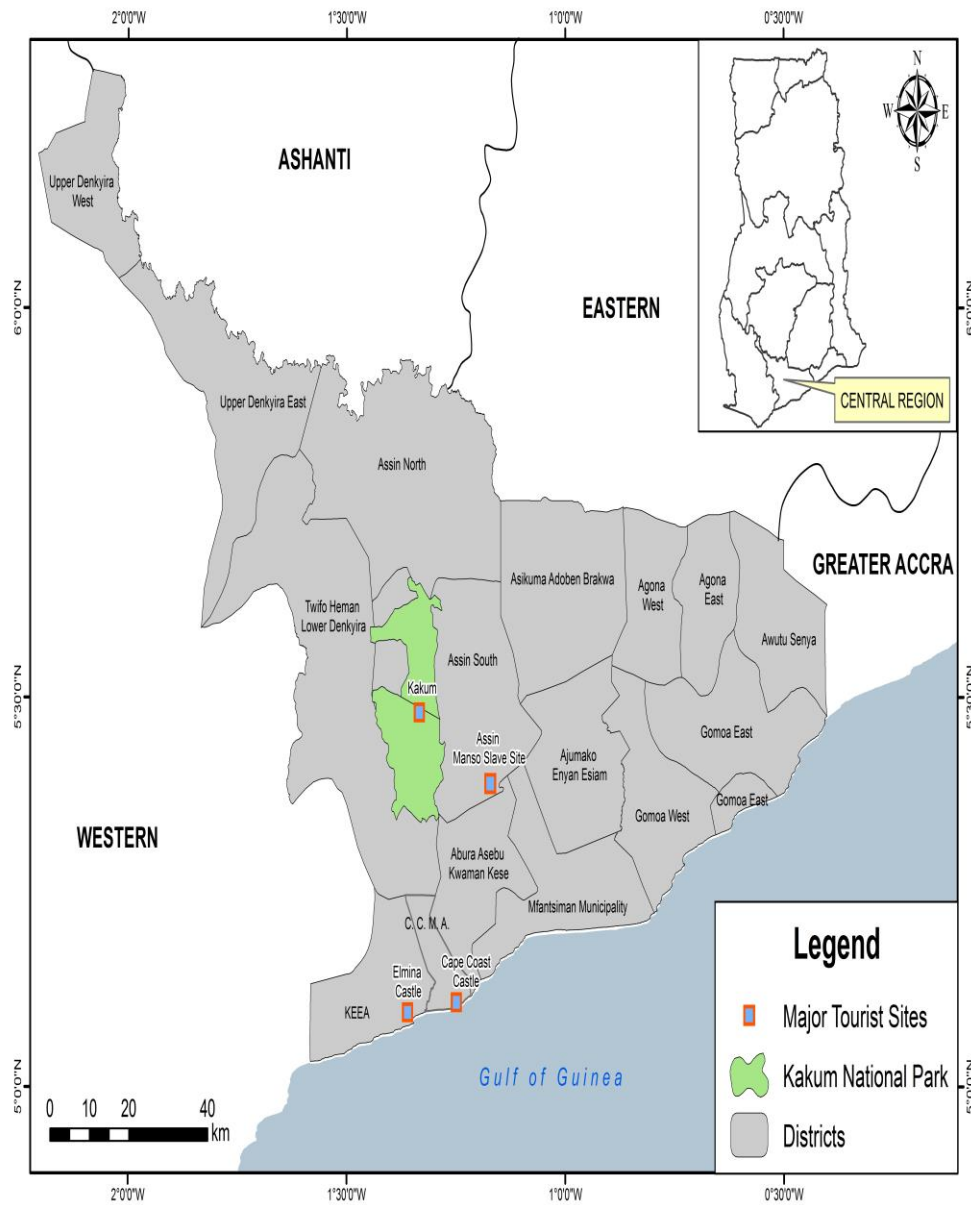
Appendix 1
The map of Ghana

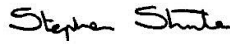Source: Cartographic Unit, University of Cape Coast (UCC).

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Appendix 2
The map of the Central region of Ghana

Source: Cartographic Unit, University of Cape Coast (UCC).

Appendix 3
Ethical approval certificate from the University

US
University of Sussex

Social Sciences & Arts Cross-School Research Ethics Committee	
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL	

Reference Number:	ER/SB583/1
School:	ESW
Title of Project	FROM CRADLE TO WORK: INTERROGATING THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS OF FISHERS ON CHILD LABOUR IN GHANA
Principal Investigator: (Supervisor)	Shaibu Bukari (Sharland/Luckock)
Expected Start Date:*	07/05/2013

*NB. If the <u>actual</u> project start date is delayed beyond 12 months of the <u>expected</u> start date, this Certificate of Approval will lapse and the project will need to be reviewed again to take account of changed circumstances such as legislation, sponsor requirements and University procedures

This project has been given ethical approval by the Social Sciences/Arts Research Ethics Committee (C-REC). *Please note the following requirements for approved submissions:*

Amendments to research proposal - Any changes or amendments to the approved proposal, which have ethical implications, must be submitted to the committee for authorisation prior to implementation.

Feedback regarding any adverse and unexpected events - Any adverse (undesirable and unintended) and unexpected events that occur during the implementation of the project must be reported to the Chair of the Social Sciences C-REC. In the event of a serious adverse event, research must be stopped immediately and the Chair alerted within 24 hours of the occurrence.

Authorised Signature	*Stephen Shute*
Name of Authorised Signatory (C-REC Chair or nominated deputy)	Professor Stephen Shute 31/05/2013

Appendix 4
Information sheet for read out and translation to the fishers

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to listen to the following information carefully.

ABOUT THE RESEARCHER:
I am a Principal Research Assistant at the University of Cape Coast, Central Region who is now reading for degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Sussex, UK. I am a Ghanaian who speaks Fanti fluently and I spent most part of my childhood in that community. I have always been on ATL fm and KYZZ fm (Radio stations) hosting and discussing social and cultural issues as social commentator. I have been interested in children issues because of my childhood experiences in that community and challenges that the community is confronted with. I hope that my research can, in a small way, contribute to the social work responses to improve relationships between fishers and the children by studying the issue from fishers' perspectives.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?
The effects of child labour on children's development continue to raise concerns among intellectuals, governments, child health authorities, non-governmental organisations, and other international agencies. Most studies have focused on the children themselves. The purpose of this study is to interrogate fishers' perspectives, realities, beliefs and practices on child labour, and fishers' thoughts within the nationalized and internationalised conceptualisation of child labour. Therefore, this study proposes to explore fishers' beliefs and practices on child labour in the community in particular and Ghana in general. Then this study seeks to understand how this child labour is understood at the community level by the fishers who work with children and how these understandings influence their reactions to national and international regulations on child labour. Finally it is hoped that the findings of this study could feed into social work practice, legal and policy discussions nationally and internationally. It could also feed into discussions to improve our understandings of child labour and child work.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS COMMUNITY?
I chose this fishing community because the research literature on Ghana suggests the government, social workers, community based organisations and NGOs are finding it very challenging to deal with child labour in that community. My personal identities also lead me into an interest in that fishing community where I spent a greater part of my childhood.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will

be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to thump print on the consent form or if you prefer you may give verbal consent. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

WILL MY WORKING CHILDREN TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH?
Fishers are the main focus for this study. The children will not be interviewed and any personal information about them will not be the focus of the interviews. However, I will seek informed consent from the parents of those that are likely to be observed within the setting of my study if the need arises. Any observation made from the children will not be part of the study unless I have an informed consent. The researcher will stop discussing the children with the fishers if the children demand that.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME IF I TAKE PART?
You may be asked to allow me to interview you and observe activities and practices you are involved in relating to the children you work with. You will be audiotaped if you consent on that, and I will take notes about what you have said and what I have observed if you agree. I will also photograph any visual materials for my records. You may choose not to answer any questions asked or may ask me not to observe at any time without giving a reason.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE DISADVANTAGES AND RISKS OF TAKING PART?
There are no known or anticipated risks of this research other than the risk of privacy. However, no one beside the researcher will know the response the respondents will give. Interviews and observations will be done anonymously (i.e. names and community name will not be included in the study).

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?
There is no direct material or financial benefits to participants. Nonetheless, it is hoped that the research findings will help to inform social work practices in the community regarding child labour. Local voices on child labour will also be privileged within national and international discourses. The finding could also help the government to identify and address the underpinning conditions accounting for high quest on the part of fishers to use the labour of children in fishing communities in Ghana.

WILL WHAT I SAY IN THIS STUDY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?
All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. Your name and the community's name will not be used, and I will be the only one who will have access to the information collected.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY?
The results of the study will be used for my doctorate thesis. I will plan to publish it as an article for an academic journal. I will be happy to discuss the highlights of the result of my study with you when it is complete.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A RESEARCHER:
I am obligated by the University of Sussex ethical standards to not breach confidentiality

and anonymity of the participants. In the report, I will not disclose the identity of any of the participants. I will use pseudonyms for the community and the fishers who will participate in the research.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
My mobile phone number while in Ghana is 0244482384 and my phone number in the UK is +44 (0) 7910698604. My email address is s.bukari@sussex.ac.uk. If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, or should like to verify my status as a PhD candidate at the University of Sussex, you should contact my supervisors Professor Elaine Sharland and Mr Barry Luckock, at e.sharland@sussex.ac.uk and b.luckock@sussex.ac.uk.
Thank you for taking time to listen to me.

Shaibu Bukari
Doctoral researcher at University of Sussex.

Appendix 5
Letters to gatekeepers (Community chief and the chief fisher)

Letter to be translated into Akan language (Fanti) to the community chief

School of Education and Social Work
Brighton, Falmer
BN1 9QQ
March 8, 2013

Nana nom, (meaning my Chief and Elders),
Application for clearance to proceed with fieldwork
I am a Principal Research Assistant at the University of Cape Coast, Central Region who is now reading for degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Sussex, UK. My proposed research seeks to interrogate the perspectives, beliefs, realities and practices of fishers on child labour. The title of the study is: From Cradle to Work: Interrogating the social constructs of fishers on child labour in Ghana.

Why this research?
The purpose of this study is to interrogate fishers' perspectives, realities, beliefs and practices on child labour, and fishers positioning within the nationalised and internationalized conceptualisation of child labour. Therefore, this study proposes to explore fishers' social constructs on child labour in the community in particular and Ghana in general. Then this study seeks to understand how this phenomenon is understood at the community level by the fishers who work with children and how these understandings influence their reactions to national and international regulations on child labour. Finally it is hoped that the findings of this study could feed into social work practice, legal and policy discussions nationally and internationally. It could also feed into theoretical discussions to improve our understandings of child labour and child work.
Why did you choose this community?

I chose this fishing community because the research literature on Ghana suggests the government, social workers, community based organisations and NGOs are finding it very challenging to deal with child labour in that community. My personal identities also lead me into an interest in that fishing community where I spent a greater part of my childhood.

How will the research be conducted?
The research is designed as a qualitative case study using critical ethnographic processes of sustained interaction interviewing, observing everyday activities. I will visit the fishing community at different times of the day and the academic year.

Who will be involved in the research?
I intend to work directly with 10 fishers, made up of 5 men (fishermen) and 5 women who are fish smokers/fish mongers. These fishers are composed of migrants and indigenes fishers. I will interview them for their perspectives, beliefs and realities on child labour. I will observe everyday practices within the shores of the sea, implicitly involving a larger population who will not participate directly in the research but whose

practices will be observed.

What are the potential risks?
There are no known or anticipated risks other than the risk of privacy. Nobody beside the researcher will know the response the respondents will give. The interviews will be like an everyday conversation. The participants will not have anxiety or stress because of the research. I will not meet with the fishers in secret places and the fishers will have the right to choose to participate or withdraw at any stage of the research process. The participants can refuse to answer my questions at any time during the interviews.

What will be the benefits of the research?
There is no direct material or financial benefits to participants. Nonetheless, it is hoped that the research findings will help to inform social work practices in the community. Local voices on child labour will also be privileged within national and international discourses on child labour. The finding could also help the government to identify and address the underpinning conditions accounting for high quest on the part of fishers to use the labour of children in fishing communities in Ghana.

What are my responsibilities as a researcher?
I am obligated by the University of Sussex ethical standards to not breach confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. In the report, I will not disclose the identity of any of the participants. I will use pseudonyms for the community and the fishers who will participate in the research.

What do I need from you?
Now it your turn to ask me any questions you may have about my research. All I need is your verbal consent that you are allowing me to undertake my research in your community and, interview and observe the fishers. I will also need you to inform your gong-gong beater to inform all the fishers and children at the shore about my study.
Thank you very much.

Letter to be translated into Akan language (Fanti) to the chief fisherman

> School of Education and Social Work
> Brighton, Falmer
> BN1 9QQ
> March 8, 2013

'Nana nom Afarfo', (meaning my Chief fisherman and Elders),
Application for clearance to proceed with fieldwork
I am a Principal Research Assistant at the University of Cape Coast, Central Region who is now reading for degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Sussex, UK. My proposed research seeks to interrogate the perspectives, beliefs, realities and practices of fishers on child labour. The title of the study is: From Cradle to Work: Interrogating the social constructs of fishers on child labour in Ghana.

Why this research?

The purpose of this study is to interrogate fishers' perspectives, realities, beliefs and practices on child labour, and fishers positioning within the nationalised and internationalized conceptualisation of child labour. Therefore, this study proposes to explore fishers' social constructs on child labour in the community in particular and Ghana in general. Then this study seeks to understand how this phenomenon is understood at the community level by the fishers who work with children and how these understandings influence their reactions to national and international regulations on child labour. Finally it is hoped that the findings of this study could feed into social work practice, legal and policy discussions nationally and internationally. It could also feed into theoretical discussions to improve our understandings of child labour and child work. Why did you choose this community? I chose this fishing community because the research literature on Ghana suggests the government, social workers, community based organisations and NGOs are finding it very challenging to deal with child labour in that community. My personal identities also lead me into an interest in that fishing community where I spent a greater part of my childhood.

How will the research be conducted?
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What are my responsibilities as a researcher?

I am obligated by the University of Sussex ethical standards to not breach confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. In the report, I will not disclose the identity of any of the participants. I will use pseudo names for the community and the fishers who will participate in the research.

What do I need from you?
Now it your turn to ask me any questions you may have about my research. All I need is your verbal consent that you are allowing me to interview and observe the fishers.
Thank you very much.

Appendix 6
Research instrument guides

DAILY OBSERVATION GUIDE AT THE SHORE AND WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Date: **Time children reported to work**
Time fishers reported to work:

 A. Early morning activities:

Fishers' activities
Children's activities
Special events

 B. Practices during fishing/fish smoking/ fish mongering
 C. Fishers-children interactions at the shore and within the community
 D. Children-children interactions at the shore and within the community
 E. Fisher-fisher activities and interactions at the shore and within the community
 F. NGO/Social workers interactions
 G. Other events

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Date of interview:	
Status (indigene or migrant)	
Pseudonym	

I will like us to discuss a few things about child labour which will help to make your voices and perspectives to inform social work practices and also be heard during national and international discourses on child labour. I decided to talk to you because you agreed to share your perspectives and beliefs with me and because you have been doing this in this community. I do not know anyone in this community and how things are done here even though I spent fairly greater part of my childhood being at the sea shore. I will need you to be sincere and tell me the truth so that you and other fishers could be better understood and offered the appropriate help so as to improve the relationship between you and the children. You remember we agreed that nobody will know what we will discuss. You are free to refuse to answer any particular question you do not want to answer. I will be glad to listen to any concerns you may have at this and any other time.

Do I have your permission to start our discussion?

Introductory discussions
1. Are you a native fante?
2. Did you learn your trade/fishing?

3. How long have you been in this?
4. What do you do in your spare time?
5. How long have you been in this business with children supporting you?
6. What exactly are the aspects of the work done by the children?

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS
All the questions will be probed further.

How do fishers' understand child labour?

1. How do fishers describe child labour and why?
2. What are their beliefs about using children to work?
3. Do fishers see children's labour as economic activity?
4. Do fishers think it is harmful to children?
5. Do fishers see any difference between child labour and child work?

How does their understanding of child labour influence their reactions to national and international regulations of child labour and social work/NGO workers?
1. Are fishers aware of any community level informal regulations on child labour?
2. Is there any tension between the community informal regulations and the fishers' constructs?
3. Do fishers have knowledge of national and international regulations on child labour?
4. What are fishers' views on national and International regulations on child labour?
5. Do fishers agree with the national and international rules and regulations?
6. What tensions exist between international and national regulations and the normative practices of fishers?
7. Do government workers/Social workers or NGO workers come to help you deal with your social problems? If they do, do they help you to understand laws surrounding child labour and children in general?

How does fishers' understanding of child labour influence their relations with the children, social work /NGO workers?
1. How are the students coping with every-day experiences within the legal regimes on child labour?
2. What is nature of their relationships with the children in relations to the regulations?
3. How do fishers see themselves as members of their community?
4. How are the fishers negotiating their identities in the face of the all the regulations on child labour?
5. What are the fishers' decisions about child labour if the legal regimes on child labour do not factor in their social constructs?

What identities do the fishers' construct within the national and international laws relating to child labour?
1. Do fishers see themselves as perpetrators of harm to the children?

2. Do fishers consider some of the attitudes of their colleagues as harmful to the children?
3. Do fishers feel heavily regulated by national and international regimes on child labour?
4. How do fishers feel regulated by particular regulations on child labour?
5. How do fishers feel and react when they feel regulated by particular child labour regulations?
6. Do fishers feel that using the children in their work is part of their ways of parenting?

FREE ASSOCIATION NARRATIVE INTERVIEWING (FANI) GUIDE

1. Please tell me about your childhood
2. Can you tell me how you feel when you are on sea with working children
3. Can you tell me about the extent of love you have for the children you work with knowing very well that you all working to share profit?
4. Tell me about some of challenges before, during and after fishing with children.
5. Can you tell me how you react and feel when the children you work with get hurt or worried?
6. Can you tell about the appropriate ways you think children should be brought up?
7. Tell me how you observe how other fishers take care of their working children emotionally
8. Can you tell me more about the fishers who migrate to this community with their children for fishing activities?
9. Can you tell me more about you challenges before, during and after fishing?
10. Tell me what you like the government and it institutions do for fishers and children
11. Can you tell me more about your taboos during, during and after fishing?
12. Can you tell me how you think fishers can develop their capabilities to be and act in ways that will not involve children in fishing?
13. Can you tell me how physically and emotionally strenuous you think fishing is?
14. Can you tell me more about why women don't go fishing but stay behind to process-salt, smoke fish?
15. Can you tell me more why fishers will always prefer children's labour to hired adult labour?
16. Can you tell me how you ensured that the extraction of this labour was not detrimental to the emotional and physical health of the child worker?
17. Tell me if you and the other fishers think children are the cheapest form of labour obtainable
18. Tell me how you think the issue of child labour should be handled
19. Can you tell me the nature of accidents and death on sea that may be involving children?
20. Can you tell me if there is any link between the nature of sea and children?
21. Tell me about any bye-laws on fishing in the community and the level of cooperation on enactment
22. Tell me more about child labour being akin to slavery

23. Tell me how you manage your finances

SOME AREAS AND QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

    A. Child labour and child work
    B. Relationship between slavery and child labour
    C. Violence and childrearing
    C. NGO workers and their approach to social problems
    D. Educated elites, local politicians' relationship with fishers and their children
    E. Effects of globalisation and colonialism
1. When you think about children who act as fishers, what comes to your mind?
2. What are the challenges you have with Social work/NGO workers who visit this community?
3. When you think of Ghana's relationship with the West, what comes to your mind?
4. How do you explain the relationship between slavery and child labour?
5. How do you explain the nature of child rearing in this community?
6. How do you explain the effect of globalisation on your way of life?