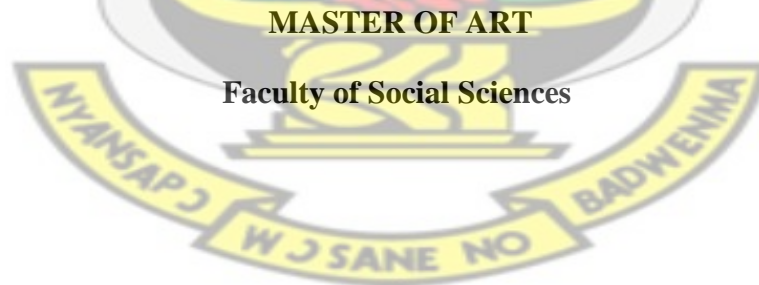


**MOTHERS' PERCEPTION OF NON-RESIDENT MIGRANT FATHER'S
INVOLVEMENT IN THE WELLBEING OF THE LEFT-BEHIND CHILDREN IN THE
DROBO TRADITIONAL AREA.**

by
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**A Thesis submitted to Department of Sociology and Social Work, Kwame Nkrumah
University of Science and Technology,
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of**



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own towards the M.A. Degree in Sociology and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of non-resident father's involvement on child wellbeing among migrant families in the Drobo Traditional Area. A mixed method approach combining a cross-sectional survey, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions was used to determine whether migrant father's contact, verbal communication and over-prolonged stay abroad significantly influenced child internalizing behaviour, academic achievement and externalizing behaviour.

Utilizing a combination of cluster sampling and purposive sampling, a total population of one hundred and thirty-one (N=131) was used for this study.

From the bivariate tables and chi-square tests, it was realised that father's contact with left behind children was not dependent on mother's marital status. Father's verbal communication negatively influenced child academic achievement and father's contact did not relate to differences in boys and girls internalizing behaviour. Finally, the study revealed that father's over-prolonged stay abroad did not influence boys and girls externalizing behaviours.

From the findings of this study, it was recommended that father absence is a major determining factor in child psychological outcomes and the involvement of migrant fathers to child upbringing aside the financial contributions would produce more positive outcomes for child wellbeing.

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To my father, Dr Lawrence Tufuor and his 'brother' Prof. Opoku-Agyemang, I am most grateful for this opportunity and your unfailing support during troubled times. God richly bless you and satisfy you with long life.

My final thanks go to Prof. Emmanuel Glakpe of Howard University, Washington DC. I appreciate your assistance in kind towards the completion of this thesis. I am highly grateful.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all wives of migrant men in the Drobo Traditional area and to the entire Tufuor Family.

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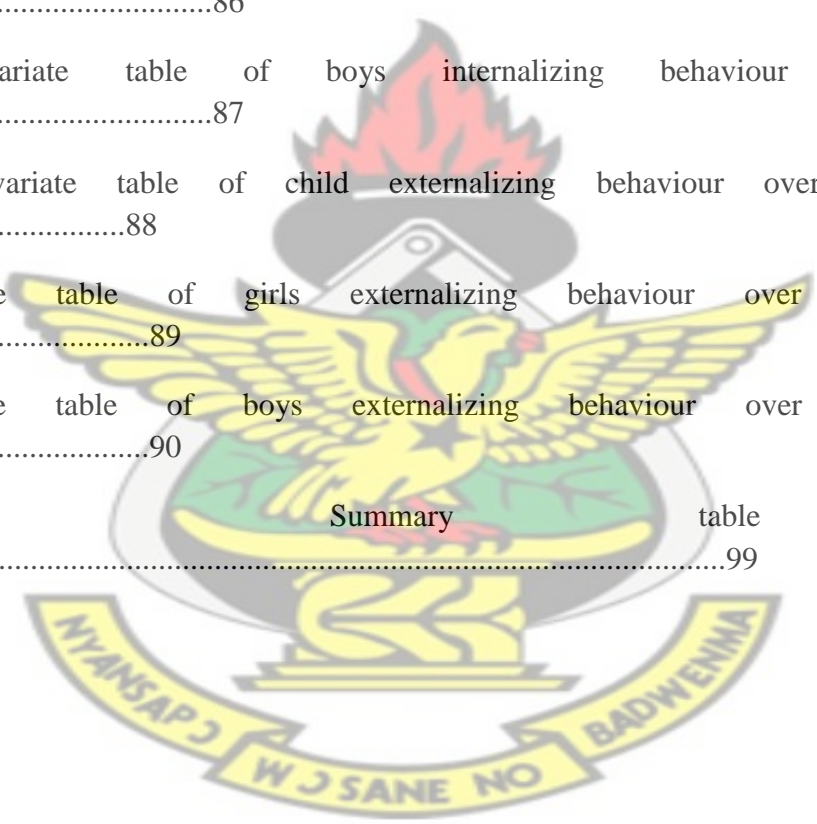


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research reported here was designed to explore mothers' perception of the relationship between non-resident migrant fathers' contributions and the wellbeing of their children within the Drobo Traditional area. This introductory chapter indicates the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions and objectives, the hypotheses, the significance of the study, the scope and conceptual definitions with a summary of the chapter.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Recent studies estimate that over twenty-five million American children (or 33.5 percent of children in the U.S.) live without their biological father (Krieder, 2005). These numbers are even higher among some minority groups: half of all African-American children (51 percent), one in four Hispanic children and one in six white children (18 percent) live with single mothers (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). The father non-residency issue has been attributed to a wide range of factors such as those caused by desertion, imprisonment, divorce and migration. However, the breadth of research on nonresident parenting has described families shaped by divorce and non-

marital childbearing, with a small growing body on non-resident migrant fathers (e.g. Nobles, 2011).

Transnational migration from the global south is creating new family forms with growing numbers of parents from low-income countries joining the global movement of workers responding to labour shortages in wealthier countries. A common feature of all such migrations is the creation of a transnational family where children are geographically separated from one or both parents over an extended period of time, while these parents remain actively involved in the lives of the left-behind. Numerous studies have demonstrated that this involvement has meaningful implications for children's wellbeing (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; King & Sobolewski, 2006), and this body of research has proved to be important by contextualizing the well-known worldwide decline in child – father co-residence (Brown, Larson, & Saraswathi, 2002). For example, In Mexico, a country with high emigration rate, 1 in 25 children has a father in the United States; 1 in 11 is expected to experience his migration by the age of 15 (Nobles, 2010).

In Africa, though migrants are to be found on the African continent itself, more recent data indicate that this historical pattern is changing as well. African migration has now become extra-regional and international in nature (Adepoju, 2000), with the number of migrants living outside the region growing during the last decade (United Nations, 2009; Ratha et al., 2011).

Research shows that those Sub-Sahara African immigrants who left the shores of Africa in search of greener pastures in Europe, North America (especially Canada and the United States), the oil rich Middle Eastern nations and recently Asia left for a variety of reasons (Takyi, 2011). The reasons include political asylum and protection or security from rampant political and tribal wars, increasing austerity and high costs of living and overall economic crisis in an era of

globalization (see e.g., Ratha et al, 2011). These movements have resulted in one end of the debate, in the “gains” that families and countries accrue from emigration; particularly remittances that improve the wellbeing of the left-behind families (Gupta, Pattillo & Wagh, 2009; World Bank, 2011). On the other end, they present various consequences for African families who continue to face overwhelming parenting challenges to the left-behind mothers and family integration problems for children and wards who grow up without experiencing the benefits of intact families and parental nurturing (Takyi, 2011).

Takyi (2011) has posited that migration tends to breakdown family ties. This happens in a context where separations span over long years, due to the migrants’ inability to re-unite with their children and other family members as is often the case with international irregular migration (Ibid). This arises within a context of restrictions and economic pressures in many of the immigrant receiving nations in Europe, Canada and the US.

Moreover, Oheneba-Sakyi and Takyi (2006) have argued that migration affects family cohesion. They contend that the social value transmission chain breaks, leading to issues of morality and social virtue, and the socialization process is thwarted. Also, non-resident migrant fathering to some extent depicts the family deficit model, because the family structure alteration affects children’s emotional and psychological developments as well as their cognitive development.

As a result of these distortions, there may be significant emotional distress of migration for the children left behind. Parrenas (2008) supports this with the view that:

‘Both temporal and geographical separations breed unfamiliarity, which in turn may lead to variegated feelings of insecurity and loss of intimacy for children’.

She adds that:

‘Children of migrant fathers frequently voiced their feelings of a gap or sense of social discomfort and emotional distance from their father’.

This study explores left-behind mothers’ appraisal of the non-resident migrant father’s involvement (in terms of verbal communication, contact and duration of absence) to the psycho-social (i.e. internalizing behavior problems in terms of self esteem and depressive symptoms and externalizing behavior problems in terms of delinquency and violent behaviours) and educational wellbeing of the left-behind children within the Drobo Traditional Area.



1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In Ghana, such research on international non-resident fathering is hardly extant. However, though undocumented, culture, entertainment, the media and television programmes such as “*Greetings from Abroad*” attest to the fact that there is a substantial number of non-resident migrant fathers. Within the Drobo Traditional Area, (DTA), a large number of young men have migrated to the Mediterranean countries of Spain and Italy, and other European countries as well as the USA and Canada. Most of them have not regularized their migration status. These fathers stay several years abroad apart from their children domiciled in Ghana. The long geographical distance, coupled with the long years of separation has associated social, psychological and welfare consequences for the members of the families spread across transnational boundaries and this has created some level of social discomfort among the people in the study area.

For their children, severe matters arise out of this father-absence. Growing up without the physical presence of a father is a great worry to the children and makes them feel abandoned or unloved and the long periods of separation have created some loss of intimacy.

There are discrepancies in the father’s level of contact received by the children as a result of the type of marital union of the parents (i.e. married or in consensual union). Consequently, these fathers have to perform their parenting obligations from abroad thus creating some emotional distance among such children and their fathers which is as a result of unfamiliarity. Though the fathers have frequent communication with their children, they do not dedicate much time to helping the children in their school work, and as such, do not provide the support required for good academic performance. Similarly, in spite of the long periods of time that separate fathers from their children, fathers do not spend much time interacting with the girls as they do with the

boys when they are back home, thus leaving the girls to yearn to fill the gap created throughout those long years of separation. As a result, girls may internalize behaviours (i.e. show signs of depression and lack self esteem). Also, these children who stay away from their fathers over many years sometimes express their discontentment in violent or delinquent behaviours (i.e. externalize behaviour) as a result of estrangement and the lack of direct supervision of the father.

Questions are thus raised as to the extent of involvement of these absentee fathers in the wellbeing of the left-behind children. Traditionally, non-resident fathers who migrate to their farms in the Western Region of Ghana see their children at least twice every year. Now, the separation spans over years, and all the family members and relatives worry about its duration. The long periods of separation have resulted in high incidence of female-headed households, since the mother is usually the carer. To some residents, the onus rests on close kin such as uncles and grand-parents to assist left-behind wives in disciplining the children or in giving some financial support or playing both roles. This disruption in the family system has meaningful implications for the child's wellbeing.

Though there is a growing number of research into the psychological (Hawkins, Amato & King, 2007; Graham & Jordan, 2011) and educational (Nobles, 2011) consequences of non-resident fathering in other parts of the world especially Latin America, very limited studies from Sub-Saharan Africa have examined how migration affects the wellbeing of the left-behind children in the region. We know little about the parenting behaviours of the growing group of non-resident fathers- men who are separated from their children in the process of international irregular labour migration in Ghana.

With the absence of empirical studies, one may thus question the level of parental involvement in the psycho-social wellbeing of the left-behind children. In view of the above, this research was designed to investigate the involvement of the non-resident migrant father to the wellbeing of the left-behind children with the following questions as a guide.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Do children of married mothers receive higher levels of contact from the non-resident father than children whose mothers are in consensual relationships?
- 2) Is there a relationship between non-resident father's periodic verbal communication and children's academic performance?
- 3) Does the level of contact of the non-resident father affect girls internalizing behaviour more than boys internalizing behaviour?
- 4) Does non-resident father's over prolonged stay in abroad relate to boys' externalizing behaviour than boys externalizing behaviour?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Generally, the study sought to examine the relationship between the non-resident father's contributions and the wellbeing of the left-behind children.

Specifically, it sought to find out:

- 1) If children whose mothers are married receive higher levels of contact from the non-resident father than children whose mothers are in consensual relationships.

- 2) If the non-resident father's verbal communication influences the children's academic performance.
- 3) If the level of contact of the non-resident father affects girls' internalizing behaviour more than boys' internalizing behaviour.
- 4) If the non-resident father's over-prolonged stay abroad affects boys' externalizing behaviour more than girls externalizing behaviour.

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1.5 HYPOTHESES

The aim of the study is to explore the association between non-resident migrant father's involvement and the psychological and educational wellbeing of the left-behind child per the mothers' report. The primary aim is to assess how multiple dimensions of father involvement are associated with different dimensions of child wellbeing.

H1: Children of married mothers significantly receive higher level of contact from non-resident fathers than children of mothers in consensual relationships.

H2: Non-resident father's periodic verbal communication significantly affects children's educational performance.

H3: Non-resident father's frequency of contact significantly relates to girls internalizing behaviours than boys internalizing behaviours.

H4: Non-resident father's over-prolonged stay abroad relates significantly to differences in girls' and boys' externalizing behaviour.

1. 6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Literature on non-resident parenting and wellbeing of the left-behind wife and children in Ghana is rare if not non-existent. This study provides some information on the phenomenon.

In addition, this study provides a basis for further research in the field of migration and non-resident parenting and consequences on children psychological, emotional and academic attainment as well as transnational families.

Further, the study provides a platform for the researcher to bring the Drobo socio-cultural dynamics into focus and explore the issue of nurturance and family cohesion in relation to child wellbeing.

The study further explores the extent of vulnerability experienced by children due to father's prolonged physical non-presence.

Finally, as a student of Sociology, the study affords the opportunity to explore at first hand some mechanisms of adaptation for children who experience this pattern of family crisis.

1.7 SCOPE

Non-resident fathering and child wellbeing have been studied using different variables (financial and non-financial; psychological, social and educational), on different respondents (mothers, adolescents and children) and through the use of various research designs (quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods). For the purposes of this study, non-resident father's involvement is limited to verbal communication, frequency of physical contact and also the father's duration of absence. The wellbeing of the left-behind child is limited to internalizing problems (depressive symptoms and self-esteem), externalizing problems (delinquency and

violent behaviour) and academic achievement (grades in English, mathematics, core science and social studies). Information was gathered from the mother's reports only, since the non-resident fathers are unavailable. Also, in order to enrich the work, there were some key informants who were elderly people in the community. Their concern for the change within their community and lack of personal stake in the issue of non-resident fathering qualified them as objective informants. Past research found that mothers' reports of nonresident fathers' involvement have tended to underestimate the involvement, whereas nonresident fathers are more likely to overestimate their involvement (Lerman & Sorenson, 2000). Yet, according to Amato & Gilbreth, 1999, the differences have not been found to be statistically significant.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used in studying the contributions of non-resident fathers. However, a mixed-methods network approach as used in this study presents specific advantages for research on children in transnational families. On one hand, quantitative analyses are crucial for measuring the potential and actual relational support available to children in a context where interactions may be hindered by temporary and prolonged periods of separation. Contrarily, qualitative analyses can address strategies and practices employed by families to maintain relationships across international borders and geographic distance, as well as the implications of those strategies for children's well-being (Bernadi, 2011).

1.8 CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

A concept is an idea expressed as a symbol or in words (Neuman, 2000). Concepts in a scientific study must be well defined in order to avoid ambiguity and allow for measurement, replication and verification. Moreover, most social science concepts are abstract ideas expressed in words;

hence, it is important to define them since the same word could mean different things to different people. In order to avoid misinterpretation of concepts used in the study, I define the following concepts in the context of this study.

-Transnational families: families that are spread across borders; where the father or mother lives in a different country and the children live in the sending country with the left behind parent or carer.

-Non-resident migrant father: in the context of DTA designates such men (fathers) who have moved to countries outside Africa in the process of labour migration and parent their children from abroad.

-Non-resident migrant father's Involvement: refers to contributions made by such fathers, both financial and non-financial towards the welfare of the left-behind children. This study focuses on the non-resident father's verbal communication and his frequency of contact with them.

- Child in this study denotes school-age latency to early adolescence 6-12 year old boy or girl whose father is an irregular migrant abroad.

-Child wellbeing: in this study denotes the psychological and academic outcomes of the child as a result of the non-resident father's periodic verbal communication and frequency of physical contact with the left-behind child.

-Father non-residency refers to the practice where fathers do not reside in the same nation with their wives and children. The separation may span over years and be across continents. It is characterised by a deficit in the family system in which the family structure alteration affects children's emotional, psychological and cognitive developments.

-Left-behind refers to the immediate and extended family members, usually the wife, children, parents and relatives of migrant men who reside in the Drobo Traditional Area. The extended family members such as parents, brothers and sisters of the non-resident migrant father play a vital role in supporting the immediate left-behind family with moral, emotional and other instrumental support needed in coping with father absence. Their support also include helping in the left-behind children's discipline.

-Labour migration is the process where people from their country of origin in this case Ghana travel to other receiving countries of Europe to live and work. Within the context of this study, labour migrants from the DTA usually work as unskilled labour due to their low levels of education.

-Receiving countries in this study are countries outside Africa, usually European countries such as Italy, Germany, Great Britain, Spain and Greece, the USA and Canada which are destination countries of labour migrants from the DTA.

-Sending countries are the countries of migrant origin which in this study refers to Ghana.

-Remittances denote transfer of funds or payments made by migrants in receiving countries towards the welfare of the left-behind wife, children and the members of the extended family. They have been found to play vital role in the lives of the recipients since they improve their economic status, health and their social positions.

-Irregular migration refers to the process of migration without the required documentation and through unapproved and potentially dangerous routes. In this study, it is the unorthodox travelling arrangements to receiving countries through the Sahara Desert and clandestine entry and non-regularized stay in these countries.

-Transnationalism in this study is a concept that refers to a set of sustained long distance, border-crossing connections or practices and relationships that link migrant fathers, their families and their children in Ghana.

-Transnational families in this study refers to such families, nuclear and extended in which the father lives and works in a receiving country and cares for or supports his left-behind children and other kin. These families depend on a cross-border division of labour where production by the non-resident migrant father occurs in the receiving country and reproduction by the left-behind wife and other kin occurs in Ghana.

-Married parents are mothers and fathers who have duly registered their marriage in the court of law or have performed the traditional marriage rights.

-Parents in consensual relationships are mothers and fathers who have not registered their marriage in the court of law neither have they performed the traditional marriage rights. They are however introduced to their families, or in courtship.

-Externalizing behaviours denotes children exhibiting delinquency and violent behaviours as a result of father absence.

-Internalizing behaviours denotes children exhibiting depressive symptoms and low self esteem as a result of father absence.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is presented in five (5) chapters. The first chapter is the Introductory chapter and is followed by the Literature Review in Chapter II. Chapter III presents the Methodology used whereas Chapter IV presents the Study Findings. The report ends with Chapter V which presents the Discussions, Conclusion and Recommendations.

Summary

This introductory chapter sets the focus of the study on mothers' perception of non-resident migrant fathering and child wellbeing within the Drobo Traditional Area.

The chapter outlined a background to the study and stated the research problem. It is followed with a discussion of the general significance and potential contribution of the study and set the scope. Last but not least was the discussion of operational definitions of the key terms used in the study. In sum, this study presented the first effort to empirical investigation of mothers' perception of the relationship between non-resident migrant fathering and child wellbeing in Ghana.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews existing literature on the issue of on-resident migrant father's involvement in the wellbeing of the left-behind wife. It comprises three main sections: the empirical review, the methodological review and the theoretical review. The empirical review assesses works on transnational migrant families, non-resident father's involvement and child wellbeing. The methodological review presents various conceptualizations adopted by previous studies, approaches to the study and methods of research adopted in previous studies. Finally, the theoretical review provides the theoretical basis upon which the topic has been previously studied and concludes the chapter with the theoretical framework.

2.1 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

This section reviews literature on transnational migrant families and non-resident migrant father's involvement in child wellbeing. It reviews existing work on non-resident father's contributions, level of contact, periodic communication and the effects of non-resident father's absence on the psychological wellbeing and academic achievement of the left-behind children.

2.1.1 Transnational migrant families

Studies of international labour migration have tended to view the temporary movement of migrants across borders as a family livelihood strategy that aims to improve the socioeconomic circumstances of both the migrant and those left behind. There is now an extensive literature on the impact of remittances sent back by migrants to family members in their countries of origin as

a means of mediating economic hardship and toning down the effects on children's educational, emotional wellbeing (e.g., Adams & Page, 2005, Vetrovec, 2004). Although there is some debate about whether labour migration helps to reduce poverty at the macro scale and in the longer term, remittances have been found to improve economic circumstances at the household level. Those left behind may thus benefit from increases in family income spent on improved nutrition, housing, access to health care, and schooling (Hadi, 1999; Jones & Kittisuksathit, 2003). However, the strategy has not always proved to be successful and debts incurred to facilitate migration or the paucity of remittances may result in left-behind family members having less money than before (Smith-Estelle & Gruskin, 2003). A few studies, (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2002; Orellana, Thorne, Chee, & Lam, 2001) have also examined the social and psychological costs of living in a transnational family. They found out that the balance sheet of international labour migration typically involves a trade-off between economic well-being and family proximity. As Svasek, (2008) puts it: 'migration is almost unavoidably a process that unnerves, motivates, excites, upsets or demoralises individuals, or moves them in alternative ways'.

Families divided across national borders may reap economic benefits, but they also make sacrifices in terms of geographical and emotional closeness (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2002, cited in Graham & Jordan, 2011). The migration of a parent is said to be a process that transforms family relationships and functioning. Following the movement, care arrangements for children must be reconfigured, and over time children may form new attachments to "other mothers" (Schmalzbauer, 2004) and change their perceptions of authority figures (Smith, Lalonde, & Johnson, 2004). It is thus plausible to suppose that transnational family arrangements could exact a high emotional cost from both migrant parents and other family members left

behind; yet, as Bernhard, Landolt, and Goldring (2005) observe, “there has been a lack of investigation using even the most basic social indicators of well-being and health of children in such situations”. The small number of recent studies that have examined children’s experience of separation from a parent during the migration process have mostly been conducted in host countries such as the United States or Canada and after family reunification. This study seeks to examine the separation in its course and explore how the migration of the father contributes to the emotional, psychological and economic wellbeing of the wife and children who are left behind.

A well noted observation in the migration literature concerns the issue of diversity in the migration process itself. The underlying context in studies conducted among immigrant groups in North America or Europe is the process of serial migration and family reunification in the host country. Although African populations have participated in such migration flows in a way, “temporary” movements of parents to host countries followed by family reunion in the country of origin is now more common. However, due to the difficulties in regularizing migrants’ status, most left-behind wives and children in the region are not presented with the promise or threat of a new life in a foreign land. As such, they do not therefore face the same disruptions and losses experienced by immigrant children in Europe or North America. Nevertheless, they also face family disruptions with different repercussions on their emotional and educational developments.

2.1.2 Non-resident father’s involvement

A large body of research considers the ways that parents can contribute to children’s development from outside of the household. Studies have posited that parents positively

influence child development through a wide array of behaviors, such as talking with the child, attending school events, helping with homework, purchasing clothes, and sending money for household necessities (Nobles, 2011). Theoretical and empirical descriptions of nonresident involvement distinguish transfers that capture, broadly, financial and nonfinancial contributions. Many names have been used to describe the two forms of involvement, such as money and time (Thomson, Hanson, & McLanahan, 1994), physical and social capital (Coleman, 1988), economic resources and parenting efforts (Carlson, 2006), and financial contributions and participation in child care (Landale & Oropesa, 2001).

Fathers' economic contributions are an important resource for children in all types of families (Becker 1991; Coleman 1988). For nonresident fathers, remittances are an appropriate measure of the transfer of financial capital to offspring. They can alleviate some of the economic disadvantage faced by single mothers and provide a less stressful home environment for children. A few studies report modest positive links between remittances and children's behavioral adjustment (McLanahan et al. 1994) and academic achievement (Argys et al. 1998). Even though the association between remittances and children's well-being is modest, they should be included in studies of nonresident fathering because they are positively related to contact (Seltzer 2000) and relationship quality (Stewart 2003). Qualitative studies of Honduran (Schmalzbauer, 2004) and Salvadoran (Abrego, 2009) transnational families, however, have emphasized the importance of financial transfers for children's necessities, including education expenses. In interviews of Mexican transnational families, Dreby (2010) found that fathers' remittances in the form of money and gifts (e.g., clothing, school supplies) are often directed at children's education.

However, the strength of the father's contribution to the welfare of the left behind children has been found to be influenced by a number of factors which include the ones discussed below.

2.1.2.1 Adolescent attitude toward fathers

First, adolescents' attitudes toward fathers may contribute to the weakening or strengthening of the father-child relationship. In general, parental involvement declines as children move into adolescence, largely because adolescents tend to spend more time with peers (Furstenburg, 2000). Teenagers who experience behavior problems and academic failure are especially likely to retreat from the family and into peer groups (Hawkins, Amato & King, 2007). Adolescents may place part of the blame for their problems on nonresident fathers, thus exacerbating interpersonal tension during visits. Regardless of whether it is the nonresident father, the adolescent, or both who withdraw from the relationship, evidence that adolescent well-being influences levels of paternal participation would support a child effects model (ibid).

2.1.2.2 Adolescent characteristics

Again, adolescent characteristics such as gender, age, and race/ethnicity may be linked to nonresident father participation as well as adolescent well-being. According to Harris and Morgan (1991) fathers tend to be more involved with sons than daughters and sons tend to report closer relationships with fathers than do daughters (King 2002; Youniss and Smollar 1985). Some studies of nonresident fathers show that sons enjoy longer, more frequent visits than do daughters (Hetherington and Kelly 2002). Nevertheless, during secondary school, girls have higher levels of academic achievement than boys (Ruban and McCoach 2005), which may encourage greater father involvement. With respect to age, older adolescents tend to be less

involved with parents, spend more time with peers, and display more problems, such as depression and delinquency (Furstenberg 2000). Nonresident father involvement also varies across racial/ethnic groups, albeit in complex ways (King et al. 2004).

2.1.2.3 Father-adolescent history.

Nonresident fathers tend to stay more involved in their children's lives if they were married to the child's biological mother when the child was born (King et al. 2004). Similarly, if the child lived with the father at some point, the nonresident father may be more committed to the father-child relationship and therefore more involved in active fathering when living apart from the child. Additionally, the more recently the father and offspring shared a residence, the more involved the nonresident father is likely to be (Seltzer and Bianchi 1988). All of these factors are also potentially related to children's well-being (Amato and Sobolewski 2004; Brown 2004).

2.1.2.4 Father characteristics.

Socioeconomic status, measured in this study as educational attainment, is positively related to paternal involvement and children's well-being (Amato and Booth 1997). Nonresident fathers' socioeconomic status is a consistent predictor of involvement, with high levels of education associated with more frequent contact (Stephens, 1996).

2.1.3 Father's contact and Mother characteristics.

Studies found that a resident mother is more likely to facilitate the relationships between a nonresident father and his children if he is her husband. Kanaiaupuni (2000), for example, described the efforts of mothers to create the presence of migrating fathers in the lives of their children by referencing them throughout the day. Mothers who are emotionally close to their children may encourage nonresident fathers to remain actively involved and be more willing to

engage in cooperative co-parenting out of a concern for the children's well-being. Adolescents who report higher levels of closeness to mothers also tend to have stronger relationships with both resident and nonresident fathers (King and Sobolewski 2006). In addition, a high quality mother-child relationship is an important social resource for children that may lessen behavior problems and help children succeed in school. Non-resident father contact is found to be correlated with characteristics of children, mothers, and the family more broadly (King et al., 2004). These include the age and gender of the child, the age and marital status of mothers, and socioeconomic resources in the family, such as mothers' education and household income (Landale & Oropesa, 2001). Also, children with more educated mothers are more likely to be recipients of fathers' parenting efforts (ibid). However, studies based on large national samples have found little or no relationship between the frequency of contact and offspring wellbeing (Furstenberg, Morgan, and Allison 1987; King 1994).

2.1.4 Father's Verbal communication and child academic achievement

In her study, Parrenas (2008) found that fathers rarely communicate with their children and when they do, it is not to allay the fears and insecurities of children. Instead, fathers often communicate to discipline their children. To remind children of their authority in the household, migrant fathers frequently reprimand their children from a distance for having low grades, selecting the 'wrong' major, or not performing adequately in other school activities. In fact, many children noted that 'distance disciplining' is a central part of transnational family childhood. Open communication about events in children's lives is also likely to be associated with positive child outcomes. The parenting literature shows that expressing an interest in

children's lives promotes a sense of security and being cared for among children and adolescents (Maccoby and Martin 1983).

In studies conducted on transnational families, Parrenas, (2003, 2005, and 2008) again identified 'The gap' which refers to the sense of discomfort, unease and awkwardness that children feel toward migrant fathers, in addition, it refers to the inability of young adults to communicate more openly with their fathers. Previous studies have raised concerns about the implications of migration for children's educational attainment (Nobles, 2011). Father migration has been linked to below-age-appropriate grade completion (McKenzie & Rapoport, 2006), lower educational aspirations (Kandel & Kao, 2001; Kandel & Massey, 2002), and a greater probability of dropping out of secondary school (Creighton, Park, & Teruel, 2009). Several mechanisms appear to drive this pattern. The migration of fathers may have tangible effects on family life that manifest themselves in children's poor school performance (Dreby, 2010).

Further, many children of emigrants envision themselves migrating in the future and thus foresee a limited return on additional years of education in the sending country (Kandel & Massey, 2002). Such children may forgo school for employment in anticipation of future migration. Studies of children's education aspirations are consistent with this explanation (e.g. Kandel & Massey, 2002). How fathers might mitigate this process through involvement from abroad is less well understood (Creighton et al., 2009; Mazzucato & Schans, 2008).

Qualitative studies of Honduran (Schmalzbauer, 2004) and Salvadoran (Abrego, 2009) transnational families, however, have emphasized the importance of financial transfers for children's necessities, including education expenses. In interviews of Mexican transnational

families, Dreby (2010) found that fathers' remittances in the form of money and gifts (e.g., clothing, school supplies) are often directed at children's education. Further, migrant fathers keep abreast of children's education progress and, in a few cases; help with homework over the phone. Thus, from one perspective, father involvement should improve children's determination to stay in school and provide the financial resources to help make that possible. At the same time, parenting provides a critical form of socialization for children; in the case of migration, parenting investments made by migrant fathers may orient children to a future in the receiving country, where success often relies less on additional education in the sending country. In fact, over half of all nonresident migrant fathers spend a majority of the time with their children in leisure activities (Stewart 1999). According to Hawkins, Amato & King, (2007), activities such as playing sports and watching movies—in the absence of other fathering behaviors—may not be related to children's well-being. Other types of migrant father involvement, such as working on school projects, talking with children about problems, and attending religious services together, may be more directly related to children's educational psychological and social development.

2.1.5 Father's Contact and child internalizing behaviours

Although visitation is assumed to be a central component of the relationship between nonresident fathers and children, studies based on large national samples have found little or no relationship between the frequency of contact and offspring wellbeing (Furstenberg, Morgan, and Allison 1987; King 1994). One difficulty in interpreting these studies is that frequent contact can represent a positive, neutral, or negative influence on children. On one hand, contact may be beneficial if a warm and supportive father-child relationship exists within the context of a cooperative co-parental relationship. On the other hand, contact may be harmful if it involves

negative behaviors by fathers or is accompanied by conflict between parents (Amato and Rezac 1994; Amato and Sobolewski, 2004; King and Heard, 1999) and the prevalence of internalizing behaviours is known to vary based on the gender of the child across diverse cultural contexts (Crinjen et al., 1997). A study by the US Office of Child Abuse and Neglect (OCAN) found that boys with physically involved fathers had fewer school behaviour problems and girls had stronger self esteem than those whose parents were absent for a long time (Office of child abuse and neglect 2006).

Nonetheless, although visitation per se does not appear to have a consistent relationship with child well-being, contact is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for nonresident migrant fathers to make other social contributions to their children's lives (King and Sobolewski 2006).

Even when nonresident migrant fathers see their children frequently, the time that fathers and children spend together varies substantially in content and quality. Because of the limitations of time and distance, contact between nonresident migrant fathers and children tends to be social rather than instrumental (Furstenberg and Nord 1985).

Of course, visits that focus exclusively on instrumental activities are likely to become boring over time to fathers and children alike. In general, fathers who engage in a balanced mix of social and instrumental activities demonstrate that their children are important to them.

2.1.6 Father's duration of absence and child externalizing behaviour

Nobles, (2011) found that children of migrant fathers receive significantly fewer financial and parenting contributions if their father has been absent for 3 years or more than if he has been absent for a shorter period of time. The years of fathers' absence has fueled worries about left-

behind children becoming spendthrift, delinquent, addicted to drugs, and emotionally scarred (Asis, 2006).

Parreñas (2008) points out that the migration of Filipino men maintains the traditional gender division of labour and argues that transnational fathering is primarily demonstrated through displays of authority and the imposition of discipline from afar. However, Crinjen et al., (1997) maintain that there is prevalence of externalizing disorders among boys and girls across diverse cultural contexts. Hawkins, Amato & King, (2007) provide some further support for the relationship between gender and externalizing disorders.

According to OCAN (2006), children who have physically involved fathers are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident and explore their surroundings and as they grow older, they have better social connections with peers. They are less likely to get in trouble at home, school or in the neighbourhood. Their study of school-aged children found that children are less likely to experience depression, exhibit disruptive behaviour or to lie and were more likely to exhibit pro-social behaviour.

2.2 METHODOLOGICAL REVIEW

This section presents various forms of conceptualizations and types of research designs adopted by previous research in studying non-resident fathering and child wellbeing. Methodological lapses are critiqued in this chapter with appropriate suggestions.

2.2.1 Non-resident fathering and transnational family arrangements

Non-resident migrant fathering is prevalent worldwide because of stringent migration policies in migrant receiving countries that make it difficult for families to migrate together families'

attempts to escape violent conflict or persecution, or family members' preferences, especially in societies where child fostering is a common practice, such as in many places in Africa. This has created transnational family arrangements and the exact prevalence of transnational family arrangements is unknown mainly because of scarcity of quantitative evidence caused by the lack of academic and policy attention to this phenomenon. Reports by nongovernmental organizations and international organizations such as Save the Children and the United Nations' International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) indicate that approximately 25% of children in selected migrant sending countries have at least one parent abroad. This estimate appears sufficiently large to justify research on transnational families and the well-being of children.

2.2.2 Transnational families and Transnationalism

Transnational families are, by definition, spread across geographical and legal borders, whereas transnationalism has been conceptualized as “a set of sustained long-distance, border-crossing connections” (Vertovec, 2004, p.3) or “practices and relationships that link migrants fathers and their children with the home country, where such practices have significant meaning and are regularly observed” (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007, p. 132).

Transnational families, nuclear or extended, are dispersed across international borders, comprising family members who spend time in one country or another, depending on a variety of factors such as work, education, legal requirements for residence permits, and care and support for other family members. These families often depend on a cross-border division of labour in which production occurs in the host country and reproduction occurs in the country of origin (Schmalzbauer, 2004).

The families are simultaneously incorporated into the host and origin countries and negotiate their identities by maintaining multiple connections. In this sense, the definition of *transnational* applies to families and individuals alike when they are embedded in an interdependent set of family relationships spread across different nations (Bernadi, 2011).

As Mazzucato and Schans (2011) have observed, studies concerning the manner in which children's care and socialization are organized in transnational families are just beginning to go beyond the analysis of mother – children and parent – children bonds and qualifying as relational subsystems (Cowan, Cowan, Herring & Miller, 1991).

2.2.3 Recent studies on non-resident fathering and child wellbeing

In the last decade, studies on transnational families and non-resident migrant fathers have emerged in which scholars from different disciplines have engaged with the topic of families with members who live across national borders and the effects of such transnational living arrangements on children (Parrenas, 2005; Schmalzbauer, 2008). These studies have shown that whether children benefit from their parents' migration depends not only on the outcomes that are studied (economic vs. psychological outcomes) but also on the characteristics of the parent and child. Children might benefit from remittances while suffering emotionally from prolonged separation (Borraz; Dreby; Heymann et al., 2009; Kandel & Kao, 2000; Lahaie, Hayes, Markham Piper, & Heymann, 2009; Suarez-Orozco, Todorova, & Louie, 2002; Schmalzbauer, 2004; cited in Mazzucato & Schans, 2011).

2.2.4 Transnationalism and gender implications

The economic and psychological processes in transnational families however are gendered (Aranda, 2003). For example, Abrego (2009) found that families in which the mother migrated are more likely to thrive economically than father-migrant families because of the extreme sacrifices mothers make to send remittances home. However, Parrenas (2005) found that children experience more emotional problems when their mother migrates compared to when their father migrates because of traditional gender roles related to care. It is however not well documented whether boys differentially receive more support than girls.

The role of the caregiver of the child in the country of origin is understudied, but the scant studies on the topic suggest that the caregiver is extremely important for the well-being of the child. Lahaie et al. (2009, p. 308) showed that children who take care of themselves (self-care) are three times as likely to experience behavioural and academic problems as children in other care arrangements. In a study by Dreby (2007), children felt abandoned by their parents and in some cases responded by detaching themselves from the parent that left. Such feelings might lead to unwanted behaviour such as quitting school or gang involvement. Thus, for migrants who left to ensure better opportunities for their children, the unintended consequences of their migration might include a strained relationship with their children and a loss of educational opportunities for their children.

The aforementioned studies show that some exciting work has recently emerged in the field of transnational families and child well-being. Indeed, as Glick (2010, p. 507) mentioned in her recent review of research on immigrant families, “researchers have become increasingly aware of the bi-national realms in which many immigrant families operate and the strategies they employ.”

Despite this progress, some significant gaps remain in the extant literature on transnational families. First, most studies in this area are small scale qualitative studies that do not collect systematic data on the topic of child wellbeing. It is therefore difficult to assess and verify the information presented in these studies (Mazzucato & Schans, 2011). The second problem is related to a more general criticism of studies on transnationalism: “They study cases of the phenomenon itself so it is difficult to say anything about the extent of the phenomenon and whether it is increasing” (Portes, 2001). Thus the scope and trends of transnationalism is not adequately covered.

There is usually no comparison group of children in non-migrant families or of children who migrated together with their parents, which makes it impossible to determine whether the observed phenomena are related to transnational families or are due to affect a wider group of people than just those in families that live across borders. Moreover, most data are collected at one end of the transnational spectrum, with only the parents in the host country or only the caregivers and children in the country of origin as subjects (Mazzucato, 2008).

In addition, children are mostly not interviewed themselves; rather, their caregivers are asked to evaluate the well-being of the child which presents some response bias (Mazzucato & Schans, 2011). Finally, the majority of studies on the well-being of children who are left behind have focused on one particular stream of migration: from Latin America (specifically Mexico) to the United States. This focus greatly ignores the increasing trends in transnational families in other migrant sending areas such as Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia. With the exception of the Philippines, however, little is known about the effects on children in these parts of the world (Huang, Yeoh, & Lam 2008, present a special issue on Asian transnational families).

2.2.5 Further studies

Mazzucato & Schans, in their special section (2011), make important advances in the study of transnational families in general and of the well-being of children in particular. All of the contributions in their paper address at least one of the methodological and conceptual challenges identified: that families are not bounded by the nation state; that cultural norms around the family are important to understanding transnational families' choices, the forms they take, and the effects they experience; and that it is necessary to include more actors than just the nuclear family. Bledsoe and Sow (2011) showed that family reunification is not necessarily the end of transnational family life and that dynamics within and outside the family can lead parents to send their children back to their country of origin.

Nobles, (2011) included fathers in her study of transnational families—an area that typically focuses on mothers. Graham and Jordan (2011) were among the first scholars to have collected data on the well-being of children who are left behind in an international comparative design, and Donato and Duncan (2011) compared outcomes for migrant children and children who are left behind with non-migrant children to be able to make more rigorous claims about the effect of transnational family life. Finally, Bernardi, (2011), argued the importance of studying the extended networks of transnational nuclear families using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Although all of the articles contributed to filling in of several of the gaps identified, none tackled them all, and some challenges had only begun to be addressed. Thus, Mazzucato & Schans, (2011) propose the integration of elements such as Mixed Methods, Multiple Sites, Matched Samples, and International Comparisons for further studies on transnational families.

2.2.6 Mixed Methods, Multiple Sites, Matched Samples, and International Comparisons

According to Mazzucato & Schans, the most insightful studies in the field of transnational families and non-resident migrant fathering are those that integrate large-scale quantitative methods with in-depth qualitative understandings of how relationships function (2011). The integration of methods is challenging, however, and even when both methods are used, findings often draw mainly from one part of the study or the other, with little integration of findings. They argued that although an emerging literature on transnational families has made critical contributions in terms of raising the issues encountered by such families, there is a need to collect more systematic data on transnational families to understand the extent of these issues and their effects on the various members involved.

Another purpose of systematic analysis on transnational families is to distinguish between different types of transnational families. This is important because, although there are many different types of transnational childrearing arrangements, none of the studies reviewed above categorizes these types in a systematic manner. Childrearing arrangements can take different forms, including those in which children are raised by a caregiver in the extended family, those in which children are raised by their biological mother or father, those in which children are raised by a non-kin caregiver, and those in which children take care of themselves. It is therefore important to ask: What are the different types of transnational childrearing arrangements and do they have differential impacts on the various actors? Finally, there is a need for longitudinal data collection that follows members of transnational families over time to overcome issues of selectivity in the analysis of the effects of transnational lifestyles and of how decisions

concerning whether to live separately or to reunify are shaped by changing contexts both at home and abroad.

There are some existing studies that combine mixed methods and matched samples over multiple sites. Bernadi (2011) suggests the need to adopt a systematic mixed-methods approach to social networks to measure the structural properties of the patterned interactions of transnational families. Similarly, a comparative research design would contrast children's social networks in different living arrangements and distinguish the specific effects of social networks in the experiences of transnational childhoods. The qualitative aspect of the study will focus on the mechanisms driving negotiations about migration, family members who remain in the country of origin, and the division of labour among individuals in transnational families. One question concerns the vulnerability of family ties over distance.

The literature on social capital argues that geographical distance leads to a reduction of connectivity, trust, and commitment among family and community members (Creswell, 1994; Hammerton, 2004; Putnam, 2000).

On one hand, family members who have migrated may loosen their ties with those who stayed behind in favour of the ties created in the new environment because of their exposure to different institutions or their need to integrate themselves locally. On the other hand, contacts between family members may intensify and their social capital may increase because of the new opportunities offered by migration (Bernadi, 2011).

Given the different strengths of mixed methods and the nature of the social process of interest, qualitative methods are best suited to explore the meaning of parenthood and to identify the relationships that contribute to the construction of this meaning. They therefore offer the entry

key to understanding how such relationships influence intentions and behavior related to family formation.

Quantitative methods are best suited for comparing networks and tie characteristics across subgroups of individuals. The nature of a mixed-methods research designs also aims at capturing the tight relationship between social structure and individual agency (social action) implied in the process of interest and social influence on family formation (Kelle, 2001). Massey's (1987) ethno survey methodology that mixed in-depth anthropological work with large-scale surveys is of interest, although the component in which migrants are matched to people back home was not conducted at the scale that was originally intended. This is the precise component that is necessary for the study of transnational families, their relationships, and resources that cross national borders.

A number of studies used matched sample methodologies (with medium-sized samples of around 150 people), which are especially suited to the study of transnational families because they sample individuals who are connected across multiple sites. This methodology has been used by Osili (2004), who studied remittance behaviour for housing construction, Dreby (2007), who studied family relationships between Mexican migrants and their children back home, and Schmalzbauer (2004), for the case of Honduran migrants and their family members. Mazzucato (2008) added a simultaneous component to the method by using a team of researchers to study a matched sample of people at the same time. This enabled the study of the small, everyday actions and transactions that influence how transnational relationships take shape but that often go unobserved when single researchers visit multiple sites sequentially and need to rely on respondent recall.

The further development of such methodologies can improve research on transnational families and broaden our understanding of the contributions of migration to the development of migrant sending countries and especially to migrants' families. Two current projects, Transnational Child Raising Arrangements (TCRA) and Transnational Child Raising Arrangements between Africa and Europe, which are funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research and NORFACE, respectively, use teams of researchers from different migrant-sending and -receiving countries in Europe and Africa to study the effects of transnational families on the different members involved in transnational care arrangements.

They study matched samples of parents, caregivers, and children across nations and use mixed methods to measure the various actors' outcomes and study local institutions in both sending and receiving contexts to situate the results within cultural understandings of "the family." The projects integrate both quantitative and qualitative data on migrant parents, children who are left behind, and caregivers in several European and African countries to allow for cross-country comparisons. They measure multiple outcomes related to education, job performance, health, and emotional well-being, thus acknowledging that migration impacts various realms, not just the economic realm. The projects also include a focus on the institutions that affect how TCRA function, such as schools in the country of origin and migration laws in the destination country.

They pay particular attention to the role played by norms around family, upbringing, and intergenerational relationships in general in the analysis of the effects of TCRA on the different actors. Such collaborative projects by teams of researchers who collect large-scale and longitudinal data through mixed methods is a step toward filling the gaps identified in this special section.

2.3 THEORETICAL REVIEW

With the theoretical review, I will consider the various theoretical perspectives about why father involvement could have consequences for child development. These are the social capital theory, ecological theory, the attachment theory and the socialization theorys. Based on these perspectives, a conceptual framework for the topic is modeled.

2.3.1 Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory provides a possible theoretical approach. The concept of social capital (Coleman, 1988) is being increasingly used in developmental science (Amato, 1995; Entwisle & Astone, 1994; Furstenburg & Hughes, 1995 cited in Pleck, 2007). Coleman identified two kinds of “capital” provided by parents that facilitate optimal development.

The first is financial capital, providing material resources to children such as food, shelter, goods, and services, including education. The second kind of capital is social capital, in two forms. One is family social capital, in the form of parenting behaviour that promotes the child’s cognitive-social development, school readiness, and educational aspirations— in effect, parents’ socialization of their children. Provision of family social capital (socialization) is thought to be especially influenced by parents’ level of education. An additional form of social capital is community social capital, referring to the linkages to the larger world that parents provide children, in the form of serving as advocates for the children in schools and other settings, as well as sharing their own social networks with their children (e.g., getting a friend to help the child, or to give the adolescent a job) or sharing knowledge of how to negotiate entry into the adult world (e.g., knowing who to call, how to act).

These distinctions may imply that at different points in development, different aspects of parents' socioeconomic status are especially relevant to parental influence on child outcomes. For example, parents' income and education (indicating material and family social capital) may be more important early in development, while parents' employment status and occupation (indicating community social capital) may be more influential later in development (cf. Leydendecker, Harwood, Comparini, & Yalcinkaya, 2005 cited in Pleck, 2007).

The distinction between the family social capital expressed in parental socialization, on the one hand, and the community social capital provided by parents' jobs, on the other, calls to mind the classic structural-functionalist interpretation of the family division of labor: the mother socializes the children and manages other aspects of internal family process, while the father connects the family and its members to the outside world via his employment (Parsons & Bales, 1955 cited in Pleck 2007). Of course, today mothers, too, increasingly provide their children with community social capital via their employment. In addition, because mothers' connections to their kin networks are typically stronger than fathers', the community social capital mothers provide via kinship relations may generally exceed that of fathers.

Coleman's analysis of the material and social capital provided by parents provides a potential structure for conceptualizing the nature of paternal influence. On average, fathers earn more than mothers, thus providing more material capital, but fathers participate less in socialization.

For community social capital, it is less clear whether fathers provide more or less than mothers when the distinction between job-related networks and kin networks is taken into account.

2.3.2 The Social Ecological Theory: The Concept of “Proximal Process”

Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986) proposed an ecological perspective on human development that

has become highly influential. His model is perhaps most well-known for making distinctions among different ecological “levels” or “systems” as they bear on the child’s development. Starting from the innermost level, these ecological systems are: microsystems (face-to-face relationships the child has with parents, peers, teachers, and other adults); mesosystems (linkages between microsystems, e.g., the relationship between microsystem partners such as parent and teacher, and between mother and father); exosystems (relationships in which the child’s microsystem partners are embedded, but in which the child does not participate directly, e.g., parent’s relationship with a job supervisor or co-workers); macrosystems (social policies and programs as well as broader “cultural scripts” influencing the prior systems, e.g., parental leave policies, cultural ideology about the role of the mother versus father); and chronosystems (historical change in the prior systems, as well as developmental change during the life course of the child in these systems).

Bronfenbrenner conceptualization of what about microsystem relationships promotes development is by far the most important in his theory. He describes the core of interaction in human development, which happens between the child and other actors as ‘proximal processes’ (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Using Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory, the dynamics of fathers’ specific influence as parents can be formulated in two ways.

First, fathers function as microsystem partners with whom children can experience good “proximal process” promoting development. The more microsystem partners the child has with whom she has good proximal process, the better for the child’s development—as long as the child is not “overloaded” cognitively or socio-emotionally, and the child’s microsystem partners are not in conflict with each other (i.e., the child’s mesosystem relationships are good). In this

first approach, fathers are viewed simply as important additional microsystem partners for the children, but not necessarily as distinctive or unique ones.

The second view is that fathers are a unique kind of microsystem partner. Because fathers' personalities differ from mothers', children's proximal process interactions with fathers differ from those with mothers in ways that are potentially important for development. For example, Parke (2002) has suggested that fathers' rough-and-tumble play may have a special role in promoting the child's emotion regulation.

Stating this in proximal process language, fathers engage in rough-and-tumble play with the child more than mothers do, and rough-and-tumble play promotes a particular aspect of development which is emotion regulation. Since this regulation is not promoted to the same degree by other forms of interaction, it is argued that children's relationships with fathers have distinctive consequences. This is to say there exist "unique" kinds of parental influence more often provided by fathers. Children in transnational families may as such not benefit from such influence due to father absence.

2.3.3 Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is rooted in evolutionary psychology and biology. In contemporary attachment theory (Bretherton, 1985), secure attachment relationships are understood as providing the infant with a "secure base" from which to explore the world, leading the child to develop a positive "internal working model" of self in relation to others that is a key foundation for effective relationships with adults and peers (Peck, 2007). This positive internal working model fosters cognitive development and skills acquisition as well as social and emotional

development. It has been recognized that infants form attachment relationships with fathers and other care-giving adults besides mothers (Kotelchuk, 1967). Further, positive social and cognitive outcomes in children are nearly as strongly related to secure infant–father attachment as to secure infant–mother attachment, and the effects of infant–father attachment are independent of the effects of infant–mother attachment. The consequences of attachment for the developing individual are viewed as lasting until at least the young adult years, the period during which parental involvement is viewed as directly influencing attachment is restricted to the child’s earliest years.

Thus, father involvement may promote child development because father involvement promotes secure infant attachment (to the father), which in turn promotes good child outcomes through the processes hypothesized by attachment theorists. The absence of the father will therefore inhibit the complete development of the child’s self.

2.3.4 The Socialization theory

The importance of parental ability to monitor children’s activities as part of their socialization processes facilitates numerous positive outcomes in their children (Patterson & Fisher, 2002). It is argued that children whose parents exemplify more favourable parenting strategies are more likely to develop well. When two parents are present in the child’s home, they share the responsibility of monitoring the child’s activities and providing encouragement and discipline as needed. When parents live apart, the residential parent often becomes the primary (or sole) provider of parental resources of care, discipline and learning. Thus, father absence implies less investment in monitoring and socializing children. The non-residential father is less proximate to the activities of the child and therefore has less regular interaction and involvement in day-to-day activities.

Parental involvement, monitoring, coaching and warmth manifest in the socialization processes which make children feel accepted, loved, open, confident and free to communicate their feeling to their parents (Ibid, 1998). They tend to have strong cohesive bonding with their families and are able to integrate and participate well in the larger society and are able to do well academically. Children who do not get such an exposure from their parents tend to be reserved, fearful, quiet and hostile towards their family and other people. They are anxious, depressive and academically not too stable (Patterson & Fisher, 2002).

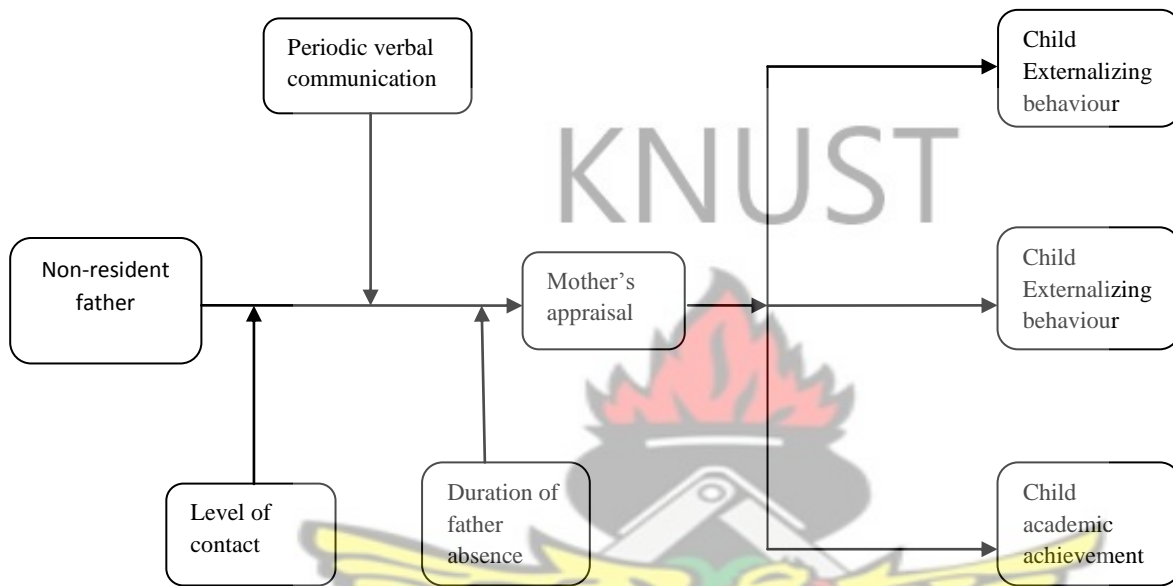
Conclusion

This chapter reviewed thorough empirical, methodological and theoretical literature on the effects of non-resident migrant father involvement on child well-being; identifying how father involvement could lead to positive outcomes for the child.

The extant literature revealed that in general, non-resident migrant fathers' periodic verbal communication does not usually involve the children and as such, may not be instrumental to their academics. Depending on its nature (i.e. whether warm or negative), contact may have positive or negative outcomes for child psychological wellbeing. However, the non-resident migrant father's overstay abroad will usually create feelings of loss of intimacy within the transnational family which will translate into negative psychological and educational outcomes for the children left-behind despite the maternal characteristics that can influence the non-resident migrant father's involvement in child wellbeing.

The study is grounded on four theoretical perspectives namely the social capital theory, the social ecological theory, the attachment theory and the socialization theory.

Figure 2.1: A conceptual Framework showing the effect of the non-resident father's involvement in child's internalizing and externalizing behaviours and academic achievement.



The figure above shows a conceptual model of non-resident father's involvement in child psychological wellbeing in terms of internalizing and externalizing behaviours and academic outcomes. Depending on the frequency of contact and content of periodic verbal communication, children of non-resident fathers are presented with various outcomes for internalizing behaviour, externalizing behaviour and academic achievement. The mother's appraisal of the duration of father's absence and his contributions in terms of contact and communication will be translated into her evaluation of her children's well-being in psychological and educational outcomes.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the methods used in the study and a description of 131 participants who are left-behind wives of migrant men abroad. The chapter begins with a presentation of the research design and outlines the procedures for the quantitative and the qualitative data. The first section presents a detailed account on quantitative sampling and sampling characteristics, measures and instrument of data collection, the test to reduce measurement errors and define psychometric properties, administrative process for data collection and the methods of data analysis. The second section describes the research setting, the data collection procedures and analysis of data for the qualitative study.

3.1 Research design

This study is an exploratory mixed methods study, combining a social survey followed by in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The sequential explanatory strategy adopted here is characterized by the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. This is in order to confirm findings from different data sources. The priority is given to the quantitative data and the two methods are integrated during the interpretation phase of the study. The purpose is to use the qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a quantitative study (Creswell, 2003).

The use of mixed methods in this study is for dual purposes. On one hand, quantitative analyses are crucial for measuring the support available to children in a context where family interactions are hindered by temporary and prolonged periods of separation. On the other hand, qualitative analyses will address strategies and practices employed by the families to maintain relationships

across international borders and geographic distance, as well as the implications of those strategies for the children's well-being (Bernadi, 2011).

3.2 Methodology for quantitative data

3.2.1 Sampling procedure

This section gives a detailed description of the processes followed to arrive at the study sample.

Study population

The target population for the study were children of all women in the DTA, who are married or in a consensual relationship to migrant men currently residing abroad. These migrant men must be seeking to or have regularized their status in the receiving country. All women 18 years and above within the Drobo Traditional Area, who are married or in consensual relationships with such migrant men residing abroad, who agreed to participate were included in the study.

Sampling units and size

The units sampled for this study were individual women, wives of international migrant men, who reside in the Drobo Traditional Area. In all, a sample size of one hundred and thirty-one (131) subjects was used for this study. This number is within the range of medium-sized samples of around 130 people deemed especially suited to the study of transnational families as argued by Bernadi, (2011).

Sample technique for quantitative data

The multistage sampling technique was employed to obtain the sample of study participants. This was done in two stages.

In the first stage of sampling, the research area was divided into five clusters based on the identification of major towns with population of not less than 2000 inhabitants. The district capital, Drobo and its environs was purposefully selected as centre cluster because it is the only community that qualifies as urban, with a population of 5000 and above and also links to all other communities. The four major towns found along the four major routes that connect to the district capital and their environs within a 20 km radius were also considered clusters. The five (5) clusters were Drobo, Faaman, Kwamesekrom, Atuna and Nyame.

In the second stage, two clusters were randomly selected out of the remaining four. These were: Kwamesekrom and Nyame clusters. The total number of communities for these three clusters was 25. The original sampling technique consisted in randomly selecting two (2) communities per cluster. However, in the course of the study, I realised that most of the non-resident migrants' wives had relocated from their communities to larger towns and urban areas thus reducing the population in the area of study. This led to a change in the sampling technique. In order to ensure adequacy of the sample size, four communities were purposively selected within the Drobo cluster since these communities have higher numbers of non-resident migrants' wives. Three communities were then randomly selected from each of the remaining two clusters: Nyame and Kwamesekrom bringing to 10 the number of communities selected for the study. Below is a table summarizing the sampled communities and the number of respondents.

Table 3.1

Table of sampled communities and respondents.

Cluster	Total Number Of Communities	Number Of Selected Communities	Total Number Of Respondents (Mothers)
Drobo	5	(purposive) 4	87
Kwamesekrom	10	(random) 3	23
Nyame	10	(random) 3	21
TOTAL	25	10	131

At this point, key informants were selected to help in the identifying all eligible target children in the selected communities. For a mother to be eligible for the study she had to have a child (boy or girl who is 6- 12 years) and her husband must have been living overseas for a continuous period of at least 1 year prior to study. All mothers who met the sampling criteria were included in the study and the total number of respondents for all 10 communities was 131 mothers (N=131).

3.2.2 Detailed characteristics of the sample

Table 3.2

Mother's self-reported age groups (N=131)

Age group of respondents	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
18-25 years	32	24.4
26-33 years	61	46.6
34-41 years	26	19.8
42-49 years	10	7.6
50 years +	2	1.5
TOTAL	131	100%

With the sample size (N=131) mothers who were interviewed, 32 of them constituting 24.4% were within age category 18-25 years, 61 constituting 46.6% were aged 26-33 years, 26 accounting for 19.8% of the sample were within the category of 34-41 years, 10 representing 7.6 percent were between the ages 42-49 years and 2 representing 1.5 percent were 50 and above.

Table 3.2 depicts the age distribution of respondents for this study. The high frequencies recorded for the modal age group 26-33 years (46.6%) as well as the 18-23 years (24.4%) who overall constituted 71% (N=93) of the total sample and 34-41 years (19.8%) is indicative of the fact that most migrant men's wives are in their youthful ages. These groups are the group of marriageable youth from which migrant men select their partners. Very few women (N=10, 7.6%) were within the age group 42-49 years and still, only 2 women (1.5%) were 50 years and above.

Table 3.3

Sex of children studied in migrant homes in the Drobo Traditional Area (N=131).

Sex of children	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Females	57	43.5%
Males	74	56.5%
TOTAL	131	100%

Table 3.3 reports on the gender distribution of children whose wellbeing were reported in this study (N=131). Gender ratio for boys (N=74, 56.5%) was higher than that of girls (N=57, 43.5%). This presents serious implications for left-behind mothers who have to socialize more boys alone without the physical presence of a father figure in the home. It also presents mothers with the difficulty of giving gender-appropriate socialization within transnational due to father absence.

Table 3.4

Mothers' self-reported type of marital relationship with non-resident father (N=131)

Type of marital relationship	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Wedded	22	16.8
Engaged (married)	87 (109)	66.4 (83.2%)
Introduced	18	13.7
Courtship (consensual union)	4 (22)	3.1 (16.8%)
TOTAL	131	100%

Table 3.4 on marital relationships in transnational families reports that of a total number of respondents (N=131), 22 participants (16.8%) reported to have been wedded by their partners and 87 participants (66.4%) reported to have been formally engaged to their partners. This indicates that overall, 109 participants constituting 83.2% of the total sample were reported to be married to the non-resident migrant father. Conversely, 18 respondents (13.7%) reported to be introduced to their partner's family without any formal commitment and 3 participants (3.1%) were in courtship with their partners. On the whole, of the total number of respondents (N=131), 22 constituting 16.8% were into consensual relationships with their partners.

Table 3.5

Mothers' report of duration of father absence from the home (N=131)

Duration of father's absence	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1- 4 years	45	34.4
4- 10 years	61	46.6
10 years +	25	19.1
TOTAL	131	100%

The phenomenon of migrant fatherhood in the Drobo Traditional Area is of recent origin as reported in Table 3.5 on migrant father's absence from home. Of the total number of respondents (N=131), 45 respondents constituting 34.4% reported that the migrant father had been absent for a period of 1-4 years. 61 respondents (46.6%) reported a period of father absence for 4-10 years and 25 respondents (19.1%) father absence for a period of 10 years +. This indicates that the phenomenon of non-resident migrant fatherhood in the DTA is of recent origin since as reported

in Table 3.4, most participants (N=106, 81%) reported father absence of a period of 1-10 years. This is as a result of the recent shifts in migration from the cocoa growing areas of Ghana where DTA originally migrated as farmers to more lucrative European countries where they now migrate to as unskilled labour.

3.2.3 Measurement of study variables

The variables considered in this study were drawn from the extant literature referenced herein. Non-resident father involvement which is the independent variable consisted of measures of non-financial contribution: periodic verbal communication, level of Contact and duration of father absence.

The dependent variable for the study being child's wellbeing was measured on 3 indices: Internalizing behaviours, externalizing behaviours and Academic achievement. Internalizing behaviours was based on 2 observed indicators: signs of Depressive symptoms and level of self esteem. Externalizing behaviours was measured on 2 indicators: delinquency and violent behaviour. Academic achievement was based on the child's grades in the four core subjects: English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Externalizing Problem Behaviours:

As father absence has been shown to increase the risk of child externalizing problem behaviours, eight (8) items with a 5-point scale (1= Never to 5=very often) which includes: He stole something, He was hostile towards others, He got in a fight, He used a stick to threaten someone (over the past week) were developed to measure this factor. Respondents indicated their children's experience with these problems by circling one of the five responses provided. The

average of all subscale items was taken as the measure of factor. On this scale higher scores indicated higher externalizing behaviour problems.

Internalizing Problem Behaviours:

Child internalizing problems have also been shown to significantly relate to father absence. As such, an internalizing problem subscale was constructed from nine (9) items with a 5 point-scale (1=Never to 5=Very often) to measure this factor. Items measured included: sadness, worry and feelings of pride. Like externalizing problems, respondents indicated their experience by circling one of the responses. The sum of all subscale items was taken as the measure of internalizing problems. On this scale, higher scores indicated higher internalizing problems.

Child academic achievement:

Non-resident fathering has been found to child academic achievement. Here again, items that measured academic achievement were the child's grades in the four core subjects: English, mathematics, core science and core science (5=A to 1=E) so that higher score indicated higher achievement.

Child Gender Related Factors

As some studies have demonstrated that father absence impacted on left-behind children differently based on their gender, one item measured the gender (sex) of children as a factor that influenced the tendency for internalizing behaviour. Mothers assessed this item by indicating whether their children were (1) Female or (2) Male.

Non-resident father's periodic verbal communication

Non-resident migrant father's periodic verbal communication has been found to be a major way through which migrant fathers are involved with their left-behind. As such, 8 items were used to measure this variable on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Not at all true of me to 5=Extremely true of me). Items included discussing problems at home, discussing children's grades, helping with the homework on phone and discussing children's discipline. Again, respondents indicated their experience by circling one of the responses. The sum of all subscale items was taken as the measure of level of communication. On this scale, higher scores indicated higher levels of non-resident father communication.

Level of non-resident migrant fathers' contact with left-behind

Level of contact in transnational families has also been found to be a major determinant of father involvement in child wellbeing. 5 items were developed on a 5-point scale (1=Never to 5= 4 or more times) to measure this variable. Items measured included frequency of father's visit over one year, frequency of receipt of goods from non-resident migrant father, frequency of attending social events together. Here again, respondents indicated their experience by circling one of the responses. The sum of all subscale items was taken as the measure of level of father contact. On this scale, higher scores indicated higher levels of non-resident father's contact with left-behind.

Non-resident migrant father's duration of absence

As previous studies have found that the non-resident father's duration of absence is related to child psychological wellbeing, respondents were asked to indicate by circling the duration of the non-resident migrant father's absence. The item had 3 categories (1) 1 to 4 years; (2) 4 to 10 years and (3) 10 years and above.

3.2.4 Description and Development of Research Instrument

The questionnaire for this study was crafted by taking into consideration the research objectives, research questions and hypotheses. I referenced the extant literature and consulted several relevant checklists that were used for similar studies. The Drobo Migrant Fathers Scale (DMFS) crafted for this study had three (3) sections **A**, **B** and **C**. Both sections B and C had 2 subsections each.

Section 'A' consisted of four (4) demographic and background survey items for mothers. Question no.1 was on age group of respondents and was coded 1= 18-25 years, 2=26-33 years, 3=34-41years, 4=42-49 years and 5=50+ years. Question 2 measured sex of children and was coded 1= female and 2=male. Question 3 was set on mother's marital type and coded 1=wedded, 2=engaged, 3=introduced and 4=courtship. These were further recoded into 2 categories: 1 and 2= married and 3 and 4= consensual union. Item 4 measured father's duration of absence and was coded 1= 1-4 years, 2= 4-10 years and 10+ years. Thus, Section 'A' identified demographic variables such as mothers' age, duration of father absence, sex of children and type of marital relationship. Coding for the 4 items in this section was mutually exclusive.

Section 'B' consisted of 13 carefully developed factors of non-resident migrant father involvement generated through prior research to tap appropriate conceptual domains for this study. The section comprised of 2 subscales. The first subscale consisting of 8 items measured non-resident migrant father's periodic verbal communication (MFVCS) with the scale 1=not at all true of me to 5= Extremely true of me. The next 5 questions formed the second subscale which measured non-resident migrant father's level of contact (MFCS) with the left-behind using

the scale 1=never to 5= 4 or more times. Together, the two subscales measured non-resident father's involvement.

Section 'C' consisted of 25 items of child wellbeing. It was made of 3 subscales: the first had 8 items measuring externalizing behaviour (CEBS), the second, 9 items measuring internalizing behaviour (CIBS) and the third had 8 items measuring academic achievement (CAAS). Using a rating scale; 1= Never to 5= very often, mothers were required to indicate by circling the appropriate code number that they thought reflected their child's status on child externalizing behaviours.

On child internalizing problem behaviours, respondents were also required to respond to seven statements using a rating scale; 1=Never to 5= Very often. Respondents were required to indicate by circling the appropriate code number in the rating scale column that they perceive corresponded to the number on the scale that showed the extent to which their child had internalized behaviours.

Seven items in the questionnaire, constituting the last subscale also addressed child academic wellbeing. Using a rating scale 1= Never to 5= Very often for items 35 to 38, mothers were required to indicate by circling the appropriate code number on the scale that showed the extent to which their child participated in academic activities. The last 4 items required of mothers to indicate their children's grades in the four core subjects as per their latest academic reports.

The rating scales of the closed-ended items of DMFS were exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Additionally, rating scales had standard instructions that requested respondents to select the most suitable answer with the assurance that there was no right or wrong answer in the selection of answers to the items.

3.2.5 Pilot of questionnaire

Pilot of the questionnaire was done in the Japekrom community, a neighbouring community of Drobo, yet belonging to a different traditional area. The women here presented similar socio-economic characteristics to the actual study sample. Questions in the pilot survey were used to test for local understandings of particular questions, and translations were revised where problems occurred. Thus, item fifteen which originally was: “how many times do you go shopping together” was reframed “how many times do you go out together” because respondents argued going out would not necessarily imply going shopping. Item twenty-nine “he was worried about his father’s absence” was reframed “he complained about his father’s absence.” Because respondents indicated that the children were constantly worried about their father’s absence. However, they complained when they were depressed. Finally, item twenty-two was reframed from “he screamed in a public place” to “he displayed anger in a public place” because respondents argued that screaming does not necessarily connote anger. A pilot of the data collection instrument was necessary just to be sure that the questions asked were understood by respondents. This was also to enable the researcher ascertain logical sequence of questions asked and to make any necessary amendments before the instrument was used for the final data collection. Further, it was to establish the feasibility in the administration time to similar sample since all questionnaires were answered within the 15 minutes gauged. Thus, the results of the initial piloting helped in gauging the time of administration, restructuring the questionnaire and making the necessary corrections.

3.2.6 Test-retest procedures and measurement of Psychometric properties of DMFS subscales.

A test-retest exercise was conducted in the Krofrom community with selected participants after explaining the aims, objectives and ethical considerations of the study. This community was selected for its similar characteristics as the selected communities of the study. 30 participants were recruited for the study and were given brief information on the aims and objectives of the study. They were also given informed consent form that explained ethical issues of voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality. The re-test was carried out after two weeks. Both the test re-test exercises were used to evaluate the adequacy of questionnaire, to try out systematically all procedures for the study, to establish and to evaluate codes for questionnaire responses and to gauge the length of the survey. It was also used to establish reliability for the survey instrument (Oppenheim, 1992; reported by Mainoo, 2008).

3.2.7 Validity and reliability of research instrument

The Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, was computed. This measure indicated the consistency of the DMFS subscales. Alpha was used because the DMFS subscales had thirty-eight Likert-type items that were summed up to make a composite score for the five sub-scales. Alpha computation was based on the mean correlation of each item in the DMFS scales with every item.

According to Nunnally (1994), Cronbach's coefficient alpha determines reliability based on internal consistency and provides a good estimate of scale reliability. Measures of this study were judged to be reliable if Cronbach's alpha was 0.70 or greater (Nunnally, 1994). Scale scores

were calculated for the five sub-scales and all the five DMFS sub-scales demonstrated an acceptable level of internal consistency with values within acceptable alpha coefficient range (Nunnally, 1994; cited in Mainoo, 2008). Scale reliability of the five DMFS subscales are presented below in Table 3.5.

Table 3.6

Cronbach Alpha for DMFS subscales

SCALE	CRONBACH'S ALPHA	NO. OF ITEMS
Non-resident father's verbal communication (MFVCS)	.774	8
Non-resident Father's contact (MFCS)	.739	5
Child externalizing behaviour (CEBS)	.749	8
Child internalizing behaviour (CIBS)	.719	9
Child academic achievement (CAAS)	.778	8

Measurement of Content and Construct Validity

The content validity of a measurement scale depends on the extent to which an empirical measurement reflects a specific domain of content (Carmines and Zeller, 1983). To address content validity in this study, a thorough review of the available literature and several relevant scales used in previous studies were considered and were thoroughly reviewed by two academicians. Additionally, selection was guided by formulated research questions and the

derived hypotheses with a thorough examination of relevant theories to the research questions with reference to appropriate statistical models that would measure the concepts or variables in the research instrument (Mainoo, 2008).

Since items on the research instrument were generally based on theory, previous research and modified constructs from existing scales that measure non-resident father involvement and child wellbeing, this DMFS scale has face and logical content validity. Content validation provides evidence about the construct validity of an assessment instrument (Anastasi, 1988). Constructs in this study had theoretical basis which were translated through clear operational definitions involving the research items.

3.2.8 Data collection process

This section describes the administrative procedures for the field entry and the procedures for data collection.

Administrative procedures for field survey

A formal letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Sociology and Social Work of KNUST and was presented to the Drobo Traditional Council (DTC). The council approved the study 3 weeks prior to the commencement of the main data collection process and subsequently verbally agreed to provide the researcher with the required assistance. The registrar of the DTC provided the researcher with the list of communities that formed the DTA and also provided assistance by clustering the communities based on their geographical locations. In all, five (5) clusters were made from the research area which were Drobo, Nyame, Kwamesekrom,

Atuna and Faaman; of which the first was purposefully selected and the next two were randomly selected for the study.

With permission granted by the council, the researcher solicited the assistance of two (2) indigenous graduates and trained them as research assistants for the study. The researcher explained that the study was designed to determine how, according to mothers, the level of migrant father's involvement affected child wellbeing. It was emphasised that only mothers whose husband had been away for a continuous period of at least one year and who had children aged 6- 12 years were required for the study.

The need for standardization of the research instrument to participant mothers was emphasised. A common code of instructions was drafted for the research assistants to be read before administering the research instrument to participants, a copy of which is presented in Appendix C. A translated version of the research instrument from English to Twi was given to each research assistant since some participating mothers could not clearly express themselves in English. A copy of the translated version of the research instrument is presented in Appendix B. Research assistants were also provided with copies of consent forms to be signed by respondents before administering the questionnaire. A copy of the informed consent form can be found in Appendix D.

Data collection of the main field survey

Questionnaire administration followed immediately the signing of consent forms by respondents. During the pilot, participants hinted that it would be prudent for the researcher to anticipate respondent unavailability since it was common for wives of migrant men to travel a lot on

business or visiting their children in neighbouring towns. Though the researcher anticipated around 250 responses, only 131 were obtained in all three clusters.

In the Drobo cluster, 87 questionnaires were distributed and collected, with 23 from the Kwamesikrom cluster and 21 from the Nyame cluster. A 100% response rate was attained with the physical presence of the researcher and the field assistants on the field as well as the immediate collection of data that followed the signing of the consent form. Participants were visited in their homes upon appointment and responded to all items in the survey. Self administered questionnaires were completed and submitted to the investigator while interview questionnaires were duly filed by the investigator in the course of the interviews. A word of acknowledgement and appreciation was rendered to each participant at the end of the visit.

With the data in hand, data processing and analysis were next on the research agenda and they are discussed below.

3.2.9 Method of data analysis

This section describes data processing procedures employed in the data analysis. It begins with an examination of data and measurement scale screening followed by a description of statistical procedures used for quantitative data analysis and hypothesis testing.

Data processing

Quantitative analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. The investigator engaged in a coding process after data collection and edited the data to ensure that all questions had been answered accordingly. Coding was done on the questionnaire. A coding scheme was developed and used to translate the responses in the

questionnaire into numbers. Coding for this study was straight forward since the close ended type of questions with mutually exhaustive responses was utilized. Data entry was done directly on an SPSS version 16.0 data matrix so it could be manipulated and analyzed.

Statistical Procedures for the Analysis for Data and Hypothesis Testing

Preliminary data analysis included obtaining frequency distributions and descriptive statistics for all variables. The study further used inferential statistics to help answer research questions and research hypotheses. Based on the appropriateness, the study used Chi Square and Gamma to determine the possible relationship between migrant father's involvement and child wellbeing.

Analytic Techniques

Descriptive statistics involving univariate, bivariate analyses were done on the demographic characteristics of the respondents and also on the dependent and independent variables. The data was then presented using percentages, frequencies and tables and interpreted appropriately.

The second part of the analysis involved the use of inferential statistics to test the research hypotheses. These techniques are useful when we need to generalize our findings from a sample to a population (ibid).

In order to establish whether or not levels of migrant father involvement were related to levels of child wellbeing, the original interval-ratio scale (1=not at all true of me...5= very true of me) had to be converted into ordinal scale (1= Low, 2=Moderate and 3= High).

In a situation where the hypotheses testing involved a sample size (N=131), two independent random samples of children (boys and girls), with ranked categories of variables, Healey (2005) recommends the use of chi square test of association and the use of bivariate tables (computation

of Gamma values) to test the relationship among 3 variables measured at the ordinal level and organised in a table format (Low, Medium, High). The goal is to gather additional information about a specific bivariate relationship by observing how that relationship is affected (if at all) by the presence of a third variable. In this case, how did the level of migrant father involvement affect the level of child wellbeing for boys and girls?

The test of chi-square and Gamma were computed. The tests found answers to the following questions:

- a) Is there an association between the variables? According to Healey, (2005), two variables are associated if the conditional distributions of Y change under the various conditions of X and Chi-Square is a nonzero value.
- b) If yes, what is the strength of the association? The strength of the association ranges from a Gamma value of 0- no association to ± 1 being a perfect association. Values less than 30= weak association; between 30 and 60 = Moderate association and values greater than 60 = Strong association.
- c) What is the direction of the association? When Y increases as X increases, there is a positive relationship and where Y decreases as X increases, there is a negative relationship.

Since these conditions were met, the computation of Gamma and Chi Square fitted best in testing our research hypotheses.

Ethical considerations in data collection

According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) as cited in Cohen et al (2005) 'the obligation to protect the anonymity of research participants and keep research data confidential

should be fulfilled at all cost unless arrangement to the contrary are made with the participants'. The researcher ensured that, information provided by the participants did not reveal their identity. Prior to engaging in the process, the researcher ensured the following ethical issues:

- a) -Obtained informed consent and respondents had the right to voluntarily participate and withdraw at any time if she so wished.
- b)-The purpose of the study was explained so that the respondent understood the nature of the research and its likely impact on them.
- c)-The confidentiality of the respondents was assured them, and anonymity was assured in the analysis and dissemination of the information.

3.3 Methodology for qualitative data

This section presents the methods adopted for the collection and analysis of the qualitative data.

The study took place in a natural setting, with the use of multiple methods that are interactive such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. In this study, the researcher looked for the involvement of the purposefully selected participants in data collection and sought to build rapport.

3.3.1 Research setting

The Drobo Traditional Area is the largest of the 3 traditional areas of the Jaman South District with few of its communities situated in the Jaman North District. Established in 2004 under the Legislative Instrument 1779, the district shares geographical boundaries with Dormaa (southwest), Berekum (south), Jaman North (north) and La Cote D'Ivoire.

The population in 2000 was 75,163 consisting of 35,163 men and 40,000 women and was estimated at 100,633 (Census 2010), with a growth rate of 2.5. The district has a sex ratio of 94 males to 100 women, with a mean age of 22.5, indicating a youthful population. The age groupings are: 0-14= 43%; 15-64= 52% and 65+=5%. The district fertility rate stands at 6.6%, with a crude death rate of 13/1000.

Due to severe unemployment in the area, savings are generally low and the cost of consumption is high.

The district is typically rural, with 130 settlements among which only 3 qualify to be urban with a population of 5000 and above. Of the 42 communities that form the Drobo Traditional Area, only the District capital, Drobo is urban.

The main occupation is agriculture (61.7%), which is rain dependent and on subsistence level. Industry constitutes 2.8%; services 35.5% dominated by public servants, and other businesses.

The district is largely homogeneous, with 90% Bonos and other tribes (Dagombas, Frafra, Ewes and others) constituting the remaining 10%. Again, 87.9% of the population are Christians, 10% Muslims and the remaining 2.1% constituted by traditionalists.

Using ethnographic research methodology, the focus of the study was the everyday experiences of the wives of migrant men and the perception and meanings they attached to their husband's involvement in their children's welfare.

3.3.2 Ethical considerations

Being aware of the delicate and sentimental nature of the issues of marriage and family life, and being conscious of the implications involved, I took steps to ensure that:

- a) Respondents signed an informed consent form to establish their willingness to participate. Some of them though did not find it necessary.
- b) Respondents had the right to withdraw at any point of the study if they so wished.
- c) Informants were informed of all data collection devices and activities.
- d) Whenever they were not comfortable with a question asked, respondents had the right to skip that question.
- e) The researcher ensured that responses were treated with a high sense of confidentiality.
- f) Finally, data was sent back to respondents to cross check if what was reported was indeed what they reported.

3.3.3 Strategy of inquiry

The strategy of inquiry for this study is phenomenological research. In the study, the researcher identified the 'essence' of human experiences concerning the phenomenon of non-resident fathering as described by the mothers. Out of a total number of 131 randomly selected respondents for this study, a small number of subjects (23) were purposefully selected for the qualitative aspect of the study and studied through extensive engagements. This was to help understand the dynamics of non-resident father involvement in child wellbeing.

3.3.4 Data collection procedures

Different procedures were used to gather data for this study. Data was collected through 14 in-depth interviews with an interview guide and 3 focus group discussions, one in each selected cluster from mothers whose husbands were irregular migrants abroad. Below are details of the interviewees and procedures.

The Interviewees

These were the respondents interviewed and observed in the course of the study. Key informants for this study were 3 persons aged 60 and above. These are the perceived knowledgeable people within their community and have no personal stake in the phenomenon of non-resident fathering. 23 respondents, who were wives of migrant fathers were purposefully selected based on the various dimensions of interest: age group of mothers (26-33 years being the modal age group), longer duration of father absence (10 years +), longer marital relationship (13 years+) and type of marital union (non-formal). These characteristics helped the researcher to document unique and diverse variations that have emerged in adapting to non-resident fathering and identified the important common patterns that cut across the variations such as migrant father's level of contact with children in formal relationships and those in informal relationships.

The in-depth interviews

There were 14 face-to-face in-depth interviews. Purposeful selection of respondents was done from the survey respondents for each of the clusters. The selection for the in-depth interviews was informed by some characteristics of the respondents which were longer father absence, longer marital relationship and type of marital relationship.

For the Drobo, Kwameaseikrom and Nyame clusters, the number of in-depth interviews was 7, 4 and 3 respectively. The figures were due to the fact that most of the non-resident fathers want their wives and children to live in larger communities, so very few are left in the rural areas. The composition of these groups is represented in figure 3.7

Table 3.7

Table of in-depth interviews with respondents per cluster.

Cluster	No. Of interviews	Characteristics of interviewees/ respondents
Drobo	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 respondents for longer married life, being married for more than 13 years - 1 respondent for longer duration of father absence; with the non-resident father being away for more than 10 years. - 3 respondents within the ages of 26-33 years - 1 respondent for type of marital union; being in a non-formal relationship with non-resident father.
Kwameseikrom	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 respondents for longer married life, being married for more than 13 years - 1 respondent for longer duration of father absence; with the non-resident father being away for more than 10 years. - 1 respondent for age group 26-33 years -1 respondent in a non-formal relationship with non-resident father.
Nyame	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -2 respondents for age group 26-33 years. - 1 respondent for longer duration of father absence; with the non-resident father being away for more than 10 years.

Note: Respondents with characteristics of marital type and longer married could not be found in the Nyame cluster due to relocation of respondents to larger communities.

The researcher used an interview guide with open-ended questions for non-resident father's contributions and child wellbeing. For example, item 4 was "what role does your husband play in your child's education?" Item 10 "how has the absence of the father affected the behaviour of the child in terms of discipline?" The interview guide allowed for questions and probing to elicit views and opinions from participants. Responses were written down by the researcher who also tape-recorded the interview process. The recordings were later transcribed to compare with the

written notes. This was to ensure that correct responses were captured. The shortest interviews lasted up to forty-five minutes while the longest interview lasted one and half hours. The variation in time was due to the fact that the interviewees had to attend to their children or visiting relatives in the course of the interview.

The Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Three FGDs were conducted in all, one from each selected clusters. The characteristics for selection of participants for the groups were: longer duration of father absence (10 years+), age group of mothers (26-33 and 42-49 years old), marital type (formal versus informal relationship) and longer duration of marital relationship (13 years+). The aim of these differentiations was to record the variations in responses through various perspectives as well as a way of gaining more insight into the research problem. The discussions were recorded and analyzed. The various focus groups were as follows:

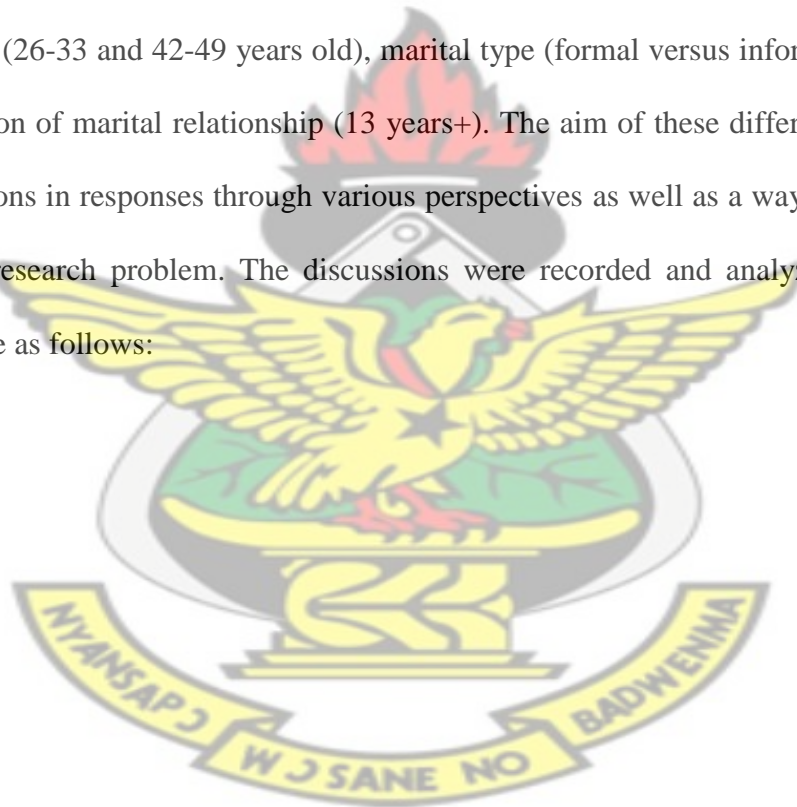


Table 3.8

Table of Focus Groups

Cluster	Group size	Composition of group
Drobo	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 women whose husbands have been away for more than 10 years - 3 women between the ages of 26-33 (majority group) - 1 woman only in courtship - 1 woman with 13years+ marital relationship - 2 women between the ages of 42-49 years
Kwamesekrom	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 woman whose husband has been away for more than 10 years - 3 women between the ages of 26-33 years - 2 women married for over 13 years - 1 woman between the ages of 42-49 years
Nyame	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 women whose husbands have been away for more than 10 years - 2 women between the ages of 26-33 - 2 women who have been married for 10-13 years.

Note: here again, the variations in the size of the groups were as a result of the relocation of migrant men's wives from small to larger communities or urban communities.

3.3.5 Qualitative data analysis

The data collected through this study was processed through a series of activities for analysis.

First, all interviews were transcribed and all field notes typed. After reading through and obtaining a general sense of the data, it was coded into chunks in relation to a) father involvement and b) child wellbeing. From the chunks, the data was coded into themes of a) father communication, b) contact, c) child externalizing behaviour, d) internalizing behaviour and e) child academic achievement. The themes were represented in a narrative form. According to Moustakas, (1994), phenomenological studies are analysed with the use of significant statements, generation of meaning units and the development of 'essence' description.

3.3.6 Validating the accuracy of findings

In order to validate the accuracy of the findings of this study,

- 1) The researcher used triangulation: a multiple data sources of information by examining evidence from the in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions. These were used to build a logical account for the themes.
- 2) Respondent verification: the final interpretation of the data was sent back to the participants to determine whether they felt these interpretations were accurate.
- 3) Peer review was done by a colleague Masters' student to ensure minimal subjectivity of the researcher. This was done by checking field notes against the report.

Summary

This chapter described the methodology used for the study. A survey design and a phenomenological design were used for the study where primary data was collected. The data was collected within selected towns in the Drobo Traditional Area. Father involvement was measured on indices of verbal communication and level of contact, while child well-being was assessed in three domains namely internalizing behaviour, externalizing behaviour and academic achievement. With the exception of demographic variables, all the sub scales were measured on 5-point likert scale. The study used questionnaire administration, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in the data collection process. A pre-test and post test of the research instrument was first conducted outside the district. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for univariate and bivariate summary of results as well as narrative.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter of the research presents the empirical analysis of the effect non-resident father's periodic verbal communication; contact and duration of absence have on boys and girls internalizing behaviour, externalizing behaviour and academic attainment. This is captured in tables of father involvement and dimensions of child well-being.

The section begins with the quantitative data presentation and analysis and is followed by the qualitative findings.

4.1 Non-resident father's contributions

This section of the study shows the results for the non-resident father's contributions. Although the Likert scale had items coded 1 to 5 (continuous) with 5 indicating higher scores, the scale was re-coded into ordinal level to enable data presentation for the various levels of father involvement and child wellbeing. Scores between 1- 2.3 were re-coded LOW, 2.4 – 3.6 were MODERATE and 3.7 – 5 were HIGH. The non-resident father's level of communication is reported in table 4.8 below.

Table 4.1

Frequency table of father's communication quality with children (N=131)

Non-resident father's communication level	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Low	20	15.3
Moderate	74	56.5
High	37	28.2
TOTAL	131	100

Table 4.1 reports of the non-resident father's communication with children left-behind. Of the 131 respondents, 20 constituting 15.3% reported having low levels of communication pertaining to children's wellbeing with the non-resident father. Majority of respondents (N=74, 56.5%) reported that fathers abroad had moderate discussions of issues involving their children's social and academic wellbeing. The remaining 28.2% (N=37) reported that fathers abroad spent enough time on phone to discuss issues pertaining to the children's wellbeing. This indicates that non-resident fathers engage in discussing matters relating to their children's wellbeing and this may lead to better outcomes for the child.

Table 4.2

Frequency table for non-resident father's level of contact with children (N=131)

Non-resident father's contact level	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Low	45	34.4
Moderate	47	35.9
High	39	29.8
TOTAL	131	100

Table 4.2 reports that low levels of contact were reported by 45 respondents constituting 34.4%. The highest number of respondents (N=47, 35.9%) reported moderate contact with the non-resident father. The remaining 39 (29.8%) of the respondents reported high contact with the absent father. This shows that non-resident migrant fathers contact their children which may be beneficial to child wellbeing.

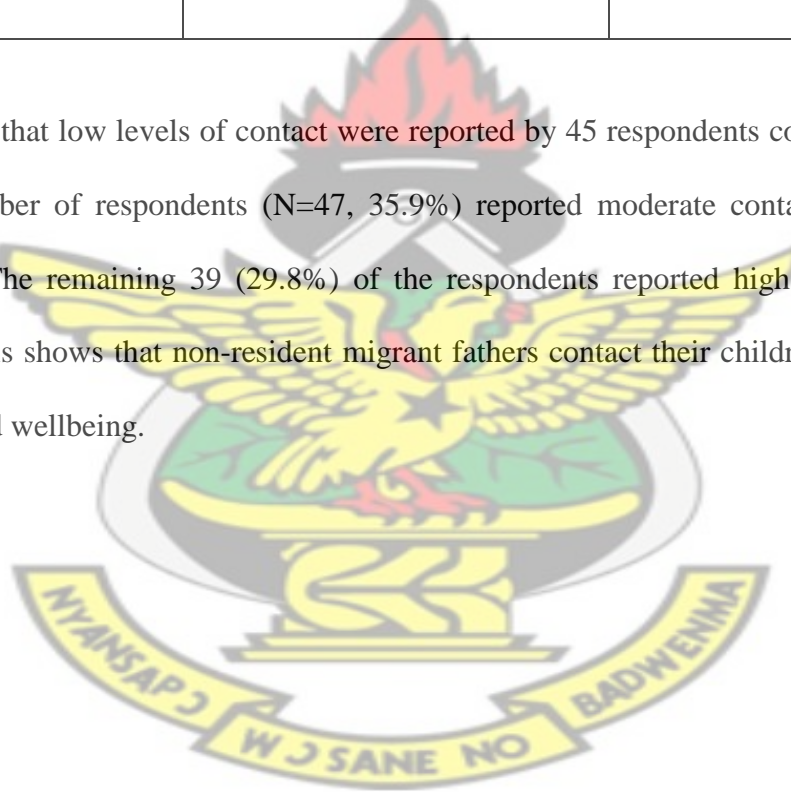


Table 4.3

Migrant father's home visitation upon frequency of goods sent home (N=131)

Frequency of migrant father's visitation	Frequency of goods received					Total
	Never	Once	2 times	3 times	4 or more times	
Never	0	13	9	25	21	68
Once	7	2	7	22	17	55
2 times	7	0	2	2	3	14
3 times	7	0	0	0	1	8
Total	21	15	18	49	42	131

Table 4.3 reports the frequency of migrant father's visitation upon the frequency of goods received by resident family in country of origin. The table indicates that 68 respondents reported that their husbands could not visit the family but received various numbers of goods. No respondent reported not receiving any goods. 13 respondents reported receiving goods once, 9 respondents reported receiving goods twice 25 respondents reported receiving goods 3 times and 21 reported receiving goods 4 times within the year and the total number of goods received was highest. Of the 55 respondents whose husbands visited once, 7 respondents reported receiving no goods, 2 respondents reported receiving goods once, 7 respondents reported receiving goods twice, 22 respondents reported receiving goods 3 times and 17 respondents reported receiving goods 4 times. The table further shows that where the non-resident father visited 2 times, 7 respondents reported receiving no goods, 2 respondents reported receiving goods twice, 2 respondents reported receiving goods 3 times and 3 respondents reported receiving goods 4

times. Of the 8 whose husband visited 3 times a year, 7 respondents reported receiving no goods from him and only 1 respondent reported receiving goods 4 times in the year. This indicates that where the non-resident father is unable to visit, he sends goods often and the lower the visits, the higher the frequency of sending goods. Contact in transnational families may therefore not be highly determined by visitation but also the provision of goods such as food items, clothing, and educational materials which may be beneficial to child wellbeing.

Child wellbeing

Table 4.4

Frequency table of child externalizing behaviours (N=131)

Levels of child externalizing behaviour	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Low	102	77.9%
Moderate	29	22.1%
High	-	-
TOTAL	131	100%

As shown in Table 4.4 above, the larger number of respondents (N=102, 77.9%) reported that their child had low externalizing behaviour problems. The remaining 29 (22.1%) respondents reported that their child showed moderate levels of externalizing behaviour problems. None of the respondents reported high level of externalizing behaviour problems for her child. This suggests that children of non-resident migrant men have minimal levels of externalising problem behaviours which may positive for child wellbeing outcomes.

Table 4.5

Frequency table of child internalizing behaviours (N=131)

Level of child internalizing behaviour	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Low	78	59.5%
Moderate	51	38.9%
High	2	1.5%
TOTAL	131	100%

Table 4.5 reports the levels of child internalizing behaviours. Majority of respondents (N=78, 59.5%) reported that their child had low levels of internalized behaviour. 51 respondents constituting 38.9% reported that their child had moderate levels of internalized behaviours and 2 respondents reported that their child had high levels of internalized behaviours. These reports show that children of non-resident migrant fathers have moderate levels of internalized behaviours which may suggest positive child wellbeing outcomes.

Table 4.6

Frequency table of level of child academic achievement (N=131)

Levels of child academic achievement	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Low	3	2.3%
Average	62	47.3%
High	66	50.4%
TOTAL	131	100%

Table 4.6 on the level of child academic achievement indicates the number of respondents who reported different levels of academic achievement for their child. 3 respondents (2.3%) reported that their child had low academic achievement level. 62 respondents (47.3%) reported that their child had average academic achievement level and the majority of respondents (N=66, 50.4%) reported that their child had high academic achievement level. The reports suggest positive outcomes for academic achievement wellbeing for children of migrant men.

Bivariate tables

The following bivariate tables show the relationships between various dimensions of father involvement (contact, verbal communication and duration of father absence) and various dimensions of child wellbeing (externalizing behaviour, externalizing behaviour and academic achievement) as part of the hypotheses testing procedures.

Table 4.7

Non-resident migrant father's level of contact over type of marital relationship (N=131).

Father's level of contact	Marital type		Total
	Formalized	Non-formalized	
LOW	37 (33.9%)	8 (36.4%)	45 (34.4%)
MODERATE	40 (36.7%)	7 (31.8%)	47 (35.9%)
HIGH	32 (29.4%)	7 (31.8%)	39 (29.8%)
TOTAL	109	22	131 (100%)

Table 4.7 above reports the level of contact received by families of non-resident migrant fathers in formalised and non-formalised relationships. Out of the respondents who were in formalized relationships (N=109, 100%), 33.9% received low levels of contact (N=37), 36% had moderate contact (N=40) and the remaining 29.4% had high contact (N=32).

Of the respondents who were in non-formalized relationships (N=22, 100%), 36.4% received low contact (N=8), 31.8% received moderate contact (N=7) and the remaining 31.8% received high contact (N=7). In sum, the table indicates that the majority of children in formalized relationships (N=40, 36.7%) had moderate contact with non-resident fathers while the majority of children in non-formalised relationships (N=8, 36.4%) had low contact with non-resident migrant fathers. This suggests that father contact may to some extent be related to parents' marital type.

Table 4.8

Child academic achievement over non-resident migrant father's verbal communication (N=131).

Child Academic achievement	Non-resident father's verbal communication			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
POOR	- -	1 (1.4%)	2 (5.4%)	3 (2.3%)
AVERAGE	7 (35.0%)	34 (45.9%)	21 (56.8%)	62 (47.3%)
HIGH	13 (65.0%)	39 52.7%	14 (37.8%)	66 (50.4%)
Total	20 (100%)	74 (100%)	37 (100%)	131 (100%)

Table 4.8 reports the relationship between child academic performance and non-resident migrant father's verbal communication. The table indicates that of the 20 children who had low communication with the migrant father, none performed poorly at school. 7 children performed averagely at school (35.5%), and the majority of children (N=13, 65%) had high communication with the father.

Of the 74 children who received moderate communication with the father, 1 child performed poorly at school (1.4%), 34 children performed averagely at school (45.9%) and 39 children constituting 52.7% performed highly at school.

Of the remaining 37 children who received high communication from the migrant father, 2 children (5.4%) performed poorly at school, 21 children (56.8%) performed averagely at school and the remaining 14 children (37.8%) performed highly at school.

The table shows that the highest percentage of children who performed highly at school (N=13, 65%) received low communication from the migrant father while the highest percentage who performed poorly at school (N=2, 5.4%) had high communication with the migrant father. This indicates that as communication with the father increases, academic performance decreases and therefore, child academic achievement is related to migrant father's communication.

Table 4.9

Child internalizing behaviour over non-resident father's contact (N=131)

Child internalizing behaviour	Father's level of contact			Total
	Low	moderate	High	
LOW	- -	2 (4.3%)	- -	2 (1.5%)
MODERATE	18 (40%)	16 (34.0%)	17 (43.6%)	51 (38.9%)
HIGH	27 (60%)	29 (61.7%)	22 (56.4%)	78 (59.5%)
Total	45 (100%)	47 (100%)	39 (100%)	131 (100%)

Table 4.9 on non-resident migrant father's level of contact and child internalizing behaviour indicates that no child who had low father contact internalized behaviours. Of the 45 children who had moderate father contact, 18 children constituting 40% had moderate levels of internalized behaviours and the majority (N=27, 60%) had high levels of internalized behaviours. Out of the 47 children who had moderate levels of father contact, 2 children(4.3%) had low levels of internalized behaviours, 16 children (34%) had moderate levels of internalized behaviours and the majority (N=29, 61.7%) had high levels of internalized behaviours.

Out of the 39 children who received high father contact, none had low levels of internalized behaviours. 17 children (43.6%) had moderate levels of internalized behaviours and 22 children constituting 56.4% had high levels of internalised behaviours. The majority of children (78) representing 59.5% had internalised behaviour irrespective of the non-resident father's level of contact. This may suggest that child internalizing behaviour is not dependent of migrant father's contact.

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Table 4.10

Girls internalizing behaviour over father's contact (N=57)

Girls Internalizing behaviour	Non-resident father's level of contact			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
MODERATE	12 (52.2%)	5 (45.5%)	10 (43.5%)	27 (47.4%)
HIGH	11 (47.8%)	6 (54.5%)	13 (56.5%)	30 (52.6%)
Total	23 (100%)	11 (100%)	23 (100%)	57 (100%)

a. Sex of children = Female

Table 4.10 is the partial table for girls internalizing behaviour over father's contact. No girls had low levels of internalised behaviours. Of the 23 girls that received low father contact, 12 (52.2%) had moderate levels of internalised behaviour and 11 girls (47.8%) had high levels of internalised behaviours.

Of the 11 girls that received moderate levels of father contact, 5 girls (45.5%) had moderate levels of internalised behaviours and 6 girls (54.5%) had highly internalised behaviours.

Of the 23 girls who received high father contact, 10 girls (43.5%) had moderately internalized behaviours and 13 girls (56.5%) had highly internalised behaviours.

56.5% of girls had highly internalised behaviour even though they had high contact with their fathers. Table 4.10 therefore suggests that girls of non-resident fathers internalise behaviour irrespective of father's contact.

Table 4.11

Boys internalizing behaviour over father's contact (N=74)

Boys Internalizing behaviour	Non-resident father's level of contact			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
Low	-	2 (5.6%)	-	2 (2.7%)
Moderate	6 (27.3%)	11 (30.6%)	7 (43.8%)	24 (32.4%)
High	16 (72.7%)	23 (63.9%)	9 (56.2%)	48 (64.9%)
Total	22 (100%)	36 (100%)	16 (100%)	74 (100%)

Table 4.11 is the partial table for boys internalizing behaviour over father's contact. No boy had low levels of internalised behaviours. Of the 22 boys that received low father contact, 6 (27.3%) had moderate levels of internalised behaviour and 16 boys (72.7%) had high levels of internalised behaviours.

Of the 36 boys that received moderate levels of father contact, 2 boys had low internalised behaviours, 11 boys (30.6%) had moderate levels of internalised behaviours and 23 boys (63.9%) had highly internalised behaviours.

Of the 16 boys who received high father contact, none had low level of internalised behaviour. 7 boys (43.8%) had moderately internalized behaviours and 9 boys (56.2%) had highly internalised behaviours. Again, the highest percentage (64.9%) of boys had highly internalised behaviour irrespective of father's level of contact. Table 4.10 therefore suggests that boys of non-resident fathers internalise behaviour irrespective of father's contact.

Table 4.12

Child externalizing behaviour over duration of father absence

Child Externalizing behaviour	Duration of father's absence			Total
	1-4 years	4-10 years	10 years and over	
LOW	33 (73.3%)	48 (78.7%)	21 (84.0%)	102 (77.9%)
MODERATE	12 (26.7%)	13 (21.3%)	4 (16.0%)	29 (22.1%)
Total	45 (100%)	61 (100%)	25 (100%)	131 (100%)

The bivariate Table 4.12 on child externalizing behaviour over migrant father's over-prolonged stay abroad indicates that of the 45 children whose father had been absent for 1-4 years, 33 children constituting 73.3% had low levels of externalized behaviours and 12 children constituting 26.7% had moderate levels of externalised behaviours.

Out of the 61 children whose fathers had been absent for 4-10 years, 48 children constituting 78.7% had low levels of externalised behaviours and 13 children constituting 21.3% had moderate levels of externalised behaviours.

Of the 25 children whose fathers had been absent for 10 years and over, the majority (N=21, 84%) had low levels of externalized behaviours and the remaining 4 children constituting 16% had moderate levels of externalised behaviours. Most children (N= 102, 77.9%) had low levels of externalised behaviours irrespective of father's duration of absence and most of the children (N=61) who had some level of externalised behaviours had fathers who had been away for 4 to 10 years. Table 4.12 shows that the longer the father absence, the lower the children externalise behaviours.

Table 4.13

Girls externalizing behaviour over duration of father absence

Girls Externalizing behaviour	Duration of father's absence			Total
	1-4 years	4-10 years	10 years and over	
LOW	18 (81.8%)	19 (76%)	8 (80%)	45 (78.9%)
MODERATE	4 (18.2%)	6 (24%)	2 (20%)	12 (21.1%)
Total	22 (100%)	25 (100%)	10 (100%)	57 (100%)

a. Sex of children = Female

Table 4.13 is a partial table showing girls externalizing behaviour over father's over-prolonged stay abroad. Of the 22 girls whose father had been away for 1-4 years, 18 girls (81.8%) had low externalised behaviours and 4 girls (18.2%) had moderate externalised behaviours.

Of the 25 girls whose father had been away for 4-10 years, 19 girls (76%) had low externalised behaviours and 6 girls constituting 24% had moderate externalised behaviours.

Of the 10 girls whose father had been away for 10 years and over, 8 girls constituting 80% had low levels of externalised behaviours and the remaining 2 girls had moderate levels of externalised behaviours. The table shows that the majority of girls (N=45, 78.9%) had low externalised problems irrespective of father duration of absence and the highest number of girls who had some externalised behaviours had fathers who had been absent for 4-10 years. Girls externalizing behaviours is therefore not due to duration of father absence.

Table 4.14

Boys externalizing behaviour over father absence (N=74)

Externalizing behaviour	Duration of father's absence			Total
	1-4 years	4-10 years	10 years and over	
LOW	15 (65.2%)	29 (80.6%)	13 (86.7%)	57 (77.0%)
MODERATE	8 (34.8%)	7 (19.4%)	2 (13.3%)	17 (23.0%)
Total	23 (100%)	36 (100%)	15 (100%)	74 (100%)

Table 4.14 is a partial table showing boys externalizing behaviour over father's over-prolonged stay abroad. Of the 23 boys whose father had been away for 1-4 years, 15 boys (65.2 %) had low externalised behaviours and 8 boys (34.8%) had moderate externalised behaviours.

Of the 36 boys whose fathers had been away for 4-10 years, 29 boys (80.6%) had low externalised behaviours and 7 boys constituting 19.4% had moderate externalised behaviours.

Of the 15 boys whose father had been away for 10 years and over, 13 boys constituting 86.7% had low levels of externalised behaviours and the remaining 2 boys had moderate levels of externalised behaviours. The table shows that the majority of boys (N=57, 77%) had low externalised problems irrespective of father duration of absence and the highest number of boys (N=36) who had some externalised behaviours had fathers who had been absent for 4-10 years. Boys externalizing behaviours can therefore not be explained by duration of father absence.

Hypotheses testing

The following section reports the use of chi-square test and bivariate tables to test the research hypotheses to determine the relationship between variables and measures of father involvement and child wellbeing.

Basis of selection of Chi-square statistical model for testing a-priori hypotheses

The selection of the chi-square statistical model to test the research hypotheses was based on meeting the following criteria as argued by Yates, Moore & McCabe (1999, p734):

- Random selection of sample for the study
- Scale index for the variables is ranked categories, therefore ordinal level of measurement.
- Independent study variables
- Not more than 20% of the expected counts are less than 5 all individual expected counts are 1 or greater.

Hypothesis 1:

Children of married mothers significantly receive higher level of contact from non-resident fathers than children of mothers in consensual relationships.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.190 ^a	2	.998
Likelihood Ratio	.193	2	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000	1	
N of Valid Cases	131		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.55.

Chi square value is .190. The value indicates that there is a relationship between the parents' marital relationship type and the non-resident father's level of contact. However, for the test to be significant, the significance value needs to be .05 or <.05. In this case, the value of .998 is larger than the alpha value of .05. So I conclude that the result is non-significant. There is therefore no relationship between non-resident father's level of contact and marital type.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	-.001	.196	-.006	.995
N of Valid Cases	131			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The Gamma value of -.001 indicates no association between type of marital relationship between parents and non-resident father's contact. The null hypothesis which states that "there is no statistically significant difference between level of contact of children of non-resident fathers in married relationships and those in consensual relationships" is true. I therefore accept the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2:

Non-resident father's periodic verbal communication significantly affects children's educational performance.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.761 ^a	4	.023
Likelihood Ratio	5.890	4	
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.161	1	
N of Valid Cases	131		

a. 3 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count 1.46.

Chi square value is 5.761. The value indicates that there is a relationship between migrant father's verbal communication and child academic achievement. However, for the test to be significant, the significance value needs to be .05 or <.05. In this case, the value of .023 is lower than the alpha value of .05. So I conclude that the result is significant. There is therefore relationship between non-resident father's verbal communication and child academic achievement.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	-.327	.139	-2.248	.025
N of Valid Cases	131			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

A Gamma value of -.327 indicates a moderate and negative relationship between non-resident father's verbal communication and child's academic performance. The null hypothesis which states that "there is no relationship between non-resident father's verbal communication and child academic achievement" is false. We reject the null hypothesis and accept the working hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3:

Non-resident father's frequency of contact significantly relates to girls internalizing behaviours than boys internalizing behaviours.

Chi square tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.196 ^a	4	.045
Likelihood Ratio	4.727	4	
Linear-by-Linear Association	.100	1	
N of Valid Cases	131		

Chi square value is 4.196. The value indicates that there is a relationship between migrant father's contact and child internalizing behaviour. However, for the test to be significant, the significance value needs to be .05 or <.05. In this case, the value of .045 is lower than the alpha value of .05. So I conclude that the result is significant. There is therefore a relationship between non-resident father's contact and child internalizing behaviour.

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	-.045	.139	-.321	.748
N of Valid Cases	131			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

A Gamma of -.045 shows that non-resident migrant father's contact and child internalizing behaviour are negatively weakly related, and significant ($p = -.045$). This shows that migrant father's contact is related to child internalizing behaviours. The differences in boys' and girls' internalizing behaviours over migrant father's contact however are reported on below.

Symmetric measures by sex

Sex of children	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Female Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	.131	.220	.592	.554
N of Valid Cases	57			
Male Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	-.208	.185	-1.104	.270
N of Valid Cases	74			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

A Gamma value of .131 for girls shows a weak positive relationship between father's contact and girls externalizing behaviour. The significance level of .554, which is greater than .05 shows that

this relationship is not significant. The Gamma value of $-.208$ for boys shows a weak negative relationship between father contact and boys internalizing behaviours. Yet again, the significance level of $.270$ which is greater than the alpha value of $.05$ shows that this relationship is not significant. The differences in these two Gamma values ($.131$ for girls and $-.208$ for boys) from the total Gamma of $-.045$ indicates that father's contact weakly and negatively influences boys internalizing behaviour more than girls internalizing behaviour. But the differences are not significant. The null hypothesis stating that "migrant father's contact does not relate to difference in girls and boys externalizing behaviour" is true.

We therefore accept the null hypothesis that non-resident father's contact does not relate to differences in boys and girls internalizing behaviour.

Hypothesis 4:

Non-resident father's over-prolonged stay abroad relates significantly to differences in girls' and boys' externalizing behaviour.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.106 ^a	2	.575
Likelihood Ratio	1.126	2	.570
N of Valid Cases	131		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.53.

Chi square value is 1.106. The value indicates that there is a relationship between migrant father's over-prolonged stay abroad and child externalizing behaviour. However, for the test to be significant, the significance value needs to be $.05$ or $<.05$. In this case, the value of $.023$ is

lower than the alpha value of .05. So I conclude that the result is significant. There is therefore a relationship between non-resident father's over-prolonged stay abroad and child externalizing behaviour.

The question however is whether non-resident father's over-prolonged stay abroad relates to differences in boys' and girls' externalizing behaviours and the following tables report on that.

Symmetric Measures for both sexes

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	-.188	.174	-1.062	.288
N of Valid Cases	131			

a. not assuming the null hypothesis

A Gamma value of -.188 shows that there is a weak negative association between father absence and child externalizing behaviour. The partial Gamma values for boys and girls however is reported in the following table.

Symmetric Measures by sex

Sex of children	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Female Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	.077	.267	.287	.774
N of Valid Cases	57			
Male Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	-.377	.213	-1.645	.100
N of Valid Cases	74			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

The Gamma values for the partial tables (.077 for girls and -.377 for boys) are different from the Gamma value of -.188 for the total table. This shows that father's duration of absence weakly

positively influences girls externalizing problems, but it moderately and negatively influences boys externalising problems. These differences however are not statistically significant with significant values higher than .05 and the null hypothesis stating that “non-resident migrant father’s over-prolonged stay abroad does not relate significantly to differences in girls’ and boys’ externalizing behaviour” is true. I therefore accept the null hypothesis.

Table 4.15

Summary table of hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Chi square value and significance	Gamma value	Decision
H1: Children of married mothers significantly receive higher level of contact from non-resident fathers than children of mothers in consensual relationships.	$X^2 = .190$ $p = .998$	$G = -0.001$	Accept H_0 , reject H_1 .
H2: Non-resident father’s periodic verbal communication significantly affects children’s educational performance.	$X^2 = 5.76$ $p = .023$	$G = -.327$	Reject H_0 , accept H_1
H3: Non-resident father’s frequency of contact significantly relates to girls internalizing behaviours than boys internalizing behaviours.	$X^2 = 4.196$ $p = .045$	$G = -.045$	Accept H_0 , reject H_1
H4: Non-resident father’s over-prolonged stay abroad relates significantly to differences in girls’ and boys’ externalizing behaviour.	$X^2 = 1.106$ $p = .575$	$G = -.188$	Accept H_0 , reject H_1 .

4.5 Results of qualitative data

The study aimed at examining the relationship between non-resident fathering and child wellbeing within the Drobo Traditional Area. It aimed at examining how different dimensions of

non-resident father's involvement (verbal communication, contact and duration of absence) affected different dimensions of child wellbeing (externalizing behaviour, externalizing behaviour and academic performance). The study was conducted between February and April, 2012. Three key informants aged 60 and above were identified in the communities. These are knowledgeable people within their community who have no personal stake in the phenomenon of non-resident fathering. As such, their contributions were most likely to be objective. 23 women, who were spouses of migrant men abroad, were purposefully selected within the clusters to participate in the study.

The study was a phenomenological study in that it sought to examine the meaning of the people's experiences concerning the phenomenon of irregular migration. In-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observation were used to gather information from respondents.

In all, 14 in-depth interviews were conducted. The number of interviews for the Drobo, Kwamesekrom and Nyame clusters were 7, 4 and 3 respectively. The selection of respondents for the in-depth interviews followed the survey. The characteristics for selection were longer duration of marital life, longer father absence, age group of respondents and type of marital union. The interviews were conducted with an interview guide and were recorded. Interviews lasted forty-five minutes to one and half hours.

Three Focus Group Discussions were conducted. A discussion was held for each of the clusters. Respondents were purposefully selected based on longer duration of father absence, formalised and non-formalised marital relationships, levels of academic achievement and they included women within the ages of 26- 33 who were the majority group, as well as women aged 42-49 who were among the oldest groups.

These focus group discussions were conducted in Twi, the local dialect and transcribed by the researcher, who is a native and proficient in the local dialect.

The themes for discussion were ways in which the non-resident fathers were connected to their left-behind children and the mother's appraisal of the state of the children's psychological wellbeing and academic achievement. The interviews focused on relationships that left-behind children maintain with transnational migrant fathers.

My discussion of the non-resident father's involvement relies on the perspectives of their wives. Hence, I look at fathering not from the perspectives of those who perform it, but from the mother's report. I acknowledge that mothers may overlook certain caring labours that their husbands deem to be important indicators of father involvement or under-represent their contributions, yet, the focus is to examine the situation from the mother's perspective. In order to avoid repetitions, both in-depth interviews and FGDs are reported together since they focused on the same themes.

The key informants indicated that though the genesis of internal migration within the Drobo Traditional Area dates back to about four generations, the international migration dates back to a few decades. The majority of the women involved in this phenomenon are women between the ages of 18 to 33 years, who have dreams to be married to migrant men. Initially, men migrated to the western part of the country to grow cocoa and returned home seasonally or were joined by their wives and children. With plantation lands becoming less available, a new trend of migration emerged with most of the youth travelling to countries of Western Europe through approved or clandestine means.

Results from the group discussions and the interviews indicated that non-resident fathers contribute both financially and non-financially to the left-behind children's wellbeing. Both interviews and group discussions indicated that the non-resident father's financial contribution came in as regular remittances usually once a month. These remittances are for feeding, healthcare and clothing. In addition to these monthly remittances, the non-resident fathers remit for the child's educational costs every trimester. It was also reported by the mothers that the non-resident father generally catered for the family's accommodation and usually supported the wife in one economic activity or skill training. Respondents also indicated that there may be occasional remittances for other social support such as funerals and support to a kin. The left-behind family over depends on the father's contributions, since migrant men usually leave their children behind under the custody of stay-at-home wives who they very often discourage from entering the formal labour market. This practice reinforces the general perception of the traditional Ghanaian women's reproductive roles as caretakers and is an explanation to the low levels of academic attainment and the concentration in informal jobs among the women. As such, in case of dissolution of the relationship, the women are very vulnerable.

During the process, it was reported that to those women who engaged in petty trading as a supplementary earning activity, work was seasonal, just to support what their husbands brought in. One member of the Drobo focus group indicated:

'I am a trader. I sell used goods like clothing and home appliances my husband sends me. When the goods are sold out, I have to wait for the next consignment. In the meantime, I will be staying at home or visit my parents and my children and we depend on the money we made of the sales.'

The relatively older women in the Drobo group indicated that though the quantum of remittance correlates with the number of children, the frequency of remittances was not. According to the women, non-resident fathers remit their left-behind spouses irrespective of the type of marital union they had. Men remit their left-behind spouses as long as they remain in a relationship, irrespective of whether or not they have children. Though in some instances, the men did not remit regularly because they had no ‘good job’ yet.

The women indicated that non-resident fathers however were not usually involved in the child’s academics, aside paying for the costs. They did not contribute much in terms of activities, but financially. One respondent from the KwameSekrom discussion told us:

‘He pays for our accommodation and sends us money every month. My children traditionally belong to my family and so it is my responsibility to raise them. I also have to make sure the house is built because my children and I will live in it in future’.

At the focus group discussions, all the respondents all agreed it was the wife’s responsibility in the ‘contract’ as they refer to their marriage to raise the children while the father provided the finances. However, during the interviews, most respondents lamented the lack of participation of the non-resident fathers in the upbringing of the children. The women thought that fathers could participate more by communicating effectively with the children.

The respondents reported that the non-resident father usually communicates with them once a week, though some respondents during the interview said they communicate more often than that. They indicated that the duration of the calls varied with the topic of discussion. For instance, a call to check on how the wife and children fared could last only 2 minutes while a call to discuss business and the happenings in the family could last more than 30 minutes. The non-

resident father's communication seldom included the child and when it did, it was limited to asking about school grades and school activities but not to discuss homework.

The respondents reported that generally, their children's academic performances were rated high or average. According to the performance of the children in the 4 core subjects: English, Science, Mathematics and Social Studies from their previous examination reports, the children fared well. The mothers explained that they are now conscious of their children's education, and as such want their children to attend the best schools in the area such as NADA and Demonstration. They explained that in order to have a good standing in the society, education was the key factor. A respondent from Kwamesekrom cluster said:

“These days, even those who are heirs to stools must be educated; otherwise the kinship can go to someone else. If we educate our children, they can get better jobs and even if they travel, they will not have to suffer like their fathers”.

Some women have had to move to nearby urban centres where their children can have access to relatively better schools like ACAB in Brekum, and Christ the King in Sunyani. One respondent from Drobo told us:

“I have relocated to Sunyani where my two children attend Christ the King. It is a very good school.”

Some mothers also reported that they had employed the services of private tutors to help their children at home. The women generally agreed that non-resident fathers seldom discuss or help with the children's homework on phone or other school activities.

Conversely, the women generally agreed that the absence of a father figure was an important factor in the child's discipline, since some of the children often flout their mother's authority and disrespect them. This however was not in agreement with the finding of the survey where most respondents indicated that their children are very often of good behaviour. In addition, some mothers during the interview and during the group discussion reported that they sometimes report the behaviours of the children to their fathers so as to get them disciplined. The father's way of disciplining in that case may take the form of threats and withdrawal of benefits and gifts from the children. It could also be a promise of a gift for good behaviour.

The study also sought to examine whether the long duration of father absence accounted for differences in girls and boys externalizing behaviours. The mothers indicated that longer duration of father absence did not influence the children, but it was the absence of the father itself that was the challenge. The mothers indicated that very often, it was their brothers who played the role of disciplinarians. The mothers again reported that because girls were docile by nature, it was easier to control them than boys. This accounted for boys being more likely to externalize behaviours than girls.

The mothers again reported that the non-resident father's intensity of contact with the left-behind wife and children in terms of frequency of visits is minimal. The women explained that the difficulty in securing their documentation in the receiving country due to their irregular status makes it impossible for fathers to visit often. A respondent in the Nyame cluster revealed that:

“We are told that times are difficult over there. Now the immigration refuses that we join them there. They are still trying anyway and we are waiting for them to take us along.”

The women further explained that the cost of travelling is another factor that hinders irregular migrants' visits. This is due to their inability to secure well-paid jobs because of their low educational levels. Very few migrants had visited their left-behind families in past 12 months and respondents explained Migrants usually visit during the sickness and death of a parent or close relative or marriage.

The women also explained that when the migrant was unable to visit, he would send goods to his left-behind wife and children whenever he could. This is to say that the non-resident father may compensate for his absence by sending goods to his wife and children, showing he cares. The goods he sends may be personal effects for his family or used goods meant for sale. These may include among others electronic appliances, clothing and other household items. For the families that have adopted the conventional nuclear family system, it was reported that they spend more time with their children, especially the boys since the traditional notion of gender does not encourage girls to follow their fathers out, in social activities such as attending church service and occasions and visiting relatives together. Girls therefore spend less time than boys with their fathers outside the home. However, the activities non-resident parents engage in with their children are mostly social with very little participation in their school activities.

The women generally reported that it was common for all children to tell lies or steal at home. They argued that all children to some extent did this, yet did not admit this of their children. They explained because children of migrants see themselves as from an elite background within the social setting, they can be stubborn. As commonly known among the indigenes, 'bogga ba' or 'dada ba' meaning migrant's child, is a term associated with prestige. This social recognition in turn may reinforce their self esteem and limits their tendency for depression.

This notwithstanding, it may also cause low self esteem and depression in the child when other people refer to their father's absence as a rejection of the child. The state of mind of the child can be influenced by the father's absence. One woman interviewed in the Kwame Ninsin cluster whose husband had travelled abroad at the beginning of the conception of their 13 year-old daughter had this to say:

"To be honest, i feel pity for my daughter at times. Once, she returned from school crying. When I asked her, she told me her friend said her father has not taken her abroad because he didn't like her... and it is for the same reason that he does not come home."

The woman added:

"It saddens me to constantly have to assure her that her father will be coming. She is now 13 and the two of them have not met yet. Her reaction at times makes me cry. What can I do when she keeps asking me if she will ever see her father?"

She further explained that her daughter's depression is more seen after talking with their father or upon hearing news of the arrival of another non-resident father. With the few exceptions reported, the mothers reported that left-behind children did not show much signs of depression.

They argued that:

"Every child had his good and bad days. Some are difficult children; others are easy to deal with. I don't think they are too different from the others. They do wrong and when they are disciplined, they get back on track. That is how children learn."

Some mothers during the Drobo discussion argued that the recognition their children enjoyed in the society, especially among their peers gives them high self-esteem. Yet, some others both

during the interviews and the group discussions did not agree with this. They maintained that social recognition had no part in the child's behaviour, but rather, his inclination to obey 'the elderly'. The respondents also revealed that often, children who had not met their biological fathers nor had very little remembrance of their fathers due to the long periods of separation were sad and worried about their father's absence, had low self-esteem and showed signs of depression.

It is worth noting however, that the children considered in this study were of the ages of 6 to 12 years. They still stay with their mothers with all the care and may not be associated with the problems that set in with adolescence. They have not yet exhibited signs of delinquency shown when children are away from their parents. At this age, they have all the social and emotional parental support. Secondly, the study was based on mothers' report only. As such, there may be much over-reporting or underreporting of facts due to the high perception society gives to 'Bogga' families.

Conclusion

From the in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions, it was reported that non-resident fathers basically contribute financially and provide goods to their children. However, socialization and other instrumental contributions to academics especially are usually non-existent in father-child relationships. Though the phenomenon of irregular migration is on a very large scale in Ghana, very little research has been conducted on the impact of this practice.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Given that the phenomenon of non-resident fathering has increased in recent years due to recent high incidence of irregular migration in Ghana, the aim of this study was to explore the relationship between the non-resident father's involvement and the wellbeing of the left-behind child in the Drobo Traditional Area. Understanding the association between non-resident fathering and child wellbeing will shed light on the changes brought about as a result of distance and time in the African family.

Review of study objectives

Many factors including mother characteristics, child characteristics and child-father history have been found to influence migrant father's involvement with children. Mother's characteristic such as marital relationship with migrant father has been found to facilitate father involvement with children (Kanaiaupuni, 2000). This study therefore specifically sought to find out first and foremost if children whose mothers are married receive higher levels of contact from the non-resident father than children whose mothers are in consensual relationships.

Second, non-resident migrant father's verbal communication has been found to be a vital part of migrant father's involvement with the left-behind family. This study sought to explore whether or not the non-resident father's verbal communication influences the children's academic performance.

Third, the psychological processes in transnational families have been found to be gendered (Aranda, 2003). This study also sought to explore if the level of contact of the non-resident father affects girls' internalizing behaviour more than boys' internalizing behaviour.

Finally, the study sought to find out if the non-resident father's over-prolonged stay abroad affects boys' externalizing behaviour more than girls externalizing behaviour.

Discussion

In the first instance, contrary to claims that a mother is likely to facilitate non-resident father contact with left-behind children if he is her husband (Landale & Oropesa, 2001; King et al., 2004;), this study found no support no differences in the level of father's contact as a result of the parents marital type. This finding is supported during the interviews when it was revealed that non-resident fathers remit their left-behind families irrespective of the type of marital union they had with their partners, thus supporting Furstenberg, Morgan, and Allison (1987) and King (1994). The study also found out that contact in terms of visitation was minimal due to lack of documentation and travel costs. The study however found that contact in transnational families is not limited to visitation but depended to a large extent on "staying in touch" by sending goods to left-behind families.

Secondly, the findings of this study reveal that migrant fathers' periodic verbal communication was negatively associated with children's academic performance. The study found that non-resident father's verbal communication did not improve outcomes for the child's academics because as verbal communication between non-resident father and child increases, academic performance decreases. This finding supports Parrenas, (2005) who found that verbal communication though frequent in transnational families does not centre on the children's

academics and is social and superficial rather than school-related. Amato, King & Harris (1998) also found that having a close bond may be effective in monitoring, communicating and teaching children. However, mothers indicated that migrant fathers were not involved in their children's academics aside paying for the costs involved.

The findings further supports other studies in that, when non-resident fathers come together with their children, the time they spend together varies substantially in content and quality. Because of the limitations of time and distance, most non-resident fathers spend a majority of the time with their children in leisure activities such as attending religious service together. According to Hawkins, Amato & King, (2007), activities such as playing sports and watching movies—in the absence of other fathering behaviours—may not be related to children's well-being. Other types of father involvement, such as working on school projects and helping in homework may be more directly related to children's educational development, yet most fathers in this study do not engage in such activities with their children.

Thirdly, this study found no differences in boys and girls internalizing behaviour over non-resident migrant father's level of contact. The findings are contrary to studies that report that the prevalence of internalizing disorders is known to vary based on the gender of the child across diverse cultural contexts (Crinjen et al., 1997). Although fathers spend more time with boys when they come home, it was normal for the girls since they have inculcated the traditional norms of gender socialization which demanded the practice. To the mothers, signs of depression were common among both genders based on the child's temperament. The findings supports Hawkins, Amato & King (2007) who claimed that a relationship between gender and internalizing behaviours is less consistent. Similar to studies based on large national samples

(Furstenberg, Morgan, and Allison 1987; King 1994), this study found a weak negative association between father's contact and child internalizing behaviour. However, differences in boys and girls levels of internalizing behaviour as a result of father contact were not supported by this study. It also found that though visitation was not high, the father sends goods often and the social recognition accorded by the society when the family engages in activities together gives the child a sense of belonging and care from his parents thus reducing the child's tendency to internalise behaviour.

Finally, the study found no differences in boys and girls externalising behaviour over long duration of father absence. This is contrary to Hawkins, Amato & King, (2007) and Crinjen et al., (1997), who provided support for the relationship between gender and externalizing disorders. Mothers explained that because girls were docile, they were less likely to externalise behaviour than boys who were more aggressive. Furthermore, contrary to Parrenas (2008), migrant men do not maintain their disciplinarian roles over the distance. Mothers indicated that the role of disciplining the child became the responsibility of the male kin in the household. Thus, duration of absence was not the factor but the absence of the father itself was the reason for children to behave unruly. Nobles, (2011) found that children of migrant fathers receive fewer parenting contributions if their father has been absent for 3 years or more than if he has been absent for a shorter period of time. Interestingly, this study found that most of the children (61) who had higher levels of externalised behaviours had fathers who had been away for 4 to 10 years. This could mean that the longer the father stayed away from home, the more the possibility of children behaviour unruly.

Problems of the study

Like all studies, this study contains some limitations. First, the independent and dependent variables are derived from interviews and questionnaire with mothers only. Matters arising from the fieldwork indicate that having the perception of other sources such as care-givers fathers, children and teachers would give a holistic view of the situation.

Second, it is possible that omitted variables like father characteristics and family relationship quality may affect active parenting on the part of non-resident fathers as well as child outcomes.

Finally, I stress that this study—based on survey data—cannot establish the causal direction between variables with certainty. All I can claim is that these results for non-resident fathers' involvement and child wellbeing are more consistent with a mothers' perception of migrant fathers' involvement in child wellbeing.

Conclusion

This study contributes to a growing literature that suggests the importance of non-resident father's involvement in child wellbeing. As per the objectives i set myself to achieve, the findings are such that mothers' perceive that:

- 1) The level of contact received by children is not determined by the marital type between mother and migrant father because it a contract of nurturer-provider relationship, where the father is the provider and the mother the caregiver in bringing up the child..
- 2) The migrant father's verbal communication does not improve the child academic performance because the content of the communication is not school-related.

- 3) The migrant father's level of contact does not affect girls and boys self esteem and depression differently, although fathers spend more time interacting with boys than girls due to traditional gender norms of socialization.
- 4) The migrant father's over-prolonged stay abroad does not affect boys' and girls' delinquent and violent behaviours differently. The absence of the father is a motivating factor for indiscipline among children.

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Recommendations

Transnational family arrangements now affect millions of children worldwide. This study suggests that some of these children may suffer psychological, emotional and social distress as a result of separation from the father. As such, fathers could contribute more towards better child outcomes by being involved in their child's discipline, academics, psychological and social wellbeing.

Since the study was mainly exploratory, it did not fill in so much in literature but makes suggestions for further research to explore:

- a) Other possible factors which are likely to impact the child's wellbeing such as the social, emotional and health aspects.
- b) The dynamics of mothers' adaptation strategies in dealing with the absence of the father, since they usually are the caregivers.
- c) The socio-cultural factors which are important to developmental outcomes of left-behind children.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for mothers on family wellbeing

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This study is part of an academic exercise for a master's degree at KNUST. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be informed that your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous and will only be used for this purpose. Please answer all the questions.

SECTION A

Socio-demographic characteristics

Please indicate the answer by crossing the box in front of the corresponding answer.

1. Age

1) 18-25 ☐

2) 26-33 ☐

3) 34-41 ☐

4) 42-49 ☐

5) 50 and above ☐

2. Number of children

1) 0 ☐

2) 1 ☐

3) 2 ☐

4) 3 ☐

5) 4 or more ☐

3. Type of marital union

1) Wedded ☐

2) Engaged ☐

3) Introduced ☐

4) Courtship ☐

4. Duration of father's absence

1) Exactly 1 year ☐

2) between 1-4 years ☐

3) between 4-7 years ☐

4) Between 7-10 years ☐

5) 10 years and over ☐

SECTION B

Non-resident father's involvement may take diverse forms. Please read every statement carefully and rate on how often this is true of you. Circle the corresponding number. There is no right or wrong answer.

Verbal Communication

1= extremely true of me

2= very true of me

3= true of me

4= slightly true of me

5=not at all true of me

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. My husband and I talk about problems I'm having at home. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. My husband and I talk about our feelings on phone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. My husband and I talk about the children's discipline | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. My husband and I talk about the children's school grades | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. my children talk with their father about their school work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. my husband disciplines the children over the phone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. My kids talk to their dad about how they feel about his absence. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. I feel that we spend enough time on phone every week. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Father's Contact

1= never

2= once

3= 2 times

4=3 times

5= 4 or more times

In the past 12 months:

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. How many times has your husband visited? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. How many times did you receive goods from him? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. How many times did you go shopping together? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. How many times did you attend an event together? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. How many times do you talk to your husband in a month? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SECTION C

Non-resident father's involvement may affect the wellbeing of the left behind children. Please read the statements carefully and indicate by circling the corresponding number what you think is true of your child. There are no right or wrong answers. Please use the scale provided.

CHILD WELLBEING

a) Externalising problems

Delinquency

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1= Never
2= not so often
3= often
4= quite often
5= very often

In the past 12 months, how many times did your child do any of the following?

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18. Deliberately damaged property that did not belong to him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. He lied about his whereabouts or who he was with. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. He stole something. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. He was hostile towards others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Violent behaviour

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22. He screamed in a public place | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. He got in a fight | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. He used a stick to threaten someone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. He insulted elderly people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

b) Internalizing problems

Depressive symptoms

In the past week, how often has this been true of your child:

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26. He was unusually afraid of people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. He was unusually quiet | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. He cried when he was not happy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. He was worried about his father's absence | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. He felt sad | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Self esteem

5= very often
4= quite often
3= often
2= not so often
1= never

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 31. He felt he was just as good as other people | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 32. He was happy | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 33. He feels he has a lot of good qualities | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 34. He likes himself the way he is. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| c) Academic achievement | | | | | |
| 35. How often does your child take part in sports? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 36. How often does your child read outside school? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 37. How often does your child do his homework? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

38. What were your child's grades in the following subjects last term?

1=E or lower

2= D

3= C

4= B

5= A

a) English	1	2	3	4	5
b) Mathematics	1	2	3	4	5
c) Science	1	2	3	4	5
d) Social studies.	1	2	3	4	5

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Thank you for participating in making this study a success. May God richly bless you



Appendix B

Translated questionnaire

Appendix B

Bua ns[mfua yi a ediso] yi.

1. Me ne me kunu di nk]m] efa efie nsemsem eho
2. Me ne me kunu di nk]m] efa yen atinka ho
3. Me ne me kunu di nk]m] efa mm]fra no ntitie ho
4. Me ne kunu di nk]m] efa mm]fra no mm]denb] w] sukuumu
5. Me mma no ne won papa di nk]m] efa sukuu dwumadie ho
6. Me kunu tea mm]frano wo ahoma tr]f]o so
7. Me mm]fra no ne w]n papa di nk]m] fa n'akwantuo ne ho
8. Me ne me kunu nya mmere pa di nk]m] fa abusua yi ho naw]twee biara.
9. Mpre dudu] sen na wo kunu ba fie?
10. Mpre dudu] sen na wo kunu mane wo]?
11. Mpre dudu] sen na wone abusua no pie abom?
12. Mpre dudu] sen na wone abusua no ako afahye ase?
13. Mpre dudo sen na wone wo kunu di nk]m] bosome biara mu?

Mpre dudu] sen na womma ye nia edidiso] yi?

14. Ohyeda see adee a enye nede.
15. Odii ntr] efaa babia]k]]ye ho
16. }wiaa adee
17. }npe nipa.
18. Ne bo fuu wo badwam.
19. }koo nt]kwa

20. }de ebo] hunahuna obi.

21. Odii mmpaninfo] atem

22. }taa suro nipa

23. Na waye din.

24. Osunye mmere a na biribi hano

25. }kasa faa ne papa akwantuo no ho

26. Ne were hoye

27. Na wohunu se]ne afufur] ye pe

28. Na nani agye

29. Wo hunuu se nniema pa w] ne mu

30. Nani gyee ne ho

31. Mpre sen na wo ba no sua adee w] abre a wap]n sukuu?

32. Mpre sen na w] ye dwumadie a w]di maa no w] sukuu mu?

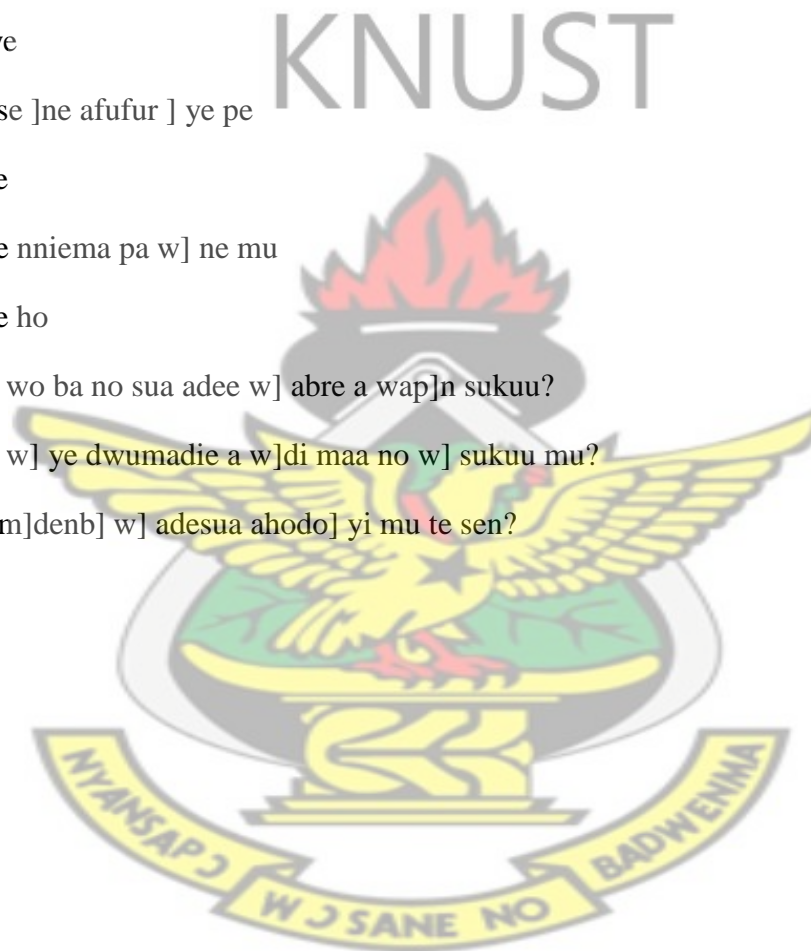
33. Wo ba no mm]denb] w] adesua ahodo] yi mu te sen?

English

Mathematics

Science

Core science



Appendix C

Standard code of instructions

You are about to answer some very simple questions in this questionnaire which is divided into 3 sections.

Section A consists of 4 demographic questions. Tick the appropriate box.

Section B consists of 13 questions on father involvement and section consists of 25 questions on child wellbeing. Read each item carefully and indicate by circling the answer that mostly applies to you.

There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer all questions.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation.



Appendix D

Informed consent form

Madame,

You are being asked to participate in a research study of non-resident migrant father's involvement in child wellbeing in the Drobo Traditional Area. You will be required to answer a series of questions on a questionnaire and you may be called to participate in a group discussion.

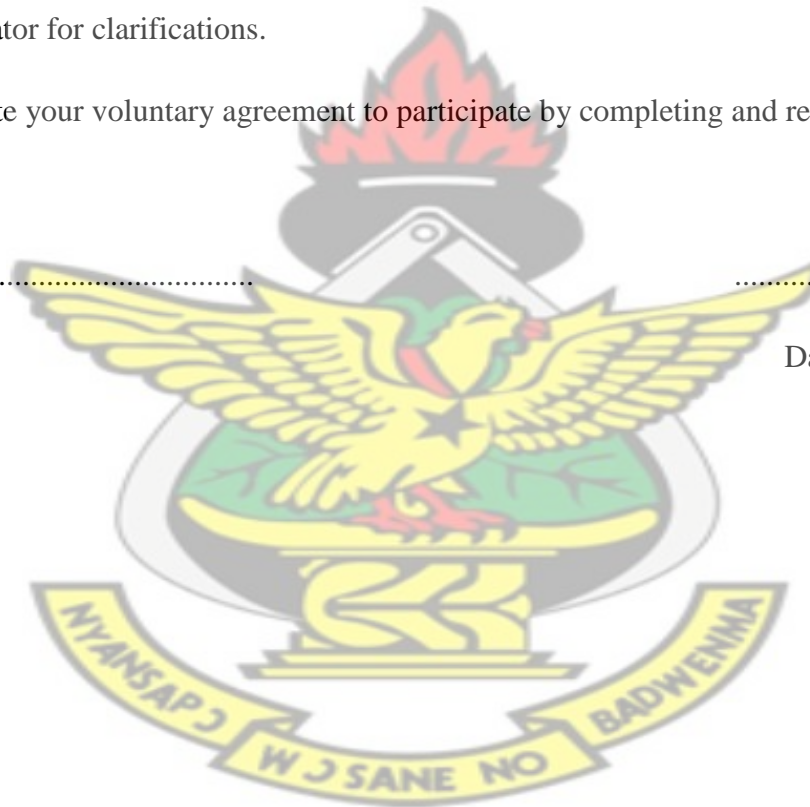
Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to say no and you may change your mind at any time to withdraw.

If you have questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, you may ask the investigator for clarifications.

You may indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this form.

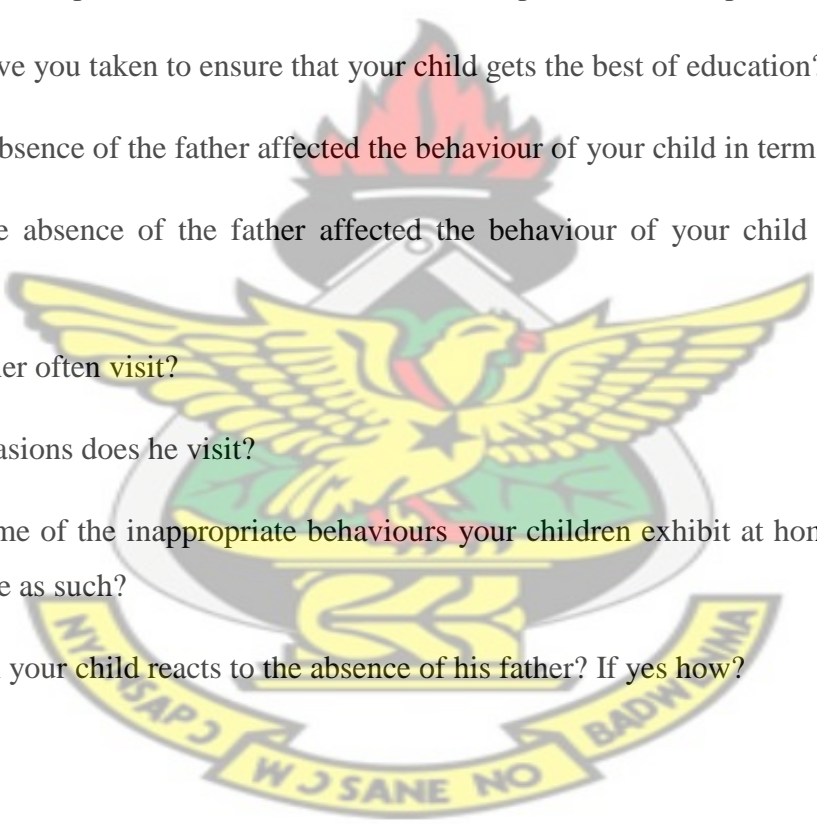
.....
Signature

.....
Date



Appendix E

Interview guide

1. In what ways does your husband contribute to the wellbeing of your child?
 2. What forms of non-financial contributions does he give?
 3. What is the financial contribution used for?
 4. What role does your husband play in your child's education?
 5. What is the content of your husband's communication with your child?
 6. How often does your husband engage in activities with your child when he comes over?
 7. How did your child perform at school last term? Can I please see his report?
 8. What steps have you taken to ensure that your child gets the best of education?
 9. How has the absence of the father affected the behaviour of your child in terms of discipline?
 10. How has the absence of the father affected the behaviour of your child in terms of self esteem?
 11. Does the father often visit?
 12. On what occasions does he visit?
 13. What are some of the inappropriate behaviours your children exhibit at home? Why do you think they behave as such?
 14. Do you think your child reacts to the absence of his father? If yes how?
- 

Appendix F

Focus group discussion guide

1. What are the possible factors that condition migrant father's involvement with the left-behind wife and children?
2. How does father communication influence the academic achievement of children?
3. Do children of migrant men show signs of depression as a result of their father's absence?
4. Do children of migrant men show signs of violence and delinquency as a result of the long period of father-absence?
5. Do boys show signs of violence and depression differently?

