

**CONTEMPORARY MOTHERS ROLE:
IMPLICATION FOR CHILD (REN) UPBRINGING**

EFUA .E. AGYIRE-TETTEY (Ph.D)

09/10/2017



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

Department of Social Work

BACKGROUND

- Work and family life roles have become essential features of humanity played by both men and women, with a large number of people engaged in activities outside the typical family system.
- The past half century has witnessed a huge rise in the number of women in paid work globally such that the rush of women into the workforce stands against traditional thinking that women must choose between family and career(Hochschild, 2000)
- Globally it is reported that, in spite of changing social norms, women still tend to hold the bulk of responsibility for running a household, raising children and having a career (Cabrera, 2009).



BACKGROUND

- The growth of working mothers in recent times is viewed as the feminization of the labour market and during the days of industrialization, housework was considered solely the woman's domain, a phenomenon that has evolved over the years due to social change (Heilman and Okimoto, 2008)

STATISTICS

- 61% global average of working mothers (Statistic Brain, 2015).
- 38% of women were active in the work force in 1995,
- 51% of women in 2001 were economically active (Casale, 2004).
- 44.0% economically active in Ghana (2010, Census) whereas



BACKGROUND

- 19.2 percent were economically inactive (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).
- An indication of a higher concentration of working mothers in recent years
- Particularly, in Africa and most parts of sub-Saharan Africa, women have been reported to spend more time at work than men do thereby affecting the amount of time they spend on childcare (Women's Work: Mothers, children and the global children crisis, 2016).
- Generally the statistics highlight the that the world is facing a hidden childcare crisis where mothers spend more time at the workplace.



BACKGROUND

- The aim of this paper is to understand the changing role of mothers in Ghana and its impact on child upbringing, highlighting the relevance of decolonization and the role of African/Ghanaian social workers to utilise indigenous knowledge and values to support mothers with their changing roles.

Specifically;

- Perception of most contemporary working mothers
- Challenges faced in combining both work and motherhood and social workers role to help mothers cope.



METHODOLOGY

Research Design- qualitative to get the details of the meaning of participant's experiences and also uncovers their lived world experience

Sampling method- purposive sampling

- Purposive sampling method helped with particular features which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and questions which the researcher wishes to study.

Target population

- Formal and Informal mothers

Sampling Size- 15

Data Collection Instruments- Semi structure interview

Data collection procedure: Face to face interview



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic characteristics respondents

Category of working mothers/	Age ranges of working mothers (years)	Range of number of children/ age ranges of children
Formal sector (6)	27-48	1-2 children (6 months to 21years)
Informal sector (9)	24-53	1-6 children (6 months to 30 years)

Working mothers engaged in formal and informal



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Perceptions of contemporary working

Themes/Quotes	Discussions
<p>Evolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determinants<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Socioeconomic• Changes in Family Structure• Increasing Single Mother Homes• The value of education families• Desires of mothers to pursue career paths• A boredom-free mechanism•••	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The working mothers attributed their need for work to the increasing difficulties in the economy as result of meeting general standards of living and to ease the burdens of their partners and most importantly to the single mother to earn enough money to care for their children.• The gradual breakdown of the extended family system result in mothers working to support their children through shared responsibilities in the house.• Most working mothers identified the need to be recognized as career women in society and also attributed the desire for career paths to be as a result of the time

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Challenges of contemporary mother

Themes	Discussions
<p>Balancing work, child and home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of a sense of responsibility(Positive)• Bonding and attachment• possibility of negative peer influence• Inadequate Socialization and Less Supervision• 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combining the two distinct roles of work is are fundamentally difficult and stressful which require an appropriate balance for effective and efficient performance.• Some choose lower paying jobs or self-employment in order to adequately see to the well-being of their children. Also there is decline in job performance• Working mothers faced high vulnerability based on a self-evaluation and perception of less involvement with their children even when they are able to spend quality time with them.• Resulting in many children lose their sense of responsibility and guidance leading to engaging in vices such as juvenile delinquency, premarital sex and many others that block their chances for

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The role of social workers

- Colonialism in many ways impacted the African continent both positively and negatively.
- Negative effects have had a widespread impact over the years such as; the dilution of the African/Ghanaian culture in areas breakdown of the extended family, reduced value for parenting and a disregard for tradition.
- Child raising in contemporary Ghana has lost its touch on the past where more attention was paid by all members of a community to the role of a child.
- Currently there is a state of individualistic mindset that has crept into the way of living of many Ghanaian homes together with the increasing patterns of nuclear families.



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The role of social workers

- Emphasizing on the changes in motherhood after colonization, there is the need to recognise the roles of social workers in ensuring that childcare practices of working mothers suit the values and belief of the Ghanaian culture in order to do away with the negative motherhood practices that have been acquired through colonialism
- Social workers in Africa/Ghana need to revisit the past to draw important lessons, methods and ideas in performing their duty
- A proper comparison of the past with current times will provoke ones attention to the folklores, teachings and taboos that were useful in child raising to improve the childcare



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The role of social workers

practices in current times to suit the Ghanaian cultural or indigenous context.

- In the field of the social work practice, it is important to consider the values and beliefs of the people they are working with, particularly practicing in the African context.
- Given support to contemporary mothers due to changes in their roles, social work practitioners must consider the world view of mothers and children which is constructed within an historical and cultural frame of reference.
- Any attempt to inappropriate modelling from the West may lead to misunderstanding of the changing roles of contemporary mothers and may not work for Africa/Ghana,



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The role of social workers

- Even though, African social work practitioners can learn from the western model of practice, they should consider the fact that, the challenges associated with the changing roles is closely tied into local conditions and cultures that the importation of practices from the west is fraught with difficulties.
- In ensuring that the effect of decolonization in childcare is complete, it is important for practitioners utilise indigenous knowledge and values to support the mothers with their changing roles

