

Johnny Andoh-Arthur

Perception of Psychological Sense of Community among Adolescents: A Qualitative Study of Rural and Urban Communities in Ghana.

Master's thesis in Human Development

Trondheim, June 2011



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NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY
MANAGEMENT

INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY

MASTER THESIS

**Perception of Psychological Sense of Community among
Adolescents: A Qualitative Study of Rural and Urban Communities
in Ghana.**

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of
Philosophy degree in Human Development, Institute of Psychology, Norwegian
University of Science and Technology, Trondheim.

June 2011

Author

JOHNNY ANDOH-ARTHUR

DECLARATION

I, Johnny Andoh-Arthur, declare that except for references to other people's work which are duly acknowledged, I single handedly undertook this research work under the supervision of Prof. Birthe Loa Knizek at the Institute of Psychology of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Trondheim-Norway, during the 2010/2011 academic year. In accordance with NTNU's academic regulations, this work has neither been submitted in whole nor in part for any degree in this University or elsewhere.

Signed:

Date:.....

Johnny Andoh-Arthur

(Student)

This work has been submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Mphil degree at the Institute of Psychology, NTNU with my approval

Signed:

Date:.....

Prof. Birthe Loa Knizek

(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated first to my mother Elizabeth Winifred Anderson. Thank you Mum, for your tireless efforts and avowed aim to see me climb the academic ladder to its pinnacle within all the constraints. Mum, I am not unaware of the great sacrifices you made for me as a single mother. I love you.

Sweet and virtuous friend and wife Nyame Ye Adom, I dedicate this work to you as well. I cannot forget your sleepless nights spent proofreading the work and praying for a successful completion of my programme here in Norway. Your deep seated love and care, your encouragements and support are legendary. ‘He who finds a wife indeed finds a good thing and obtains favour as the scripture says.

To my informants, this work is dedicated to you. Together with you and all the young persons, Ghana our beloved country could have a brighter future.

To the Chiefs and people of Anomabu Traditional Area, I make a special dedication of this work to you all.

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ABSTRACT

The construct psychological sense of community has assumed prominence in research within the field of Community Psychology. Many have studied the construct in a variety of settings with different groups of people to understand how the construct means in such settings for such people. While admitting that this has contributed to deepening understanding of the construct in the scholarly world, not much has been done regarding how the construct is perceived within non - Western contexts especially Africa. Although the construct has been found to hold the same relevance for adolescents as for adults, little has been done to replicate this finding using adolescents as referents. This study aimed at qualitatively exploring perception of psychological sense of community among adolescents in rural and urban areas of Ghana. Data was drawn from the experiences of thirty (30) adolescents in Ghana through focus group interviews and personal interviews with the aid of a semi-structured interview questionnaire. Results from the analysis using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), revealed three interrelated themes: perception of community, belongingness, and effect of community on persons, as underlying adolescents' perception of psychological sense of community in Ghana. The findings are discussed in the light of relevant theories and concepts as well as related studies. Implications for community psychology praxis and further studies are also discussed and conclusion given.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	I
Dedication.....	II
Acknowledgements.....	III - IV
Abstract.....	V
Introduction	1
1.1.0. Background.....	1 – 3
1.2.0. Personhood and the Community	3 – 7
1.3.0. Aims and Objectives.....	7 – 8
1.4.0. Research Questions.....	8
1.5.0. Rationale for the Study.....	8 – 9
1.6.0. Relevance of the Study.....	9 – 10
1.7.0. Operational Definition.....	10
2.0. Chapter Two.....	11
Theoretical Background.....	11
2.1.0. Theory of Community.....	11 – 13
2.2.0. Psychological Sense of Community	13 – 14
2.2.1. McMillan and Chavis Model (1986).....	14 – 17
2.2.2. Kim and Kaplan Model (2004).....	17 – 21
2.2.3. Tertaglia Model (2006).....	22 – 23
2.3.0. Review of Related Studies.....	23
2.3.1. Perception of Community.....	23 – 24
2.3.2 Psychological Sense of Community.....	24
2.3.3 Psychological Sense of community and Wellbeing.....	25 – 26

2.3.4 Psychological Sense of community and personality variables.....	26 – 28
2.3.5. Psychological sense of community and choice of group membership.....	28
2.5.0. Related Theories.....	29
2.5.1. Belongingness.....	29 – 30
2.5.2. Identification.....	31 – 32
2.6.0. Related Concepts.....	32
2.6.1. Participation.....	33
2.6.2. Social Interaction.....	33 – 34
2.6.3. Attachment to community.....	34 – 35
2.6.4. Social Support.....	35 – 36
Chapter Three.....	37
Methodology.....	37
3.1.0. Aims of the Study.....	37
3.1.1. Design.....	37 – 38
3.1.2. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).....	38
3.2.0. Study Setting.....	39
3.2.1. Urban Setting.....	40
3.2.2. Rural Setting.....	41
3.2.3. Semi Urban Setting.....	41 - 42
3.3.0. Sampling Consideration.....	42 – 43
3.3.1. Informed Consent.....	43
3.3.2. Sample.....	43 – 44
3.4.0. Data Collection.....	44

3.4.1 Focused Group Interview.....	44 – 45
3.4.2 Personal Interview.....	45
3.4.3. Materials.....	45 – 46
3.4.3. Observation during the Interviewing.....	46 – 47
3.5.0. Transcription.....	48
3.6.0 Reliability and Validity.....	48 – 50
3.7.0 Ethical Consideration.....	50
3.7.1. Confidentiality.....	50
3.7.2. Trust.....	50 – 51
Chapter Four.....	52
Result and Discussion.....	52
4.1.0. Perception of ‘Community’.....	52
4.1.1. Locality.....	52 – 55
4.1.3. Social Organisation.....	55 – 57
4.1.4. Culture.....	58 – 61
4.2.0. Belongingness.....	61 – 62
4.2.1. Dependency.....	62 – 65
4.2.2. Reciprocal obligation.....	65 – 68
4.2.3. Responsibility.....	68 – 72
4.2.4. Insurance.....	72 – 75
4.3.0. Effects on the individual.....	75
4.3.1. Identity.....	75 – 79
4.3.2. Emotional Attachment.....	79 – 83
4.3.4. Development/Challenge of Potential.....	83 – 87

4.3.3. Incorporation into the Universal-Hope.....	87 – 90
Chapter Five	91
General Discussion and Conclusion.....	91
5.1.0. Overview.....	91
5.1.1. Psychological Sense of Community.....	91 – 94
5.1.2. Rural Area.....	94 – 95
5.1.3. Urban Area.....	95 – 96
5.1.4. The Semi Urban Area.....	96 – 97
5.1.5. Methodological Issues.....	97
5.2.0. Weaknesses.....	97 – 98
5.3.0. Strengths.....	98
5.4.0. Potentials and Future Directions.....	99
5.4.1. Community Psychological Praxis.....	99 – 101
5.4.2. Research on Psychological Sense of Community.....	101 – 102
5.5.0. Conclusion.....	102 – 103
References.....	104 - 118
Appendices.....	119
Appendix I: Semi structured interview Guide.....	119 - 120
Appendix II: Informed consent form.....	121 - 123
Appendix III: Letter of consent to parent/Guardian of Informant.....	124 - 126
Appendix IV: Letter of ethical clearance from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) Norway.....	127
Appendix V: Letter of Approval from the Psychology Department, University of Ghana, Legon-Ghana.....	128

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Individual defined by reference to the environing community (Menkiti, 1984)

Figure 2: Individual taking pre-eminence over the community

Figure 3: Gyekye (2003) on moderate communalism

Figure 4: African and Western views of society (Adopted from Menkiti, 1984)

Figure 5: A model of relationships among domains of sense of community (Kim & Kaplan, 2004)

Figure 6: A model of perception of psychological sense of community among adolescents in Ghana.

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1: Map of Africa with Ghana

Map 2: Map of Greater Accra Region of Ghana

LIST OF PICTURES

Picture 1: View of Accra

Picture 2: View of a rural area in Ghana

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AMA: Accra Metropolitan Authority

ERP: Educational Reform Programme

FCUBE: Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education

FGI: Focused Group Interview

GoG: Government of Ghana

GSS: Ghana Statistical Service

GTB: Ghana Tourist Board.

IPA: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

JHS: Junior High School

MMA: Mfantseman Municipal Assembly

MoE: Ministry of Education

MOYS: Ministry of Youth and Sports

NYC: National Youth Council

PAR: Participatory Action Research

PHC: Population and Housing Census.

SHS: Senior High School

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 Background

The idea that man has lived in social groups and belongs to communities has gained growing appreciation in the last decades (Fisher, Sonn & Bishop, 2002). Psychological commitments to such communities and groups remain essential to be explored in order to fully understand behaviour and attitudes of people within their settings.

Writing extensively in his seminal work on the construct psychological sense of community, Seymour Sarason (1974), believed that psychological sense of community held the key to one of society's most pressing problems: the dark side of individualism, which he saw manifest as alienation, selfishness and despair (as cited in Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2001). Since the work of Sarason (1974), sense of community¹ has received attention in many fields; its absence is noted in the urban violence and its presence is recognised in the support estranged neighbours give each other in times of disaster (Pretty, Conroy, Dugay, Fowler & Williams, 1996). The task of defining sense of community, however, has not been simple; many researchers find the construct elusive and frustrating. (Bess, Fisher, Sonn & Bishop, 2002). Sarason admitted "the concept, although intuitively obvious, was not a familiar one in psychology. It does not sound precise; it obviously reflects value judgement and does not sound compatible with hard sciences" (Sarason, 1974, p.156). Chipuer and Pretty's (1999) review of sense of community literature also point to the lack of consensus over whether the construct is a cognition, a behaviour, an individual affective state, an environmental condition or a spiritual dimension. Proposing a definition, McMillan and Chavis (1986) define it as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to

¹ Sense of community is used interchangeably with Psychological sense of community.

the group, and a shared faith that member's needs will be met through commitment to be together (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p.9).

Research in sense of community so far has mostly focused on the perceptions and experiences of the adults. However, concerns regarding the apparent lack of sense of community among adolescents in their neighbourhoods and schools have been raised (Pretty *et al*, 1996). A study by Pretty, Andrews, and Collett (1994) suggested however that sense of community may have the same relevance for adolescents' wellbeing as for adults. This finding gives a strong justification for a study into adolescents' perception of psychological sense of community which would contribute towards an understanding of the varying ways the community influences adolescent's lives. Apart from being predominantly focused on adults, there has been little attempt in previous research to explore sense of community from non-Western context, particularly Africa. Situating the study of psychological sense of community in the context of Africa is important for a number of reasons. One of the reasons is spawn from the belief that Africans, like other non-western people, are thought to have collectivistic self construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) which informs an important ethic of communalism in their socio- cultural life (Menkiti, 1984).

The environment, and for that matter the community, in which adolescents live is an important context of development. Bronfenbrenner (1994) in his ecological model of development argued "Human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate environment" (p. 38). It therefore may be expected that in the course of time, adolescents internalise values that sustain such complex reciprocal interactions between themselves and their environment and community. This may serve as basis for lasting affectionate ties with their communities and can also influence their attitudes, behaviour and overall perceptions of their community.

Orford (1992 as cited in Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005, p.21) for instance, has long argued that “studying people out of their social context leads to ‘blaming the victim’. Thus an attempt to understand adolescents’ sentiments with their communities in Africa in general and Ghana in particular with recourse to prevailing socio-cultural ethic is seen as a framework for providing insights into how they may perceive psychological sense of community. This may reduce if not totally eliminate, the tendency for the wanton blaming of adolescents within their communities. The unique perceptions adolescents of Ghana have of the construct under investigation may be well illuminated against the background of the African socio- ethical views on ‘personhood’ and ‘community’.

1.2.0 Personhood and the Community

Western views of man abstract specific features of individuals and then proceed to make it the defining or essential characteristic of Man. However, the African view of man is defined by reference to the environing community (Menkiti, 1984). This is summed up in the syllogistic statement “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am” (Mbiti, 1969, p.141). Menkiti corroborates further asserting:

The various societies found in traditional Africa routinely accept this fact that personhood is the sort of thing which has to be attained, and is attained in direct proportions as one participates in communal life through the discharge of the various obligations defined by one’s stations (Menkiti, 1984, p.176).

Community from the view of Menkiti (1984), Ikuenobi (2006) and Mbiti (1969) takes precedence over the individual and is comprised of collective social groupings. That is, the individual, being a component of the community, is organically tied in the community because that is where he or she derives an essence. This is illustrated by Figure 1 below

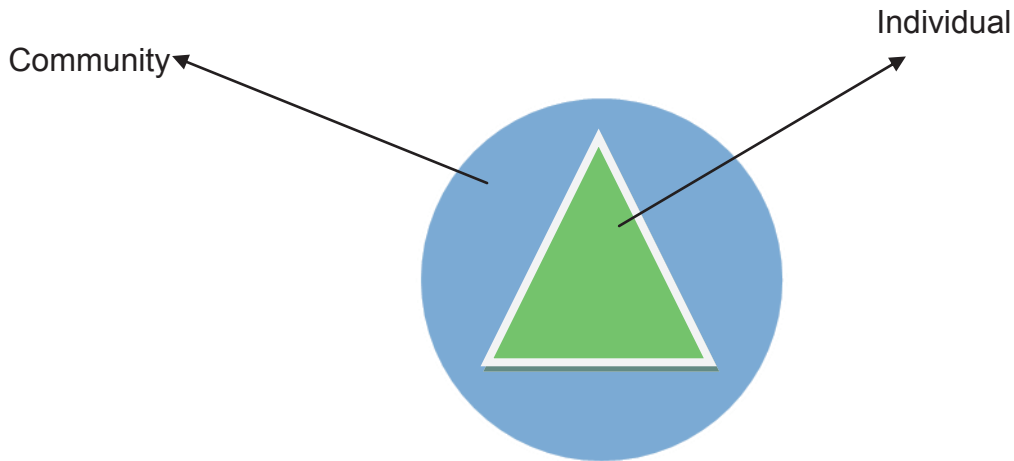


Figure 1. Individual defined by reference to envioning community (Menkiti, 1984)

There is an assumption of organic dimension to the relationship between the component individuals within the community. This is because from the figure 1 above, the individual belongs in the community. According to this view, community is composed as a collective social group. This sharply contrasts with the Western view of community which sees community as being composed of constituted social groups made up of non-organic bringing together of atomic individuals. From the writings of Western thinkers like John Rawls, specific individual attributes of the constituted people rather define the features of the community as illustrated in the Figure 2 below

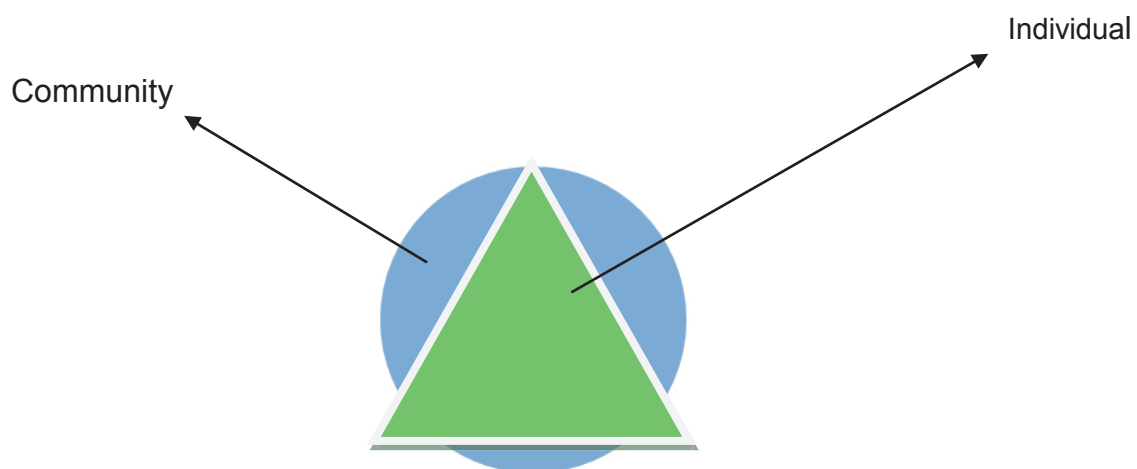


Figure 2. Individual taking pre-eminence over the community

Ikuenobi (2006) shares Menkiti's view by asserting that the normative conception of personhood in Africa is plausible because of the conception of community and its place in African people's normative conceptual scheme. Ikuenobi explains that the idea of community is a conceptual foundation on which most African ideas, beliefs, values, ontology, cosmology, and ways of life are grounded.

While this position is shared by many, opinions differ on the degree to which the community is rooted in the personhood of the African. Gyekye (1995) for instance, takes a rather moderate position arguing that "the African social order is, strictly speaking, neither purely communalistic nor purely individualistic" (Gyekye, 1995, p.154). "The idea of community in Africa implies a common good, which is not merely the combination of individual interests but shared values, working together to meet the necessities of life and a common humanity, and not merely a surrogate of total individual goods" (ibid). From the foregoing, Gyekye implies that notwithstanding the communal nature of African societies, there is an aspect of individualism within an African which is ontologically prior to the community. However as a member belonging in a community, through the vehicle of socialisation, aspects of one's life may become grafted into the shared values of the community as illustrated in the Figure 3 below.

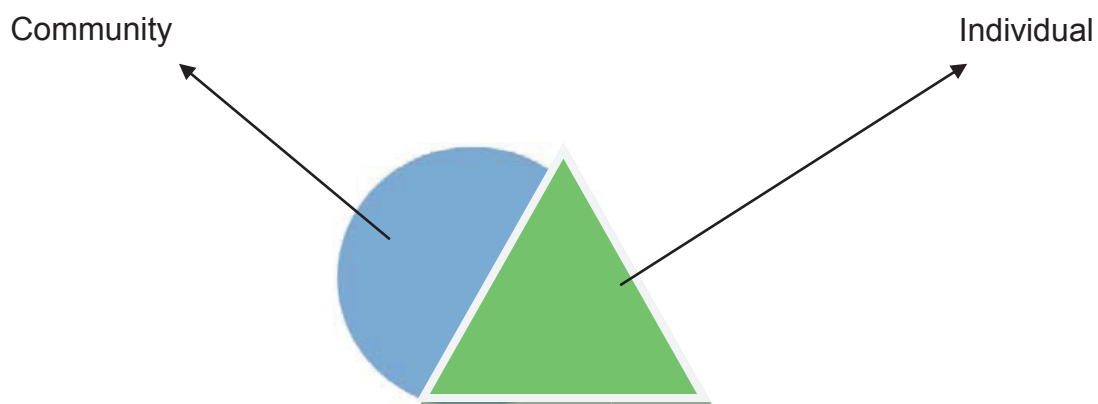


Figure 3. Gyekye (2003) on moderate communalism

Despite the middle ground position Gyekye takes in the personhood community argument, Ikuenobi (2006) maintain that communalism is a common element that characterises most African societies. The Western and African views on personhood and community could be illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 4.

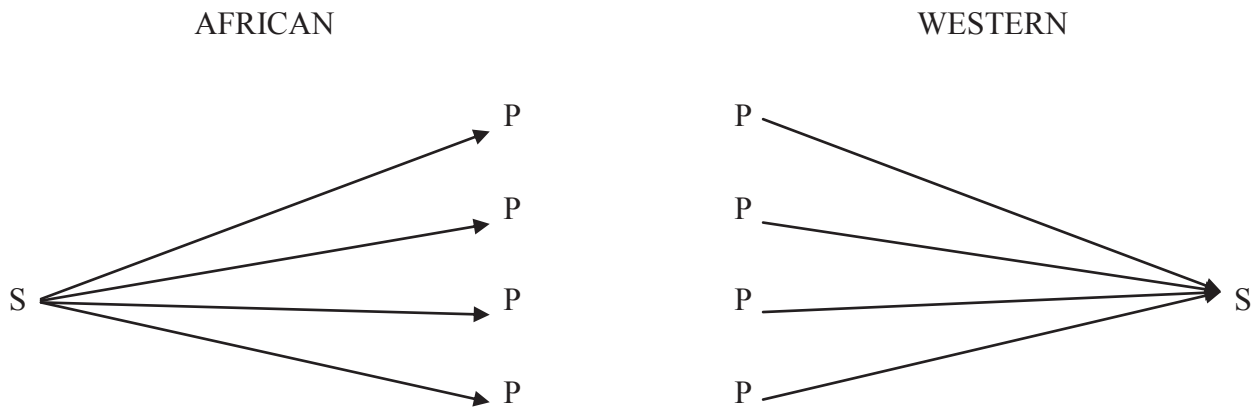


Figure 4: African and Western views of society (Adopted from Menkiti, 1984, p.180)

It can be seen from Figure 4 that whereas the African view asserts an ontological independence to human society, and moves from society to individuals, the opposite pertains in the Western view. That is, specified rights of individuals are seen as antecedents to the society (Ibid). Ghana is an important context for such a study because her form of communalism is characterised by elaborate kinship systems (Nukunya, 2002) which appears to act like “an insurance policy covering the physical and metaphysical dimensions of human life,” (Mbiti, 1984, p.141).

In the formulation of a psychological sense of community model, McMillan and Chavis (1986) asserted that the construct could be generalised to all types of communities. However some theories of communities suggest that communities differ quite considerably in structure and in function (Kirkpatrick, 1986; Newsbrough, 1992; Tonnies, 1957). With the relatively more heterogeneous cosmopolitan nature of the urban centers and the relatively

more homogenous rural dwellings in Ghana, a focus of the present study within each of these contexts would result in a nuanced understanding of the construct among adolescents in Ghana.

1.3.0 Aims and Objectives

The main objective of the study was to explore perception of psychological sense of community among the adolescents. This was preceded by an exploration into adolescents' perception of the root concept 'community'. This became necessary because research involving participants in sociological and psychological investigations of community and other community sentiments have excluded young people from their samples (Cuba & Hummon, 1993; Goody, 1990, 1996, Mesch & Manor, 1998) and in the case of Ghana, no study has been sighted so far on studies into adolescents' perception of psychological sense of community.

Secondly, most of the works on the psychological sense of community treat the concept as a unipolar factor that denotes the feelings of an individual for a single target community (Brodsky, 2001). Individuals as a result of particular circumstances may not regard where they come from only as their communities but where they may have stayed before or are presently staying for varied reasons. The second objective was to explore how adolescents perceive sense of community towards where they may presently stay and where they originally come from.

Past studies on psychological sense of community have used models particularly McMillan and Chavis's (1986) model for understanding the concept. However little has been achieved in terms of its application in different contexts. The third objective was to find out if there were differences in the perception of the construct among adolescents living in urban areas and those living in rural settings.

The final objective was to find out if the adolescents are emotionally attached to their communities. The reason for this is because although the construct has been found to have cognitive, behavioural and affective domains, much emphasis is placed in the affective domain; that is people's emotional attachment to their communities.

1.4.0. Research Questions

On the basis of the aims and objective outlined, the research proceeded with the following questions.

1. How do adolescents perceive the term community?
2. How do adolescents in Ghana perceive the construct psychological sense of community?
3. How do adolescents perceive psychological sense of community towards where they stay and where they originally hail from?
4. Are there differences in the adolescents' perception of psychological sense of community in the rural and urban areas?
5. Do adolescents feel emotionally attached to their communities?

1.5.0 Rationale for the Study

Margaret Mead (1984) suggested that:

The neighbourhood (community) is the place where children are brought up to become members of their own society. Inevitably, within a neighbourhood, children encounter various older adults from whose experience they learn how to adopt themselves to the kind of society into which they are growing (Mead, 1984, p.3).

This quotation underscores that children and for that matter adolescents, as social beings, are influenced by the older adults of the society where they live. The survival of a society and its culture would, to a greater extent, depend on how much children and the adolescents assimilate healthy cultural values essential to sustaining the breadth of the society. A study of a concept so vital to community and its growth as psychological sense of community among the adolescent is therefore paramount. Awareness of this need has led to various attempts by Governments of Ghana to incorporate such academics courses as Moral studies and Civics into the school curricula to enable children develop community mindedness early in their lives. However Sergiovanni (1994) admits, schools have been relatively unsuccessful in achieving this because they have been created out of theory and practice of formal organisations rather than out of theory and practice of community development.

According to Pretty & Chipuer (1996), the physical context within which adults interactions occur partly define the meaning the adolescents give to the interaction. Thus within a community, if adults are seen and heard to live and talk about issues that are vital to the community and its growth, adolescents define this in a positive way and this could ultimately benefit the community and its growth.

Investigation of psychological sense of community among adolescents therefore would help shed light on the concept very well in the context of Ghana and among the younger generation upon whose shoulders the future of the community rests. This would then provide a framework within which future research regarding the creation and adoption of community minded attitudes and behaviours among the adolescents could be done.

1.6.0 Relevance of Study

According to Pretty (2002), there is an age at which young persons are expected to adopt community minded attitudes and behaviours in order to contribute to the sustenance of the

mutual relationship between individuals and their communities. This they can do by engaging in community service, such as communal labour², volunteer groups, neighbourhood watch and environmental protection: more importantly, to participate in civic activities³.

Exploring adolescents' psychological sense of community is an important step towards identifying the strength of their identification with their communities in terms of their perception, behaviour and feelings about their communities. This would enable Community Psychologists to use them as ready resource and as effective collaborators when designing community interventions. Although extensive work has been done in this field in the Western countries, very little has been done in Africa and in Ghana in particular, the psychological dimension of community study and sense of community especially has received no attention at all. The reason for the dearth of research in this field in Ghana is not farfetched because community psychology as an academic discipline is not very familiar among Ghanaians (Akotia & Barimah, 2007). This project would stimulate the interest of many in the field of community psychology to go into adolescent's psychological sense of community in Ghana. The qualitative approach would help uncover much information about the construct that would provide the basis for further work in the field.

1.7.0 Operational Definition

Adolescents: Young people from the ages of fifteen (15) to nineteen (19) years

² Communal Labour, locally christened '*Amandwuma*', is a regular community development programme where every responsible adult and the youth are traditionally mandated to take part in community's self- help developmental projects.

³ Article 42 of Chapter 7 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana puts age at which a person is eligible to vote in General Elections at 18years.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1.0 THEORY OF COMMUNITY

There is a long tradition of theorizing the nature and meaning of community in the social sciences (Bess *et al.*, 2002). In his classic work, Tonnies (as cited in Fisher *et al.*, 2002) for example, depicted two forms of social organisations in his concept of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* to reflect the changing nature of society and to clarify the foundations of community. According to him, in the rural peasant communities that typify the *Gemeinschaft*, personal relationships are defined and regulated on the basis of traditional social rules. People have simple and direct face-to-face relations with each other. The *Gesellschaft*, in contrast, is typified by modern, cosmopolitan societies with their government bureaucracies and large industrial organizations. In the *Gesellschaft*, human relations are more impersonal and indirect and act to weaken the traditional bonds of family, kinship, and religion that permeate the *Gemeinschaft* structure.

The term ‘community’ has been defined and couched in different terms such as a ‘locale’ (Giddens, 1984), ‘locality’ (Cooke, 1989) and ‘neighbourhood’ (Glynn, 1986; Unger & Wandersman, 1985). Definition of community too broadly as a catchall term however may make the concept risk losing its meaning and conceptual utility (Puddifoot, 1996). Attempts at narrowing the understandings of the term dates back several years. Hillery (as cited in Fisher *et al.*, 2002) having content analysed ninety-four (94) different definitions of community, discovered three definitional elements of community: social interaction between people, one or more shared ties, and an area context. Sarason (1974) described community as the readily available mutually supportive network of relationships to which one can depend. Models for

understanding community have since emerged in the field of community psychology. Locational communities, based in specific geographical area, reflect the older model and a relational community model, which is based on common interest, issue, or characteristic that the members share (Bess *et al.*, 2002). Heller (1989) also indicated another model of community characterised by the coming together of people to exert a shared power.

Gusfield (as cited in McMillan & Chavis, 1986) defined community in geographic terms as a locality. This is the traditional concept of the term denoting residential neighbourhoods, small towns, and cities. According to Heller (1989), communities, as localities, were initially developed to take advantage of economic markets, or were set up as defensive enclaves. They were not developed with the psychological or social needs of citizens in mind. Heller argues “localities eventually developed procedures for the provision of living spaces and shelter, the distribution of goods and services, and maintenance of safety and order” (Heller, 1989, p.5). Within these localities, interpersonal ties exist based on geographic proximity, not necessarily choice. (Dalton *et al.*, 2007).

Some writers including McMillan and Chavis (1986) maintain, however, that community can be achieved independently of territorial context where social networks exist. They argue further that territory or locality is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition to define the existence of community. Wellman (1979) noted the evolution or ‘liberation’ of community from solely the traditional residential concept arguing that diversity of lifestyles along with advances in transportation and communication allow for different types and layers of community based on interests and other form of relations and not based on geography (*ibid*).

Relational community is based not on residential propinquity as found in localities but rather on networks of individuals who interact within formal organisations and institutions, and as

members of informal groups (Heller, 1989). Community from this viewpoint is thus concerned with kind, quality and character of human relationships, without reference to any specific geographical location. Here the emphasis is on networks of individuals. What brings people together is not geographic proximity but common interests around which social relationships develop. This view of community has received interest in community psychology research lately. This notwithstanding, community as a locality, plays an important role in the life of many people including those limited by mobility (Fried, 1984) and adolescents whose lives are susceptible to many influences from the social environment (Pretty *et al.*, 2002). Sense of community is a phrase commonly used by citizens, politicians and social scientists, to characterise the relationship between the individual and the social structure (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990).

2.2.0 PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Seymour Sarason (1974) in his book “*Psychological Sense of community: Prospect for a Community Psychology*” provided the framework for understanding and research into the construct of psychological sense of community. He conceptualised the construct as

the perception of similarities with others, an acknowledgement of interdependence with others and a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving or doing for others what one expects from them and a feeling that one is part of a larger dependent stable structure. (Sarason, 1974, p.156)

Although there are some common methodological and theoretical threads that run through studies of the construct, views and specific findings are quite varied (Hill, 1996). Borrowing from Shinn’s (1990) analysis of typologies of research involving multiple levels of organisation, Pretty *et al.* (1996) conceptualised sense of community as a systems level

perception of the social environment in that it is not rooted in actual experience, but in the perception that one is part of the common good which will be accessible to one should the need arise. Hill (1996) has also suggested that psychological sense of community is to a significant extent, setting specific. This is evident in the lack of consistent findings regarding dimensions and correlates underlying the construct from setting to setting (ibid). There is the assumption by Hill (1996) again that the construct implies variables beyond individual relationships and behaviours. That is, psychological sense of community may have to be perceived as an extra individual, aggregate variable and its utility becomes evident when studied at the community level. There are others like Lounsbury and Denui (1996) who also assume that psychological sense of community is an individual construct.

2.2.1 McMillan and Chavis Model (1986)

McMillan and Chavis (1986) developed a theory which now remains one of the most utilised theories of the construct. They defined the psychological sense of community as “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (McMillan, 1976, p.9).

In the model, MacMillan and Chavis delineated four elements constituting the construct; membership, influence, integration and fulfilment of needs and shared emotional connection.

Membership

Membership refers to the feeling that one has invested part of oneself to acquire membership and therefore has a right to belong. It is a feeling of belonging, of being a part. Membership in effect refers to the feeling of emotional safety with a sense of belonging to, and identification with, the larger collective (Obst & Tham, 2009). McMillan and Chavis identified five attributes that constitute membership: boundaries, emotional safety, a sense of belonging and

identification, personal investment and a common symbol system. An interaction of these five attributes of membership confers upon people a set of rights and responsibilities that are always characterised by the belonging to a community (ibid). Boundaries are marked by such things as language, dress, and ritual, indicating who belongs and who does not. This gives people a sense of emotional safety and identification.

Influence

The second element; influence is a bidirectional concept. For example; for a group to be attractive, an individual must feel he or she has some control and influence over it. And for a group to be cohesive, the group itself must also have influence on its individual members (Obst & White, 2007). McMillan and Chavis (1986) pointed out that influence is seen as an internal process that reflects the perceived influence that a person has over the decisions and actions of the community. The dark side of the influence, however, is that it could lead to high levels of conformity and sometimes groupthink which could deny a member of an ability to express his independent dissenting thoughts.

Integration and Fulfilment of Needs

The third component; integration and fulfilment of needs reflect the benefits that people derive from their membership of a community. Macmillan and Chavis (1986) refer to the motivation of reinforcement that members receive by having their needs met through their membership. Some of the needs the authors suggest could be fulfilled through community membership are the status achieved through group membership, demonstration of competence by members, and the shared values that are exhibited by the group. For the authors, strong communities can provide these opportunities for their members, thus reinforcing the value of membership of the community (Fisher *et al.*, 2002)

Share Emotional Connection

The final component; shared emotional connection, according to McMillan and Chavis (1986), is based, in part, on a shared history. It is not necessary that group members have participated in the history in order to share it, but they must identify with it. The interactions of members in shared events and the specific attributes of the events may facilitate or inhibit the strength of the community. McMillan and Chavis (1986) list seven important features of shared emotional connection. They include; contact hypothesis, quality of interaction, closure to events and shared valent event hypothesis. The others are investment, effect of honour and humiliation on community members and finally spiritual bond. The authors admit that the spiritual bond aspect is difficult to describe, however they maintain that it is "present to some degree in all communities" (p. 14). The authors give the example of the concept of "soul" in the formation of a national black community in the United State of America (USA) to underscore this element.

From the model proposed by McMillan and Chavis (1986), dynamics within and between the elements of the construct among individuals within various settings could be used to explore people's perception of the construct in their communities. The elements in the constructs are thought of as operating in a linear fashion. That is individuals having achieved membership in groups, seek to attain some influence so they could integrate very well and have their needs met. Through constant interactions, there is gradual development of shared values which underlie a strong emotional connection among the members. This model is useful in the exploration into perceptions of psychological sense of community among adolescents. This is because identity, which is one of the psycho-social landmarks of the stage of adolescence is theorised to be negotiated successfully based on how individuals categorised themselves into their groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Self categorisations into groups is also theorised to be influenced by how people perceive their groups (Stets & Burke, 2000) in terms

of how the group (community) enhances their self image through shared values that are subscribed to by members of that group.

2.2.2 Kim and Kaplan Model (2004)

While recognising the four dimensions underlying the construct in the McMillan and Chavis model, Kim and Kaplan (2004) point to the lack of focus on physical aspects of community which they believe tap important aspects of people's psychological sense of community. This view provides support for the assertion by Pretty *et al.* (2002) that one may have strong feelings about the physical surroundings because of personal meaning associated with the land, trees, and wildlife. This might in turn affect one's feelings for the community as a whole.

Proposing an alternative framework for understanding sense of community incorporating both psychological and physical factors, Kim and Kaplan (2004) outlined four elements: community attachment, community identity, social interaction and pedestrianism, each of which incorporates a variety of subcomponents to conceptualise the construct of psychological sense of community.

Community attachment

According to Kim and Kaplan (2004), community attachment refers to emotional bonding or ties to the community. They argue that the sense of feeling at home in one's community is expressed in ways including community satisfaction, sense of connectedness, sense of ownership and long-term integration.

Kim and Kaplan (2004) explain that when people find their homes and community satisfactory, they are likely to experience a strong community attachment (Hummon, 1992; Mesch & Manor, 1998). Sense of connectedness develops when the community reminds the

people of their personal and community history and tradition and familiar environmental characteristics (Sampson, 1988). Sense of ownership reflects a sense of control over their homes or community which can increase community attachment (Hummon, 1992). Long-term residence helps in establishing long-term social integration into the local area, and such integration creates an emotional bond between residents and their homes and community (Hummon, 1992; Sampson, 1988; Smith, 1985). Place attachment is thus a key domain of sense of community as it expresses ways in which one feels at home and belonging to the community (Kim & Kaplan, 2004).

Community Identity

Community identity is defined by Kim and Kaplan (2004) as personal and public identifications with a specific physically bounded community with its own character. Community identity implies that local features of the built and natural environment characterize a physical identity of place which in turn affects people's personal and group identity. Community identity is thought by the authors to be engendered by the following: uniqueness or distinctiveness, continuity, significance, congruence or compatibility, and cohesiveness.

Sense of uniqueness or distinctiveness implies "being different" from others through associating with a group or a place (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Continuity implies physical properties of community maintain a link between residents' past and present environments, which in turn helps preserve their own and community identities. Significance assures self-esteem and pride, which refers to a positive evaluation of oneself, the group, or the place with which one identifies (Devine-Wright & Lyons, 1997). Congruence or Compatibility, that is a "good" fit ("this is my kind of community") exists when the environment facilitates people's everyday lifestyle and when they can perform well in that

environment (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). The cohesiveness dimension under the community identity element implies a strong character of community expressed by a sense of homogeneity, intimacy, and compactness. Through combinations of these qualities, community identity can thus contribute to people's sense of community.

Social Interaction

The third element social interaction is defined as formal (e.g., active, planned) or informal (e.g., casual, unplanned) social opportunity in which two or more residents attend to the quality of their relationships. (Kim & Kaplan, 2004). They noted that social interaction consists of neighbouring, casual social encounters, community participation and social support.

Neighbouring refers to interactions with residents living next door or on the same block (Buckner, 1988; Glynn, 1986). The casual social encounters reflect the informal social contact between residents who do not know each other and are not neighbours (Khermouch, 1995). Community participation involves interactions about community issues or engagement in community problems and related activities (Zaff & Devlin, 1998). Social support refers to friendship networks and the development of small groups that foster feelings of caring for each other (Pretty *et al*, 1996). Through such social interactions residents get to know one another and gain a sense of belonging in the community.

Pedestrianism

Pedestrianism, which Kim and Kaplan (2004) identify as the final element making up the sense of community, implies that a community is designed for walking and fostering street side activities. Pedestrianism consists of four major concepts: walkability, pedestrian propinquity, public transit and pedestrian-scale and street side activity. Kim and Kaplan (2004) opined that in a walkable community, the community's physical environment is conducive to more walking and less driving (Barber, 1986; Untermann, 1990). The pedestrian propinquity may help residents feel a sense of community if their community has necessary services within easy walking distance (Berry, 1985; Brower, 1996). With Public transit, when the community center, workplaces, and other communities are reachable by public transportation, a community is likely to experience a sense of community and to promote less automobile dependency (Bernick & Cervero, 1997). With regards to the pedestrian-scale and street side activity, Kim and Kaplan (2004) argued that if a streetscape is designed to human scale to create a high-quality street environment, it can help residents to feel comfortable in engaging in streetside activities.

The relationships between the four dimensions were noted by the authors in the model below;

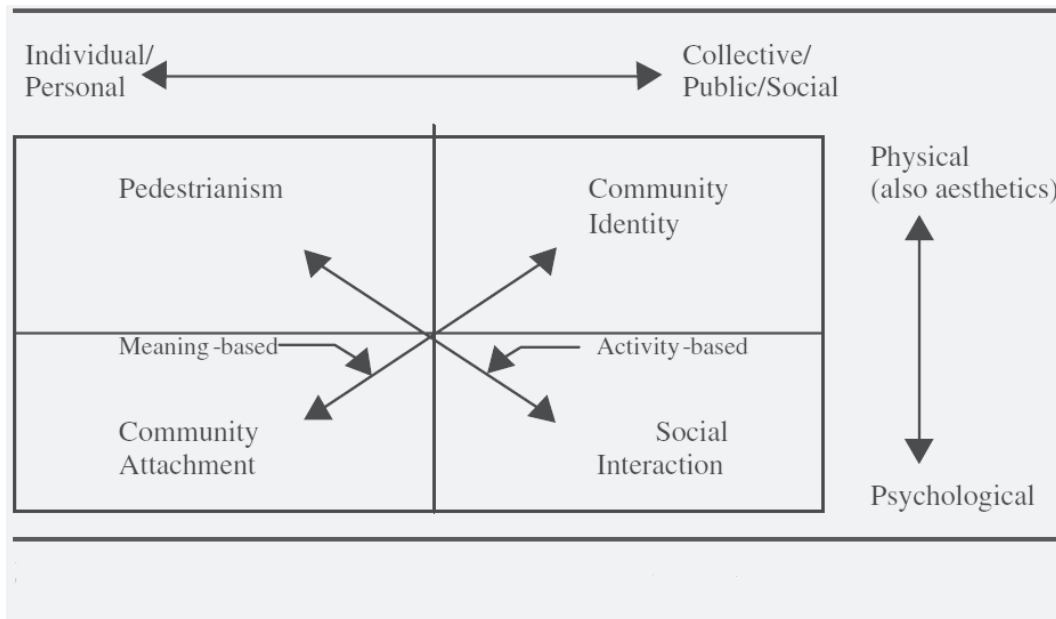


Figure 5: A model of relationships among domains of sense of community (Kim and Kaplan, 2004).

Pedestrianism and community attachment are based on an individual experience and perception of sense of community while community identity and social interaction are more related to collective and social perspective of sense of community. Whereas pedestrianism and community identity rely on physical attributes of community, community attachment and social interaction have greater psychological composition. Pedestrianism and social interaction are activity based while community identity and community attachment are meaning based. This model “focuses on the recognition that experiencing and fostering a sense of community requires both individual and collective initiatives in both specific physical and psychological contexts” (p. 319). The application of this model in other settings has not been documented much unlike the classic McMillan and Chavis model. It however leads the way in its incorporation of the physical aspects of the community in conceptualizing Psychological Sense of Community. This is believed to help in exploring sense of community among adolescents in Ghana as it brings both individual and community, physical and psychological perspectives to bear on perception of sense of community.

2.2.3. Tertaglia Model (2006)

A new model for understanding psychological sense of community proposed by Tertaglia (2006) in a preliminary study found place attachment, needs fulfilment and influence and Social Bonds as underlying dimensions for the construct. The validated structure of this model partly resembles the classic McMillan and Chavis Model. The needs fulfilment and influence dimension represents the pragmatic relationship between the individual and the community and incorporates two of the dimensions of the McMillan and Chavis Model. The other two, Place attachment and social bonds, represents the affective ties with two aspects of the local community, the physical one (i.e., place attachment), and the relational one (i.e., social bonds) that is similar to the shared emotional dimension of the classic model. In the opinion of the Tertaglia (2006), psychological sense of community should include tie with the physical territory because structural characteristics of communities relate to developing and maintaining psychological sense of community (Brodsky *et al*, 1999). Again, current conceptions of community psychology recognise place not only as source of limits and resources but also of affective values (Amerio, Fedi, & Rocato, 2000). This model shares some important features also with the Kim and Kaplan's (2004) proposed model. Place attachment according to Tertaglia (2006), reflects affective ties to community and it is influenced by knowledge and familiarity of the physical environment, length of residence, and the habit of walking around. The needs fulfilment and influence dimensions reflect the concrete benefit of using resources present in the community. The social bond dimension is related to the relevant ties with other members of the community of residence. The main weakness in this model is that it was developed with a sample not truly representative of the population of Italian city of Turin which was the setting. Findings from the application of this model in other countries are yet to be sighted. Its main strength lies with the consideration on the physical aspects of community as important factor in the development of Psychological

Sense of Community; something which is also acknowledged in the Kim and Kaplan's model but not in the classic McMillan and Chavis Model. Tertaglia's model is useful for the current study because it also brings into focus how both relational and locational models of community may exist together to explore an adolescents general perception of the construct.

2.3.0 REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

2.3.1 Perception of community

Rather than simply drawing on existing literature and textbook theory about community, Dudgeon, Mallard, Oxenham and Fielder (2002) conducted a study to explore contemporary Aboriginal perceptions of community in Australia using interviews. The study revealed that aboriginal perception of community had two main facets: physical groupings and psychological belonging to a particular group. For some of the people, the concept of community held political dimension and is informed by the common vision of the entire cultural group of aboriginal people working against oppression and towards self-determination. (Dudgeon *et al*, 2002). The defining dimensions of Aboriginal conceptions of community generally, according to the authors, are "a sense of belonging, based along family lines, and 'country' or area of origin" (as cited in Fisher *et al*, 2002. P.248). This study revealed further that the aborigines themselves feel that the notion "aboriginal community" is a western imposition. Notwithstanding this, the people have adopted, modified and internalised the western notion of community and attributed meaning to it based on their unique experiences and history. The perception of community held by the people according to (Dudgeon *et al*, 2002) could therefore have political, social and geographic connotations. From these findings, one can make a supposition that adolescents in Ghana, could perceive community in ways that would, to a significant degree, be reflective of the socio - cultural

milieu they find themselves. This is so because the notion of community is grasped differently by different people. Ife (1995) explains by asserting that:

Community is essentially a subjective experience, which defies objective definition. It is felt and experienced, rather than measured and defined. Because of its subjective nature, it is not particularly helpful to think of community as ‘existing’ or to ‘operationalise’ community in such a way that we can measure it. It is more appropriate to allow people to develop their own understanding of what community means for them, in their own context. (p. 93).

The current study is thus, guided by the findings above and the suggestion by Ife (1995), not to proceed with an idealised notion of community, but to reflect the adolescents own critical views and perceptions of the concept based on their unique experiences.

2.3.2 Psychological Sense of Community

Psychological sense of community has been examined in a wide range of settings in relation to many different issues and topics (Lounsbury *et al.*, 2003). For example, Psychological Sense of Community has traditionally been analyzed in terms of communities as a whole (Obst *et al.*, 2002; Prezza *et al.*, 2001) as well as in the context of neighborhoods (Glynn, 1986). The construct has also been studied in specific settings such as university campuses (Mahan *et al.*, 2000), workplace and school (Royal & Rossi, 1996) and local parish (Miers & Fisher, 2002). Among specific groups, the construct has been studied on adolescents (Pretty, 2002) and immigrants (Sonn, 2002). In many of such studies, support is found mostly for the existence of the four theorised dimensions under the McMillan and Chavis’ (1986) theory.

2.3.3. Psychological Sense of community and Wellbeing

The utility of the psychological sense of community as proposed by the Macmillan and Chavis was supported in a research by Pretty *et al.* (1996) to assess sense of community and its relevance to the wellbeing of adolescents of all ages. The work of Pretty *et al.* (1996) was to further the findings of Pretty *et al.* (1994) which had earlier found that sense of community is a significant aspect of adolescents' environments and called for a research to explore adolescent's sense of community and their relevance to adolescent development. In their work, which was done using quantitative methodology, Pretty *et al.* (1996) found that social support and sense of community were distinctive aspects of the adolescent's community context. Sense of community was found also to be the primary correlate with subjective evaluations of well-being. The results showed further that younger adolescents have a significantly higher sense of community in neighbourhood and school than older adolescents. This study provides a basis for the current study in that perceived social support and wellbeing are perceived as important components that could influence the perception of psychological sense of community by adolescents used for this study. The current study is thus expected to be enhanced to some extent by findings of Pretty *et al.*'s (1999) work,

It is important to underscore that although support is generally found for the McMillan and Chavis (1986) model, results from many other studies show that the dimensions under the model do actually differ in their relationship with certain outcome variables such as wellbeing. The dimensions also appear not to have equal salience in some settings. Obst and Tham (2009) in their study for example, used the theory of McMillan and Chavis (1986) to examine the dimensions of psychological sense of community and their relationship to wellbeing in the church context. It emerged from their study that psychological sense of community was evident in the church context and positively related to psychological wellbeing. However, examination of psychological sense of community at the dimensional

level revealed that there were dimensions of the construct that were more important than others in predicting wellbeing (Obst & Tham, 2009). Shared emotional connection and influence, rather than membership, emerged as the most important dimensions in the prediction of wellbeing in this context (ibid). The findings of the study though support McMillan and Chavis' (1986) multi-dimensional conceptualisation of the construct; it shows however that it is essential also to examine relationships between the dimensions of psychological sense of community and outcome variables within settings.

The current study is informed by Obst and Tham's (2009) work to go beyond the existence of the four theorised dimensions under the McMillan and Chavis's model and to look into the salience of some of the dimensions in their relationship with many variables found to influence perceptions of psychological sense of community among adolescents used for the current study

2.3.4 Psychological Sense of community and personality variables

Psychological sense of community as proposed by McMillan and Chavis appear to address individual concerns and attachment. The focus on the individual level of analysis in the understanding of the construct has been sharply criticized by many including Pretty *et al.* (1996) and Hill (1996) who advocate psychological sense of community should be viewed as an extra individual variable and therefore must be studied at the community level. However, others including Lounsbury and Denui (1996) support the focus on the individual as implied in the model and maintain that the construct can be studied from personal framework. This is because some individual personality traits have been found to be related to psychological sense of community, including need for affiliation (Davidson, Cotter, & Stovall, 1991), self-efficacy (Altman *et al.*, 1998), locus of control (Langram, 1997),

Adopting the McMillan and Chavis model in their study to explore relationship between psychological sense of community and the big five model among college and High School Students, Lounsbury, Loveland and Gibson, (2009) found that the Big Five personality variables are significantly related to Psychological Sense of Community. The personality correlates were interpreted as being consistent with definitions of and prior research on sense of community in the sense that for example, higher levels of emotional stability can be associated with higher levels of Psychological sense of community. This according to the authors is consistent with Pretty *et al's* (1996) finding of sense of community being negatively related to loneliness and positively related to subjective well-being which is also consistent with McMillan and Chavis' (1986) emphasis on emotional safety and security being an important element of sense of community. The authors opine also that individuals higher on agreeableness would be expected to relate more positively and cooperatively with other community members to achieve cohesion and a sense of belonging (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). With reference to the college sample, the authors argued that more extraverted individuals would be expected to have more frequent interactions and more extensive relationships that would contribute more to what McMillan and Chavis termed "shared connections." Finally, with reference to the high school sample, Lounsbury *et al.* (2009) maintain that individuals with higher levels of openness would be expected to be more open to influence by community members, and thus, to more readily incorporate community norms and values. The findings of the study have implication on the conceptualization of psychological sense of community as viewed in the model proposed by McMillan and Chavis (1986). This is because the authors admitted that the Big Five personality variables accounted for 16% of the variance in psychological sense of community, which is more of the variance accounted for in psychological sense of community than any studies they had seen that looked at group-, organizational-, or community-level variables in relation to sense of community.

Lounsbury and Denui (1996) had earlier found that extroversion particularly was related to psychological sense of community among college students. This lends support to the study by Lounsbury *et al*, (2009). Though personality variables of the informants used for this study were not explored, data however revealed differences in individual concerns for social harmony and getting along with others in the community. The stimulation informants derive through community engagement and specific emotional feelings that results from such encounters in the community for specific individuals may underlie how they perceive their community and a psychological sense towards it.

2.3.5 Psychological sense of community and choice of group membership

Obst and White (2007) have also found that overall psychological sense of community increases significantly as the choice associated with membership in the community increases. In their study using three groups of membership which differed in the degree of choice available to participants in becoming members, that is neighbourhood (low choice category) student groups (Medium choice group) and a self chosen interest group (high choice interest group), all the four dimensions of psychological sense of community as proposed by McMillan and Chavis were found to be significantly different for the three groups with means of the various dimensions being lower for the low choice group (neighbourhood), which was lower than the medium choice group (student group) which was also lower to the high choice group (self chosen interest group). This study was though limited in its focus only on urban young population, the results presents initial evidence for the notion that degree of choice of membership may influence levels of psychological sense of community with that community. Relating this finding to the current study, one expects to have informants' sense of community being impacted on negatively due to lack of choice the informants have in belonging to their communities. This is because all the informants are dependents on parent and guardians hence the decision to choose where to live or stay is not theirs.

2.5.0 RELATED THEORIES

Prevailing views of Psychological Sense of community appear to ground the construct on human needs theories (Nowell & Boyd, 2010). One of the essential human needs which underlie perceptions of the construct is the need for belongingness or relatedness.

2.5.1. Belongingness

According to some motivational researchers, the need for relatedness is one of three basic psychological human needs that are essential for human growth and development along with the need for autonomy and competence (Cornell & Wellborn 1991). The need for relatedness involves the need to feel securely connected with others in the environment and to experience oneself worthy of love and respect. This need in essence implies the need to experience belongingness and sense of community. One is bound to experience overall wellbeing and proper psychological development when these needs are satisfied. Maslow (1971) in his famous theory of needs pointed that after physiological and safety needs are met, love and belonging needs are attained. At this stage on the hierarchy of needs, individuals hunger for affectionate relations with people in general. Maslow emphasised the importance of this need by claiming that in our society, the thwarting of these needs is the most commonly found core in cases of maladjustment and severe psychopathology (Maslow, 1971). It is important that the communities where people live and for that matter where adolescents are growing up provide opportunities for meeting such needs.

Alfred Adler (as cited in Bret, 1998) asserts that each human being has the capacity for learning to live in harmony with society. This is an innate potential for social connectedness which has to be consciously developed. The feeling of genuine security is rooted in a deep

sense of belonging and embeddedness within the stream of social evolution. Adler, (as cited in Bret, 1998) entered the domain of the transpersonal because he maintained that social interest or community feeling was the ability to feel at one with the whole of humanity 'sub specie aeternitatis' (in the light of eternity) (Bret, 1998, p.2). Community feeling according to Adler becomes the final goal of perfection. It contains in it 'the goal of an ideal community'.

Lending support to the prime importance of the need for belonging in understanding the human growth and development, Baumeister and Leary (1995) did an extensive review of literature to find out whether there was sufficient evidence to support the claim that the need for belonging is a fundamental human motivation. The need for belonging was defined as a "pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive and a significant interpersonal relationship (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p.497). A fundamental motivation they argue, should apply to all people, operate in a wide variety of settings and affect emotional and cognitive patterns. The need to belong according to the authors is associated with differences in cognitive processes, emotional patterns, behaviour, health and wellbeing. With respect to cognitive processes, sense of relatedness was found to affect people's perception of others, leading people to view friends and group membership more favourably and to think about them more often and in more complex ways. They remark further that being accepted, included or welcomed leads to positive emotions such as happiness, elation and contentment. Intense negative feelings of anxiety, depression, grief, jealousy and loneliness result when one is rejected, excluded, or ignored. Lack of belongingness is also found to be associated with incidence of mental and physical illness and a broad range of behavioural problems ranging from traffic accidents to criminality and suicide (ibid). The way adolescents perceive lasting belongingness in their interpersonal relationships within their communities would be expected to significantly influence their perceptions of psychological sense of community in their communities.

2.5.2. Identification

Identification is a key concept found to play a role in several dimensions of psychological sense of community such as membership and shared emotional connection (Obst, 2004). When individuals feel belonged to their community, they are likely to identify with the community. Chavis and Pretty, (1999), Fisher, Sonn and Bishop (2002), Obst (2004), have variously suggested that differences in individual's level of psychological sense of community may be understood in terms of the strength of their identification with that community. Further research has suggested that the more value or salient a particular identity is, the greater the potential that identity has to exert a positive or negative influence on the individual's wellbeing (Thoits, 1991, cited in Obst, 2009).

Since sense of community has been found to be related to wellbeing (Obst & Tham, 2009; Pretty *et al.*, 2006), it is hypothesised that an individual's identification with a community may be related to psychological sense of community as well. Social identity is the individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership of social groups (Stets & Burke, 2000). In other words, it is an individual-based perception of what defines the "us" associated with any internalized group membership. Previous studies have suggested identification plays a role in developing Psychological sense of community (Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Fisher *et al.*, 2002; Obst, 2002). The more a person identifies him or herself with a community, the greater his psychological sense of community may be. If an individual does not identify much with his community, it could be that he does not feel belonged, does not have much influence in the community and the community does not influence him much, has less needs met and is less emotionally connected to the community. Thoits (1991) asserted that the more salient the identity, the more meaning, purpose, and behavioural guidance the individual should derive from its enactment, thus the more the identity should influence psychological wellbeing. Support for this theory was found by Furrow, King, and White

(2004), who found that the degree to which adolescents' personal identities were defined by their religious affiliation was positively associated with their sense of fulfilment in life.

Community, according to Wiesenfeld (1996), springs from the personal identities of its members. She argues that "since the process of creating a community, as a social construct, proceeds from one's personal identity, the individual then naturally incorporates the community identity into his own" (Weisenfeld, 1996, p.337). By extension, if individuals define their personal identities in terms of the strength of their identification with their community, then they are likely to be happy and thus have a strong psychological sense to that community. This is because people are organically tied to their social groups through social identity and tied mechanically through their role identities within a group (Stets and Burke, 2000). So the deeper the ties, the deeper the psychological sense towards the community. Closely tied to this theory is the social cohesion theory by Shaw (1976) which posits that without actual engagement with a social group (community) one will not come to affiliate oneself with the group. This may have an implication on how individuals locate the 'self' or categorise themselves with the group and might explain why people may find themselves in a community but may have no feelings for the community.

2.6.0 RELATED CONCEPTS

Sense of community is identified to relate with a number of community related sentiments such as participation, Social Interaction, Attitudes and Behaviour to community, community attachment and social support.

2.6.1. Participation

Chavis and Wandersman (1990) set out to explore a model which posits that three important components influence an individual's participation in voluntary neighbourhood organisations and that sense of community plays a catalytic role in mobilizing the three components. The three components are the perception of the environment, ones social relations, and ones perceived control and empowerment within the community. Perception of the environment involves judgement about the environment (perceived qualities of the environment, satisfaction with the environment, problems with environment (Wandersman *et al.*, 1983). A negative perception of the community environment can lead to stress and/or arousal. Negative signs in the environment (e.g. incivilities such as litter, abandoned cars, or gangs on the street) can lead to fear of crime, lower property values and social withdrawal (Ahlbrandt & Cunningham, 1979; Wandersman & Chavis, 1990).

2.6.2. Social Interaction

On the issue of social relations, Chavis and Wandersman (1990) posit that as people interact among members, there is the provision of emotional/personal, instrumental and informational support. When people feel a sense of community, they are more apt to interact with members (Chavis *et al.*, 1986; Unger & Wandersman, 1982) while at the same time enhancing the shared emotional connections that helps to maintain the sense of community (Macmillan & Chavis, 1986). The presence of mutual relations in the community is thought to regulate social behaviour through normative mechanisms called informal social control (Merry, 1987). Perceived control relates to the beliefs an individual has about the relationship between actions and outcomes. When individuals believe that their individual efforts (self efficacy) or a group of people working together (collective efficacy) can solve a problem in the community, this can influence their behaviour and feelings for the community. The findings

of Chavis and Wandersman (1990) support the model in which sense of community plays a catalytic role in stimulating satisfaction with ones residential environment, encouraging neighbouring relations, and enhancing ones perception of personal and group empowerment to influence what goes around them.

2.6.3. Attachment to community

Previous studies of community attachment have been grounded on Kasarda and Janowitz's (1974) work on community attachment. Literatures following Kasarda and Janowitz's work have generally clustered under two broad theoretical perspectives. The linear development model also called the determinist or Wirthian theory is associated with the classic work of Tonnie (1887, 1957). The theoretical perspective is termed linear because linear increases in the population size and density of human communities are assumed to be primary exogenous factors influencing patterns of social behaviour. The other theoretical perspective, the systemic model, is from the work of Park and Burgess (1921 as cited in Sampson, 1998). The systemic model view community as a complex system of friendship, kinship and association networks into which new generations and new residents are assimilated while the community passes through its own life cycle (Kasarda & Janowitz, as cited in Sampson 1998). Much of the systemic model attachment literature concentrates on amassed sociodemographic measures such as home ownership, race, income, number of children living at home, age, level of education, social interactions, marital status, and presence of children, ages of children and religious status as factors underlying attachment (Theodori, 2004).

Theodori (2004), from a random sample of individuals in two communities located in West Texas in a general population survey studies, found that length of residence had a direct, significant main effect on the social bonds measure of attachment to the community. However, with respect to affective items of emotional ties to the community, the way length

of residence related to community attachment depended upon the person's age. (Theodori, 2004). Research indicates that the community as dwelling place becomes increasingly focal point in the lives of the elderly and as such increases their emotional attachment to it (Cuba & Hummon 1991). Perception of sense of community thus may be hypothesised to be influenced by how long a person has stayed in a community. In related study, Pretty and McCarthy (1991) found length of time in a residential setting to be related to sense of community, while sense of community in a work setting does not necessarily increase over.

2.6.4. Social Support

Felton and Shinn (1992) state that the availability of both instrumental and emotional social support to members of a group from other group members is a key aspect of well-functioning and caring communities. Obst and Tham (2009) have found a relation between psychological sense of community and social support in their study using church as a referent. Social Support serve as a form of insurance in that it functions to cushion individuals from emotional and social challenges which may be threatening to their wellbeing and psychological sense of community. The classic definition of social support by Cobb (1976) provides a point of departure for an argument that supports the link between the two concepts.

Cobb (1976) defines social support as the existence of others who provide information which leads an individual to believe that they are cared for and loved, esteemed and valued, and belong to a larger network involving communication and mutual obligation. From this perspective, social support is a resource vital to be relied on especially in times of challenges. In view of this, it is possible to hypothesize that the greater the amount of social support received by a person from individuals within ones community, the greater the likelihood that overall psychological sense of community would increased.

To sum up, psychological sense of community is a broad concept that cannot lend itself to a single normative theory. Studies have demonstrated empirically that the various components of psychological sense of community manifests themselves across settings, however the underlying assumptions about the meanings elicited by the items have remain unexamined (Sonn *et al*, 1999) especially in specific settings. Exploring psychological sense of community with due regard to some specific concepts that relate to how people perceive the construct of psychological sense of community within their settings may be very productive to such an endeavour.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1.0 Aims of the Study

The aims of the study were to find out the perception of community; investigate and explore how adolescents construct psychological sense of community; how adolescents perceive psychological sense of community towards where they stay and where they originally come from. The other aim was to explore adolescents' emotional feelings towards their community. With the intention to get as close to my data as possible, qualitative method of research was chosen.

3.1.1. Design

Qualitative method was adopted because it helps explore a wide range of thoughts and opinions on concepts and constructs. Silverman (2006) pointed out that there are certain areas of social reality which statistics cannot measure. "Qualitative methodology provides an opportunity for researchers to study phenomena which are simply unavailable elsewhere" (p. 43). The use of qualitative methods provides the opportunity for the investigator to go beyond the ordinary and access detailed information on social phenomena from the point of view of the informants. Its sole purpose is to understand the informants' world better. There is no consensus as to how qualitative analysis should proceed. Janowski and Wester (1991) noted however that whatever method one chooses to adopt, the process of qualitative analysis is deeper, more focused and more detailed than in quantitative research.

Quantitative research approaches are generally concerned with counting occurrences, volumes, or the sizes of associations between entities (Smith, 2008). Psychological Sense of community is a construct with a nature that makes it difficult to be explored in-depth using

quantitative techniques. Qualitative research was appropriate because of the flexibility it offers both the researcher and informants to explore many areas related to the topic under study.

3.1.2. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

According to Smith and Osborn (2008), the aim of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is to explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social worlds, and the main currency for an IPA study is the meanings and particular experiences, events, states hold for participants. Heidegger (1962) argued that to be human is to be interpretive, for the very nature of the human realm is interpretative (as cited in Webb & Kevin, 2001). The IPA is based on the assumption that the observers cannot separate themselves from the world. Truth from Heidegger's view was not something that is constructed by distancing oneself from what is to be known. An interpreter always brings certain experiences and frames of meaning to bear in the act of understanding and these cannot be bracketed (Koch, 1996). This is because the IPA is phenomenological and it involves detailed examination of the participants lived experiences; attempting to explore personal experience and is concerned with an individual's personal perception or account of an object or events opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object or event itself (Smith & Osborne, 2008). Smith and Osborne admit that access to the participants' life world indeed depends on, and is complicated by, the researcher's own conceptions.

When analyzing data using IPA, emerging themes are developed from interviews which are mostly unstructured, connections are then made between them in a theoretical and analytical ordering, working up to more general categorizations (Smith & Osborne, 2003). Narrative quotes are used to substantiate findings and analysis (Osafu, 2011).

3.2.0 Study Setting



Map 1: Map of Africa with Ghana

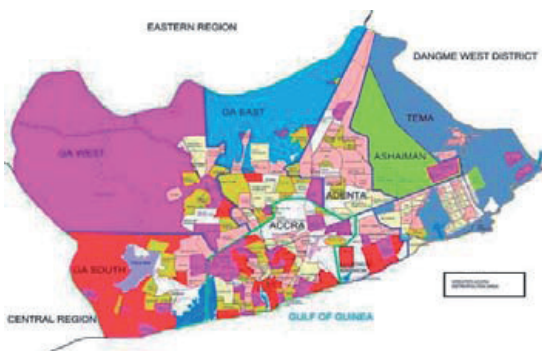
Ghana was the setting for the study. The country from the map 1 above, extends from the Gulf of Guinea and is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the South, Togo to the East, Burkina Faso to the North and Cote Divoire to the West. Ghana covers a land surface area of 238,837sq.km (92,100sq.miles). According to the year 2010 provisional Population and Housing Census (PHC) figures released by the Ghana Statistical Services (GSS), the population of Ghana is 24,223,431 with roughly 16.1 % living in and around the capital city of Accra. More than 70 languages are spoken and the people are classified in four linguistic groups of Akan, Mole- Dagbani, Ewe and Ga. Two thirds of Ghanaians are Christians, 15% Islamic and the rest are spread among the Traditional animist religions and others (Ghana Tourist Board, 2010).

3.2.1. Urban Setting



Picture 1:View of Accra

Accra was chosen as the setting for the urban context based on its cosmopolitan attributes. It is the capital of Ghana and the largest city in terms of population size. The population of Accra is estimated to be 3,909,764 (GSS, 2011). Accra is one of the most populated and the fastest growing cities in Africa with an annual growth rate of 2.8% (GSS, 2011). The population of Accra is very youthful with 56% being under 24 years. Fifty - one percent (51%) of the population is females and 49% males. Apart from being the capital of Ghana, Accra is also the capital of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Owing to the size, Accra is divided into 11 sub-metropolitan areas which together form the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). This is illustrated in the map below with the city of Accra in green borders.



Map 2: Map of Greater Accra Region

(Credit: Accra Metropolitan Assembly, 2010)

3.2.2 Rural Setting



Picture 2: View of a rural area in Ghana

Obuadze is located North-West of the Mfantseman Municipal Assembly of the Central Region of Ghana. The people are Fantes who migrated from the Coast. The setting is populated with 327 people as of 2010⁴. The population is old in terms of age distribution. About 30% of the population are youthful under 18years and most of them attend the only school serving six nearby villages. The community has no access road to the nearest town Anomabu located 12km from the town. There is no pipeborne water and until recently no electricity. Christianity and traditional religion are the only religions in the community according to an opinion leader. Farming and manual stone quarrying are the main occupation of the people.

3.2.3. Semi Urban Setting

Saltpond is the capital of the Mfantseman Municipal Assembly (MMA) of the Central Region of Ghana. It is inhabited by close to 198500 people as of August, 2010 (MMA, 2010). The people are largely Fantes⁵. Due to her status as the capital of the municipality, decentralized agencies of the central government are located there to provide services to people within the

⁴ Due to lack of formal demographic data on the rural area, oral accounts of an opinion leader was relied on.

⁵ Fante is one of the ethnic groups within the Akan population in Ghana.

municipality. In view of this, formal sector occupations that provide services and other informal commercial activities particularly trading are what people mostly do for a living. Christianity is the dominant religion followed by Islam and then the African Traditional Religion (ATR). Saltpond is the capital of the Municipal Authority within which Obuadze; the rural community is located.

3.3.0. Sampling Consideration

Twumasi (2001) underscored that an intelligible idea about the parameters of the population can help the investigator to determine the type of sampling design. In connection with this assertion, it was important to look for that segment of the population of Ghana who were relevant for the purpose of the study; the adolescent population. This criterion was an important guide in the choice of the suitable sampling design. Secondly, the length of time I had at my disposal as well as other practical issues in relation to cost required a manageable sample size of informants who were also readily accessible to be used. Thirdly, the aims of the study demanded that two diverse contexts in Ghana were to be explored; urban and rural areas. I had to determine whether to use proportionate representations or not since the population of adolescents in the two contexts differed. Constraints with time and cost and easy accessibility to the informants, demanded an equal number of informants from both rural and urban centers for the purposes of the interviewing. The languages adopted for the study English, Twi and Fante⁶ also required that only those with good proficiency in any of those languages were to be used. The implication of the language consideration on the study was that informants who could not express themselves very well in the languages would face difficulties communicating their thoughts very comprehensively, thus denying the research of rich data needed for concise analysis and interpretation. Another implication would have been

⁶ English is the formal language in Ghana and the medium of instruction at the upper primary and the high schools. Twi and Fante are two of the many dialects of the Akans.

that an interpreter or translator had to be employed to assist in meaningfully conveying the sentiments and thoughts of the informants to the researcher and vice versa.

Finally demands placed by the IPA which was adopted for the purposes of analysis required that the researcher does not make use of too much information. According to Smith and Osborne (2008), a distinctive feature of IPA is its commitment to a detailed interpretative account of the cases included, and many researchers are recognizing that this can only realistically be done on a very small sample. In simple terms “breadth of data was sacrificed for depth” (Smith & Osborne, 2008, p.56).

3.3.1. Informed Consent

Consent for the interview was sought at two levels; firstly, owing to the fact that all the informants were dependents on parents and guardians, actual informed consent forms were given to them to be filled first by their parents and guardians approving of their wards’ participation in the research. Those that were returned were kept. Another consent forms were given to the informants to fill. Those who returned both forms with approval from parents and informants themselves met at a meeting where an agreement was reached between the interviewer and interviewees for the scheduling of the time and date of the interview.

3.3.2. Sample

Forty (40) samples were initially drawn. However, at the end, thirty (30) informants comprising fourteen (14) females and sixteen (16) males were used for the study. Out of this, twelve (12) each were enrolled for the interviewing in Accra and Obuadze and six (6) for Saltpond. All the informants were purposively sampled. The age range was between sixteen (16) and nineteen (19) years. On the issue of gender, parity could not be attained for the interview itself because more females could not return their consent forms as compared to the males. That is, whereas seven (7) females did not return their consent forms, only three (3)

males did not do same. There were therefore more males than females in the actual sample. All the informants used for the study were students; twenty three (23) being students of Junior High School (JHS) while seven (7) of them were from the Senior High School (SHS).

3.4.0. Data Collection

Twumasi (2001, p.29) stresses the point that “the selection of a particular method to collect data must be decided upon in the light of one’s problem”. Interview method was adopted for collecting the data for the study. The Interview method offered flexibility in that the interviewer was in a position to sense the situation and could adapt his questions to suit the psychology of the people involved in the field situation. At the end, the interview process helped both the researcher and the informants to create a relaxed but insightful stimulating atmosphere where each learnt a lot from the other. This finds expression in the assertion that “interview situation also creates a learning environment in which the two: the interviewer and the interviewees are involved in purposeful discussion” (Twumasi, 2000 p.35).

3.4.1 Focused Group Interview

The type of interview technique used was the Focus group interview (FGI). Within the qualitative paradigm, FGI is popular because it is very compatible with key assumptions of the qualitative paradigm (Bradbury- Jones, *et al.*, 2008). First, in the qualitative tradition, the nature of reality is viewed as phenomenological, and multiple views of reality can exist. An atmosphere where informants could share experiences, challenge assumptions of others, modify assumptions on a same phenomenon that is experienced by all through a common discourse, was found to be very appropriate in uncovering the hidden meanings and perceptions informants had of the construct of psychological sense of community. There were five focal groups in all, two each in the urban and the rural centers and one in the semi urban center respectively. An all male and an all female groups of six (6) informants each were

interviewed in both the rural and the urban centers while an equal number of three of both males and females were interviewed in a mixed gendered focus group in the semi urban area.

3.4.2 Personal Interview

Two personal interviews, one each in the urban and the rural settings, were conducted for purposes of triangulating the study. Two informants, a male and a female were each interviewed in the rural and the urban settings respectively.

3.4.3. Materials

The main material used in accessing the data from informants was a semi- structured interview guide. The guide was constructed in a funnel shape fashion; the first parts explored informants' perception of the concept of community with the last parts exploring specific issues forming the components of the construct as outlined in the psychological sense of community model proposed by MacMillan and Chavis (1974); membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of need and shared emotional connection. It emerged from the interview process that many of the questions on the guide merely served as guides rather than rules. The items on the guide were translated into the local language of the rural informants by a professional language specialist. This became necessary because the pilot study done earlier revealed that while the urban informants had a better appreciation and understandings of the items in English and could express well in the English language, their rural and semi-urban counterparts did not quite understand the items as they appeared in English and could not communicate their thoughts in meaningful English. A tape recorder was used to keep track of the various interviews and discussions held with the informants. The recorder was pretested before the interview with the same informants on a different issue of interest⁷. The pretesting of the recorder was good as it assured the interviewer and gave the recorder "a clean bill of

⁷ The period for the interview was during the World Cup 2010 held in South Africa at which Ghana participated. Events of the tournament regarding Ghana's participation were explored to pretest the recorder.

health". The pretest also succeeded in arousing the interest and excitement of the informants even before the interview began. While the interview was going on, the interviewer observed non verbal expressions and noted them. The duration for the focus group discussion ranged from thirty-five minutes (the male group in obuadze) to one hour 47minutes (female group in Accra) while the personal interview ranged from one (1) hour to (47) minutes in Accra and Obuadze respectively.

3.4.3. Observation during the Interviewing

While the interview was ongoing, some informants talked without being invited to do so, others found it difficult to talk even when they had been invited to talk. Some voices appeared 'domineering' and 'intimidating' causing some informants to withdraw. This was common in the interview at the urban center with the female group. It had an effect on the study as it was realized some informants were resorting to "no comments" or "yes or no" answers in their bid to refrain from giving out all. To overcome this problem, the researcher had to be more firmer by allowing informants to talk only upon invitation. This helped because informants had equal opportunity to talk without being inhibited.

It was realized during the interview that some informants were exhibiting signs of difficulties in understanding questions posed to them. It became clear the concepts were not clear to them. The effect of this on the interview was that sometimes the responses received were not related to the construct under investigation. To overcome this problem, the researcher had to employ synonyms of such concepts and terms as 'community', 'feelings' and 'sense' in the local dialects of participants. This was unintended because there were no problems with the use of a common dialect of Fante during the pilot study. Another observation made during the interview was wrong impression people had formed of the interview especially in the rural area. Informants had perceived the interview as a form of an

examination. This problem was found to be caused by a ‘familiarity effect’.⁸ The informants saw the interviewer as still ‘wearing the hat’ of a teacher and an examiner in spite of all the assurances given before the commencement of the interview that it was going to be a normal conversation. The effect of this on the interview was that informants were observed defining and explaining terms and opinions like in an examination. This problem was overcome instantly when the interview process was paused and an excerpt of a lively focus group discussion earlier done on urban informants was played to the rural informants. After hearing the excerpts, the atmosphere became very conducive for a lively discussion. While overcoming all these problems, one challenge which became intractable was the issue of generational effect. With the age difference between the interviewer and the interviewees, informants, rather than just responding to questions; were more concerned about punctuating and addressing the interviewer with traditional titles for an elderly person in the village. While this appeared to be culturally prompted, it fostered a certain power relation between the interviewer and the interviewees. It also meant that interviewer had to spend time and effort to seek leveling to allow for ease of communication. In the urban center however, the gender difference between the interviewer and the female interviewees made some informants become unnecessarily impressionistic in their responses and gestures and this sometimes had the potential of distracting the interviewer and other informants from focusing.

⁸ The researcher who doubled as the interviewer had once taught and headed the only school in the community which was attended by the informants.

3.5.0. Transcription

In order to maintain the freshness of the data to aid its transference from a verbal to written text material, the researcher made it mandatory to start transcribing data the very day interview was held. Although many transcription techniques were available to be used, the word - for - word transcription was adopted because the researcher wanted to record everything verbatim with all the frequent repetitions, pause, emphasis in intonation and emotional laughter and sighing that accompanied the responses. This helped retain the original meanings for easy interpretation.

3.6.0 Reliability and Validity

LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998) describe reliability to mean ‘the consistency or constancy of a measuring instrument’ (p. 558). Hammersley (1992, p. 67) also suggests that reliability ‘refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions. The current study adopted Brink’s (1991) proposed three tests of reliability for qualitative work; *stability*, *consistency* and *equivalence*. Stability is established when asking identical questions of an informant at different times produce consistent answers. This was achieved to some extent with the use of same interview guide during the interview process itself and a follow up interviews⁹, Although not all the informants covered in the main interview process were covered in the follow up, answers from those available for the follow-up were not quite different from the those earlier given. Within the actual interviews, some informants’ responses about main points were re-assessed during the summary and they were found to cohere with their earlier responses. Brink (1991, p.176) acknowledged that when the integrity of issues within a single interview is assessed so that an informants answers on a given topic remain concordant, then

⁹ A follow –up interview was done five months after the main interviews when the researcher went back to Ghana.

consistency is established. Except for some few responses that were found to lack integrity, most responses sounded coherent when subjected through rigours of qualitative interrogation. Equivalence is tested by the use of alternative forms of question with the same meaning during a single interview or by concurrent observation by two observations (ibid). The interviews for the current study were conducted solely by the researcher and thus equivalence could not have been established by another person. However, continuous process of phrasing, rephrasing and paraphrasing of questions on the interview guide did little to change the meanings of the responses from the informants.

Validity is epitomized by the question: “are we measuring what we think we are measuring?” (Kerlinger, 1973, p.457). On the broader concept, if validity imply the extent to which a method investigates what it is intended to investigate, to the extent to which observations indeed reflect the phenomena or variables of interest (Pervin, 1984, p.48), then qualitative research in principle can be a valid scientific method (Kvale, 2009). Validity in the findings of this study was ascertained through the continuous checking and probing during the interview process and then through the interpretation of the narrative quotes against theory. Guided by Miles and Huberman’s (1984) tactics for testing and confirming research findings, communicative validation techniques helped established validity through meaningful dialogue by checking for representativeness, minimizing researcher bias, checking out rival explanations and even triangulation. The use of personal interview at some point in the data collection and the choice of the semi urban setting as part of the interview settings were all to help validate the data. Polkinghorne (1989) argues that validity of the findings of a phenomenological research project depends on the ability of its presentation to convince the reader that its findings are accurate. The process of testing the findings of this study through long period of intersubjectivities among informants, people from same contexts as informants,

colleague master students¹⁰ and insightful comments from experts¹¹ in the field, can be said to have significantly helped validate the findings of the present study.

3.7.0 Ethical Consideration

Ethical clearance for the project was sought first from the Norwegian Social Sciences Data Services (NSD) of Norway. In Ghana, the researcher sought clearance from the Psychology Department of University of Ghana.

3.7.1. Confidentiality.

The researcher, before the commencement of the interview, assured the informants of their confidentiality. This was spelt out in the informed consent form given out to them and their parents. To do this practically, the interviewer had no interest recording the biographical data of informants. Codes reflecting the setting, gender and ordinal position of informants were assigned instead of real names. For example, UMO1 (informants 1 in Urban Male Only Group), UFO2 (Informant 2 in Urban Female Only Group), UFPI (Urban Female in Personal Interview), RMO3 (Informant 3 in the Rural Male Only Group), RFO4 (Informant 4 in the Rural Female Only Group), RMPI (Rural Male in Personal Interview), SUF5 (Informant 5 in the Semi-Urban Group who is a female) and SUM6 (Informant 6 in the Semi-Urban who is a male)

3.7.2. Trust

Rapport is an important decisive element needed in any interview process to create a stimulating atmosphere where informants could speak on issues which sometimes may be unpleasant or private. Trust was built for the interview by first introducing a topic of interest; an ongoing world cup in South Africa where Ghana crashed out bitterly at the hands of Uruguayans. The introduction of this subject created a heated debate which brought out

¹⁰ Regular seminar presentations with colleague Mphil students under the guidance of a distinguished academic served to subject findings continuously through validation process.

¹¹ The supervisor of this project and a colleague academic helped in the validation with their expertise through constant probing of interpretations.

passions out of the informants and got everyone speaking. Opinions of everyone were respected. In that relaxed atmosphere the researcher created after the debate, the stage was set for a lively discourse.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study interviewed adolescents on their perceptions of psychological sense of community. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was employed for analysis. On the account of their respective experiences and perspectives, three broad themes emerged: Perception of community, belongingness and effect of community on the individual. These themes with sub-themes are discussed below;

4.1.0 PERCEPTION OF ‘COMMUNITY’

The concept of community is defined by many people both within and outside the field of social science in many diverse ways. However from these interviews, informants describe and explain community based on their unique experiences and perceptions of it. Three sub-themes were delineated and stood as the pillars upon which community is perceived. These are locality, culture, and social organisation.

4.1.1 LOCALITY

Many theorists, including Bess, *et al.* (2002) maintain that the term community encompasses focus on both geographical territory, and locality setting on one hand and social networking or relational settings on the other hand. Community is described geographically as a location with some relational features by the informants in the present study. “*Community is an area in which a group of people live or an area in which a group of people stay*” (UFO, 3). The use of the word ‘area’ in the quote above denotes a geographical feature that can be located. It also reflects definition of community given by Hillery (1964). The use of the conjunction ‘or’ brings two different ideas: ‘stay’ and ‘live’ together in the description. To ‘stay’ in an area imply temporariness whereas to ‘live’ connotes a relatively lasting residence.

Community by the description of the informant above could refer to a place comprising either permanent or temporary resident people. “*Community is where a group has put up buildings and living over there*” (RMO5). The use of the phrase ‘group of people’ in all the voices show a form of relational affinity that put a hitherto atomic individuals into a collective unit to form a community. Buildings are part of the physical features of a community and they meet the essential shelter needs of humans. Stressing this point also goes to confirm that community is a place of human habitation but not one where this basic human need of shelter cannot be found. The reference to buildings also implies that community is set up intentionally by people who have thus made a choice.

The perception of community as a locality by informants may be due in part to the fact that localities are avenues where adolescents are socialised into the larger society. According to Nisbet (as cited in Heller, 1989) basic cultural values are inculcated and transmitted only through direct faces - to - face relationships. Community as a locality is of prime importance to certain groups of people. Heller (1989, p.7) asserts that “those who are most connected to locality tend to be the very young or very old, women who do not work outside the home and certain ethnic groups.” By implication, the informants, who are adolescents and are still dependents on parents and guardians, may have perceived community using the locality experiences as frame of reference.

As people realise the need to enhance the capacity of the locality to support their wellbeing, they may consciously commit themselves to acting, thinking and feeling in ways that would ensure that psychological and social needs, which are essential for life, are met. “*A place with many people with a purpose aimed at seeking the development and welfare of the place and themselves*”. (UMO, 6). There is emphasis in this quote of commitment on the part of members to ensure maximization of benefits for living in the community. The choice of the word ‘place’ is significant because it can be understood as a unit of environmental experience

(Canter, 1986), a convergence of cognitions, affect and behaviour of the people who are experiencing them (Canter, 1991). 'Place' also includes that which influences the meaning occupants give to it through personal, social and cultural process (Altman & Low, 1992). So the choice of the word 'place' invariably refers to an avenue or a location or a territory of human habitation where the totality of human life is experienced. The voice above also reveals relational aspects of the environment of the community. The purpose to seek development and welfare of the place and the people as implied in the voice makes community a socio-cultural organisation. This is where a dynamic interaction between psychological, social and cultural processes, reveal relational aspect of life in a community and transforms community from a loose physical entity into an organic, meaningful, and cohesive unit which is capable of regeneration.

A common desire to meet basic physiological and most especially psychological needs permeates every endeavour of the life in the community. This is because it is fundamental for life to be lived in conditions that, to an appreciable extent, can support and perpetuate life. The illustration below from a semi urban male clarifies the point.

For me a community is where people have agreed to stay and have some basic needs met there to make life as comfortable as it could be. But when we look at this place, we do not have market, so we always have to go to a nearby community having markets to buy. Again because this place is a school (-) ..., it is not all things that is allowed to be done (SUM, 5).

The informant affirms the locality notion of community; however he refuses to describe where he is staying now as a community. His reason implies that the school does not typify an area where some amenities such as market; essential for readily meeting one's basic needs, can be found. The informant does not anticipate receiving from the community what he

perceives not to be present in the community (Pretty *et al.*, 2002). Social life in boarding schools¹² in Ghana is controlled under a regime of regulations intended to protect and also to provide an ambient environment for studies. This probably may underlie why the informant¹³ does not readily meet some of his vital needs within the setting. On the basis of this reasoning; he does not see his place of abode as a community.

4.1.3 SOCIAL ORGANISATION

System of Norms

From the earlier sub - themes, it can be established that community is made of group of people. It is important also to emphasise the point that, as people come together, social relations become the pivot around which social life would revolve. According to Assimeng (2006), there exist regulatory structures that serve as glue to cementing bonds of social relations. He argues that “it is the process of socialisation that turns the biological organism which is what emerges at birth, into a socially co-operating and acting person”. (Assimeng, 2006, p.14.)

Among the regulatory structures that ensure that community remain an avenue for meeting social needs are conventions, rules, and norms and a system of governance. This is underscored by SUM 1 “*I also believe it is a place with people who have agreed to come under a “law” and would want to do things that will improve their lives in that particular place.*”

Community is perceived here as a social organisation with norms serving as signposts providing indications as to what one is to do and what one is not supposed to do in order to

¹² Boarding Schools are the residential system of education mostly practiced in most Senior High Schools (SHS) in Ghana.

¹³ The informant is an adolescent who lives in a boarding school because one of the parents lives and teaches in that boarding school.

improve people's lives. Norms, rules, laws or any system of conventions regulating the life of people must be well known to the people themselves, and subscribed to by, the people governed by it. 'Laws' as described by the informants are not imposed by one person but are fashioned to ensure the common interest of all. They (norms, laws etc) exist "*for social control*"; as admitted by RMPI; "*This is to control children from going out but rather to learn and also to prevent them from practices which are not good.*" (SUM 2)

Leadership and Laws

A social organisation such as a community apart from having norms also has leaders who are the custodians of the culture, norms and the properties. In a community, leaders also hold the people together and provide direction to the people: "*I can also describe where I live as a community because we have leaders of the community who provide direction and command the respect of all*" (SUM 1). The prime role of the leaders is buttressed by another informant: "*Where I stay is a community because we have a leader who takes care of every issue in the community together with elders.* The point is further made that the way leaders operate the 'laws' makes community and its people distinct. That is, leaders may be informed by peculiarities and specific needs of the community to promulgate 'laws' to suit their people and developmental objectives, Thus each community has its unique laws for varied purposes: *The "laws" in different communities may not be the same, so I can say the kind of "laws" in my community is different from other communities.* (RM 5)

Gleaning from many of the excerpts on this sub-theme, the mentioning of 'laws' appear confusing. This is because the local Fante¹⁴ word for legal or constitutional 'law' appears to be a polysemy; used to refer to all local norms, convention and customs as well as the laws which are national in character. As much as this makes the interpretation somewhat difficult,

¹⁴ 'Mbra' is the local Fante word used to refer to national laws, local customs and norms in the rural area.

it also reveals clearly that individuals come under a hierarchy of laws in the community: formal national laws and local norms, convention and customs. The responses reveal that the notion of 'law' as emphasised vigorously above may not necessarily be the formal national laws to which every Ghanaian must subscribe, but the norms, social mores and customs which guide the day - to - day lives and activities of the people and are fashioned out of the specific needs of the people. This was emphasised profoundly especially by the informants in the rural setting; *“In my community, when you are caught quarrelling, the ‘law’ prescribes a penalty of two bags of cement, but I know a nearby community where the same offence attracts just a bag of cement and two plastic chairs”* (RFO5).

This excerpt shows how under a particular governance system in a community, people have accepted creative ways to deter and punish people from disturbing the peace of the community. Punitive measures (yielding economic value to the community) are meted out to people involved in anti - social behaviour. The mention of this particular law in the voice above shows clearly that 'law' as used by the informants is not the formal laws of the state but local regulatory frameworks unique to the locality in the form of customs and norms.

From the forgoing elucidations, community is not perceived as an acephalous locality with people without leadership and any sense of purpose. Rather, community is a governed social organisation characterised by leadership where human life and activities are socially controlled by a hierarchy of systems of laws, local norms and customs.

4.1.4 CULTURE

Social groups among others have a characteristic feature of interaction. The interaction existing between social groups has meaning, purpose and structure. (Assimeng, 2006). The interactive feature of social groups also provides a framework within which individual's

thoughts and actions could be patterned. Generally speaking, the social framework under which life is pattern somehow is ingrained in the culture of the people.

A community is made up of a prevailing culture because it is the framework within which the interaction patterns and the life of individuals are regulated. Relationships between the persons and the culture of the community are determined to a greater extent by how this framework works. According to Valsiner, (2007), there are three forms of relations between person and culture: person belongs to culture, culture belongs to the person and culture belongs to the relating of the person and the environment. The first; person belongs to culture, appeared to dominate the discourses across all the settings of interest to the present study. For example, a semi urban male said:

In my community, there is a special way of dressing and again we have particular kinds of foods we eat. If someone finds it difficult eating our food then it would mean that person is not a member. The language the person speaks too might be different from what we speak. (SUM, 4).

The assertion is consistent with the form “person belongs to culture” as described by Valsiner. It denotes “commonality of belonging and guarantees relative similarity among people staying in a community” (Valsiner, 2007, p.21). This form of person culture relationship: the person belongs to culture, specifies a clear boundary to the membership of a community as outlined in the McMillan and Chavis model (1986).

Boundary

Culture, might be perceived as a boundary because it distinguishes a community from another and an individual member of a community from non members of that community: “*The way the person dresses, eats or speaks would tell me whether the person is or is not a member of the community*” RFO3 buttresses.

Another illustrative voice also makes this boundary function of culture clearer; *“There is a certain man in my community who is a Rasta man. His very life, the way he speaks and his hairstyle are enough to recognise him as not part of the community (Sure).”* (UMO, 4).

Even among people who seem to share common ancestry and historical and ethnic background, the subject of cultural boundary differentiates people of one community from the other. According to RFO 4,

The way the person talks or walks could be another way of knowing his background. People from Saltpond¹⁵ for instance, have a way of speaking different from us though we all speak the same Fante language. So when you hear the Fante is similar to yours, then obviously, the person should come from my community if not, then he is not from my community”. (RFO4)

A lively discourse emanated from a question posed by UFO1 on the same issue of culture and boundary. She enquires; *“for example someone who is an Ewe¹⁶ may stay in an Ashanti¹⁷ community, a time may come when such a person may be fluent in the Ashanti language due to his long stay there, what about that too (?)*.

To the rescue of UFO1, UFO4 admits:

“Because he has learnt the language and eat the food of the people, he can be a member of that community. Even if for some reasons he relocates and there is a festival or any occasion at all, he still can come back and partake in everything the people would do”.

¹⁵ *Saltpond* is a Fante semi urban community and the capital of the Municipality within which the rural area Obuadze, is located

¹⁶ Ewe is one of the main tribal groups in Ghana

¹⁷ Ashanti is also one of the ethnic groups of the Akan people. The Akan group is the largest tribal grouping in Ghana.

This answer did not rest well with UFO3 who sharply intervened and explained:

“(Please)..(Please) I said no because you may own a property or something in the community but that does not mean the culture is yours because you also have your own culture. When you are to describe your culture, you may describe it as yours and I will also describe mine as mine so it will be wrong to say you belong to the culture of where you stayed temporary”(UFO,3).

It could be gleaned from the argument put up by UFO 3 that her rejection of 'foreigners' in spite of their seeming acculturation is premised on the view that culture is a possessive entity that could be owned by an individual and could be transported. From this perspective, culture therefore may belong to the person and is “brought into personal subjective worlds where they transform subjectivities, yet culturally guided ways” (Valsiner, 2007, p.21). However for people who do not belong to cultures of their host communities, intense negotiation between one's culture and a community's culture may underlie successful acculturation and conferment of membership on them by the host community. At this stage, the third form of person and culture relation; culture belongs to the relating of the person and the environment (host community) may become applicable. Here, culture becomes exemplified through different processes by which a person relates with the world” (ibid.). So to the extent that people (though not from a community) have internalised certain norms of the host community, then one can safely admit that culture of a community may define the boundary of membership and incorporate such people into the membership of a community. People who have successfully negotiated their culture and that of the host community's and share in the lived experiences of the indigenes may well be classified as members. This may underlie the reasoning of UFO1 and UFO4. For UFO3, the negotiation between the culture possessed by the individual and the host community's may not have been complete and successful hence her stance. From the informants' perceptions, community could be summarised as consisting

of environment and people. Environment comprising both physical and socio-cultural while the people comprise both members and non-members.

4.2.0: BELONGINGNESS

Humans are active agents in their social worlds and therefore partake in the process of dynamic interaction among the components making up the society. As social beings, there exist instrumental relationships among individual members of the society. This among others is aimed at harnessing human and material resources essential for livelihood needs. Human beings are gregarious. That is to say, we are always seeking to live in ‘flocks’ and communities. “We are fond of being in the company of fellow human beings” (Assimeng, 2006, p.10). According to Cornell and Wellborn (1991), the need for relatedness is one of the three basic psychological human needs that are essential for human growth and development along with the need for autonomy and competence. Throughout the interviews, community was constructed partly as avenues for meeting these needs. From the interviews, the theme of belongingness or need for relatedness centered around four interrelated sub-themes of, dependency, reciprocal obligation, responsibility and insurance.

4.2.1 DEPENDENCY

A theme of dependency came out strongly from the voices of the informants. There appeared to be differences in the values upon which the individual-community relation is built in the urban and rural areas. In the rural community, individuals perceive themselves as integral part of the community and so their identity evolves not without recourse to the community. Sometimes, the community itself becomes the very identity and this becomes a strong foundation upon which deep seated feelings of belongingness are built. This is illustrated here by a RMO 5 “*I feel belonged because when I go to any place and do something bad or good,*

the first thing they would say is that this person is from Anomansa¹⁸, that is my community.

The informant in this quote sought to say that the community is the ultimate identity he carries out. In his view, a good or bad behaviour outside the community implies a good or a bad image not for him but Anomansa where he comes from. The collective will of the people in the community to strive to maintain a good corporate image may lead them to be nested in their social relations. Based on this, there is the likelihood that people would anchor interactions on harmonious interdependent relations. The need to maintain this collective will somehow become ingrained in the individuals and define their self construal. A self construal of interdependence which is prevalent among Africans with Ghana inclusive, according to Markus and Kitayama (1994), drives people to value belonging, fitting in, maintaining harmony, restraining oneself, and promoting others' goals. Within this framework of human interaction, dependency becomes pivotal. It ensures relative peace and social harmony with the community, making people to develop strong feelings for their community:

“I feel part of my community and have a sense of belonging because that is where I was born and where I have stayed all my life. Whenever I go to any community at all and for some reasons I am sacked, at least the only place I can call my own is my community. When I am in my community, I can rely on many others and at least I have a certain right too that no one can take from me. No one can ask me to leave my own community. I mean leave for where... (?).(RMO2).

This voice affirms an ontological right to belong and to depend on a community. The rhetorical question “*I mean leave for where?*” seems to say there is no other place where this right to ‘belong’ and ‘depend’ could be met. The value of interdependency existing in the community could also be thought of as underlying the seeming cohesiveness prevailing in the rural contexts. Cohesiveness is expressed as people act in a coordinated manner on common

¹⁸ Anomansa is a neighbouring rural community to Obuadze; the setting for the rural study

goals and purposes. Contrasting this sharply with the situation in the urban center, one might assume the seeming independent construal among the people are due to the effects of rapid social changes brought about by urbanisation and globalisation. This phenomenon finds expression in the linear model of local community derived from the Tonnie's (1887) and Wirth's (1938) classic work. In this model, increased size and density of populations are thought to be the primary exogenous factors that influence social behaviour. The forces of urbanism are hypothesised to weaken community kinship and friendship bonds as well as social participation in local affairs (Wirth 1938, as cited in Sampson, 1988). The weakening of such relational bonds may underlie increasing independent way of life and segmentation of urban people. People choose to either live independently or among groups with whom they share certain interests and goals. Based on this, people may exploit individual competences to pursue individual goals or group goals mostly at the expense of the collective. UMM4 clarifies this point: *"In Accra everyone thinks we are different, if you live among the Muslims for instance, they think you are different. They see you as unholy and would not want to share anything with you, if you do otherwise, confusion and chaos results"*

This state of affairs is contrasted in the voice of UFO3 *'In my home town which is a village in the Western region, many people are united but here they are not'*. Another explanation is offered by UFPI; *'In Accra many people from different tribes have come here to work that is why they are not united'*. Unity is therefore demonstrated in the rural community in many diverse ways and it underpins mutual aid expressed among the people. Recounting her contribution to bereaved people in her community for instance, RFO5 explains;

'Well, I do all these because whenever you are also bereaved, you are assured you will not do all the work alone, your family would also get a lot of help from many other people because of the fact that you depend on others while others in turn depend on you too in a similar situation'.

The lack of meaningful social relations characterised by individualistic tendencies and pursuit of self-interests in urban areas may indeed be counterproductive. This may reflect why some urban dwellers could gleefully engage in anti-social actions with careless abandon. UFPI emphasised this and admonishes as follows:

“Well some people are very selfish, thinking about themselves only and not the community. If something wrong is going on near them or in the community, they think because it is not happening in their house, it is none of their business. This is not good at all because we are all in the community as one people so if even something bad is going on somewhere in the community, each person can initiate an action to halt it so that it does not harm other members of the community. This must be done because we are all each other’s keeper. If something goes on well, it goes on well for all of us, if it gets bad for one person eventually, it would get bad for all of us.”

UFPI’s arguments shows amply the extreme form of independence where people are not concerned at all about the interest of others but only about their selfish interest. The informant goes on to outline possible solution to salvage the situation by stressing the need for people to be there for others; implying, dependency.

4.2.2. RECIPROCAL OBLIGATION

Closely linked to the sub theme of dependency is reciprocal obligation. There is an Akan maxim that “the reason two deers walk together is that one has to take the mote from the other’s eye’. This aptly underlines reciprocity as a moral reason for social life or togetherness and implies the impossibility of receiving some needed help in a life of selfishness: ‘Solitariness is a pitiable condition’ asserts another popular maxim in the context of Ghana. Ethical egoism (selfishness) is thus rejected because it is considered antisocial (Gyekye,

2004.). The element of reciprocity is an underlying construct which governs interpersonal relations between the community and its citizens. SUF1 asserts that:

“Where would the community be if there are no people living there and contributing to its development? Yes I need the community too to give me a place I can stay and develop, so I feel I have to help the community as the community also helps me”.

The implication of this reciprocity is that a community that does not endow its members with some enabling conditions necessary for healthy psycho-social development suffers. The reason among others is that, when one has a sense of belonging to an identified community, one can anticipate receiving from the community those resources he/she perceives to be present in the community (Pretty *et al*, 2002). One would therefore be more likely to reciprocate by responding in kind when the community requires something of his/her resources. In other words, people care for, and are cared for by those with whom they belong (ibid). Apathy results when there is lack of sustained acts of reciprocity of individual’s effort and resources as revealed by UFO3:

“In my community for instance, there is the assemblyman who is the political head of my place. He is dormant and does not encourage people to do the right things, for instance, if someone sees a problem say littered surroundings or say indiscriminate waste disposal sites, the person would like to do something about it. But because the person may be alone, and there is no power backing him or her, after he or she has finished, instead of nobody dumping refuse there, people would still do it. This continues to the extent that the volunteer would give up initiate such actions.Hmm...I mean this is bad!

Individuals may have a tendency naturally to contribute to the community, however when their singular efforts are not necessarily reciprocated, it may lead to the total breakdown of

willingness to help. The voice above also makes an attribution to lack of effective leadership. From the sub-theme of social organisation, it was evident that leadership within a community is expected to enforce laws to regulate social behaviour and also to give direction for development. Linking this to the quote above, the leadership of the community in question is seen to be ineffective and unappreciative of individual efforts. An implication drawn is that a feeling of belongingness in a community does not emerge out of just being in a community, but out of awareness that one's effort in a community would be appreciated and reciprocated especially by effective leadership. According to MacMillan and Chavis (1986), some of the needs that can be fulfilled through community membership include demonstration of competence by members, and the shared values that are exhibited by the group. The quote affirms this clearly because volunteerism for purposes of community development is discouraged because individual's competences and efforts are unappreciated due to lack of shared value of reciprocity which is vitally important for community development. A community where there is so much apathy on the part of leaders and members in general towards development is bound to have fast depreciation of feelings of belongingness on the part of its members. The same respondent UFO3 further admits:

'Sometimes I see the place dirty, and it becomes so bad that it is even shameful to let someone come and visit you in your community. The community looks untidy most often. Sometimes the dirt is overwhelming that I can just not be able to do much. Two or three people joining me would do, but then no one is ready to help, in that case, then I leave it and we all suffer as we live in it.That is it period!...

There is frustration in the voice above. "The long pause followed by the phrase *That is it! Period*" at the end of the quote shows there is extreme difficulty in verbalising consequences of the situation in the community. The phrase might implicitly confirm that practically there is no other alternative or solution to bail the community out of the possible consequences and

that the situation is out of hand. Again the use of the word 'shameful' is too strong and confirms total degeneration of feelings for the community. This also reflects the link which physical environment of a community has on one's self image. That is the self image and esteem of the informant is battered by unpleasant conditions inherent in the informants community consistent with Kim and Kaplan's model. Place attachment in Tertaglia's (2006) model also becomes very salient to understanding the informants psychological sense of community. The informant herself and others may live helplessly in the situation. A negative perception of the community environment is thought to lead to stress and/or arousal (Wandersman *et al.*, 1983) and this may have an influence on one's participation and general feeling towards the community.

The feeling of lack of reciprocal obligation leading to depreciating sense of community came out strongly from the interviews as a feature that is more common in the urban context than in the rural communities. Reasons for this: "*In the rural areas, they know themselves and understand themselves*". Admits UMO1.

Exploring this further, the urban community, in this case Accra is understandably made up of a heterogeneous population of people from different cultures and backgrounds (Nukunya, 2003). Most urban dwellers may have no specific moral allegiance to the communities in which they live. They might be interested only in pursuing goals and interests for which reason(s) they stay in the urban communities. This sharply contrasts with the situation in the rural areas. As admitted by the above informant, the people know themselves because they are more homogenous in terms of culture and values. This may make them more cohesive and susceptible to influences to contribute to developmental objectives essential for their common needs and interests. It may be based on the idea of cohesiveness that adolescents from the rural communities reciprocate benefits they derive from their community

by initiating a number of developmental programmes and project as revealed in their voices in latter themes.

4.2.3 RESPONSIBILITY

Individuals making up community seem to have a mental contract that obligates them to assume a role requiring a responsibility towards the community. Prevailing views of psychological sense of community appears to be rooted heavily in human needs theory. That is, one's psychological connection to a community is premised on the extent to which the community satisfies one's psychological and physiological needs. Several excerpts in the interviews buttress the need theories, for example, UFO5 admits this view:

I have the need to be educated so I can become meaningful to my community. My community has provided me a school which is helping me in that regard. Again my parents are working in the community and this enables them to cater for me and also provide me my basic needs. (UFO5).

From the excerpt, a critical need for the informant to be educated is met with a provision of school. His basic needs are also provided for. Feelings towards a community clearly may be influenced by need satisfaction and needs fulfilment as admitted in the Kim and Kaplan's (2004) and McMillan and Chavis's models respectively. Exploring this needs-based logic as an underlying assumption of the psychological sense of community, the community is viewed as a resource for meeting physiological or psychological needs of the individual. To the extent that these needs are met, individuals are more likely to feel a better psychological sense of community and engage in community oriented behaviour as an urban male illustrate here:

“There was a man in our community who protects the people especially young people when they find themselves in danger. One day he was attacked by armed robbers and was injured so an appeal was made for people to contribute a little towards his upkeep and I contributed”. (UMM4)”

The informant above may have given help to the injured man based on the idea that his safety needs is provided for by the community through that very man. It may probably also imply that if the informant does not contribute to quick healing of the man who ensures safety of young people including him, then his (UMM4) safety would still be in danger.

Within this perspective, sense of community is created by the interaction of an individual’s psychological and physiological needs with the community context in terms of its ability to meet those needs. (Nowell & Boyd, 2010). Psychological sense of community can thus be redefined as an individual’s sense that their community serves as a resource for meeting key physiological and psychological needs such as the need for affiliation, power and affection. (McClelland as cited in Nowell & Boyd, 2010). The point is made strongly from the above illumination that informants’ responsibilities towards their communities are contingent on satisfaction of basic need. Without discrediting this theme, it emerged strongly from the study that some informant’s responsibility towards their communities may not necessarily stem out of a predisposition to engage in community oriented behaviours as a result of the communities’ satisfaction of their need, but rather from a higher order ideals, personal values and a sense of responsibility (Perry, 2000). Many excerpts from the study illustrates this: *“Even this school, it was announced Swine flu had broken out in some part of our community so they even came into our school to mobilise funds to vaccinate the whole community with H1N1 vaccine and I contributed” (UMO,1)*. SUM5 could not have even put it more clearly;

“My community actually wants to educate its youth so they could also develop the community when they become adults. Because of this, we the young ones help in communal labour aimed at construction of facilities for the benefits of the youth and their future such as libraries and schools. There was a time I was called upon to sweep a computer lab in my community. I guessed if I did not do that, the place would have been untidy and it could have become a breeding ground for mosquitoes which could cause malaria. When people get sick too, the community suffer because the very people who are supposed to work would not get the strength to do that.”

The excerpt above shifts the perception of the community away from the prevailing view as a resource for satisfaction of needs to a platform for responsibility. The reason might be that the former view of community in essence, struggles to account for situations in which people act to the benefit of their communities- often at a substantial costs to themselves and not out of expectation of personal benefits (Nowell & Boyd, 2010). Mention can be made of a RMO1 who claimed:

“When there is funeral, I even participate in digging of graves... Actually I do not participate in the digging of the graves since that is a sacred duty performed by people who have undergone some ritual but I carry the equipment used to dig graves” (RM1).

Though this informant is quick to admit he does not participate in the actual digging of graves, he implies from his voice that what he does; carrying of the implements to the graveyard, is as important as the actual practice itself. Again it is gleaned clearly that the mental preparedness to engage in the actual grave digging is not in doubt at all on the part of the informant. The only reason for him not engaging in the actual practice is the traditional barrier which, as he put it, is the ritual¹⁹ one has to go through before engaging in that. This

¹⁹ Traditional Ghanaian beliefs require elaborate rituals to be performed before a grave is dug for the dead.

also demonstrates a responsibility on the part of the informant to obey the time honoured values and customs of the community. It is possible also to infer that such acts of responsible conducts and engagements without compulsion or expectation of benefits on the part adolescents such as RM1 are borne out of some or a combination of dispositional traits of conscientiousness, openness and agreeableness as implied in the Big five personality model. Thus giving credence to Loundsbury *et al*, (2009) finding that sense of community could be influenced by personality variables. Some informants also expressed a sense of responsibility for the improvement and wellbeing of other members and the community as a whole. This was explicitly not rooted in an expectation of direct personal benefits: *“We have founded a club called children’s club. Every Sunday we go and clean the market to make it very tidy”* (RFO 3). A semi urban male express this in an interesting way “:

“... I love kids so even when a child is refusing to go to school, the parents would look for me to come and convince the child to go to school .The same is what I do when a child is crying so much that the mother is unable to attend to a pressing need. I have a way of playing with them to win their hearts. This makes me feel important. (SUM, 6)

The opportunity to demonstrate one’s competence or talents in a community is enough motivation to people and not necessarily out of a desire to have some rewards. From SUM 6, this makes him feel important. That is, he feels community can count on him too in pressing situations even at his age. His love for kids drives him to engage them to allow mothers especially to attend to other important needs. This passion on the part of SUM6 is borne not out of expectation of any overt or covert satisfaction of a need .According to Gyekye, (2003), in the traditional African society, bringing up children to feel that they have responsibilities towards others is part of the whole process of socialisation. The ethic of responsibility, rather than the ethic of individual rights, is inculcated from the outset (Ibid). Ghana is no exception as children are taught to be motivated in their actions more by their obligations to contribute

to the welfare of the community than by consideration only of their own rights and self-interests. The justification for giving primary status to responsibility rather than to individual rights derives from the requirements and implications of social life. Community life directly involves a person in social and moral roles, responsibilities, obligations, commitments that must be fulfilled.

4.2.4 INSURANCE

Given the uncertainties of life, individuals work towards building a resource where they can readily draw support from each time circumstances befalls them. It becomes very much plausible that in good times, individuals usually accumulate sufficient savings to enable them to meet various challenges that may face them in future, But given the prevailing low wage earnings and high incidence of unemployment in the context of Ghana according to the Human Development Report (UNDP, 2007), many people may not be able to meet daily wants and needs and may be unable to leave a margin for saving. Individuals faced by this situation may want to divert their attention from physical/monetary premiums against future setbacks. They would look more to accumulating ‘social premiums’ which could eventually become a resource from which they could draw support in times of adversity.

Social support here refers to friendship networks and the development of small groups that foster feelings of caring for each other (Keane, 1991; Pretty, et al., 1996; Schwirian & Schwirian, 1993) especially in times of difficulties. Social support is one of the sub components of Kim and Kaplan’s (2004) proposed model for psychological sense of community. Adolescents used in the present study, all of whom were dependents, may draw on social support as a form of insurance or a buffer against life’s challenges. Community as a social insurance was candidly underscored; “*When you find yourself in difficulties, you easily*

receive help” (RMO 2). An urban informant also supported this tacitly “*I respect my people a lot so anytime I go into trouble, they come to my aid*” (UMO 5). Another informant corroborates further; “*I feel safe because anytime I fall down or get injured even far away from home; people readily come to my aid and later take me to my parent (UMO3)*”. To the informant UMO3, there is the assurance of ready support in times of accidents even far away from home. The excerpts reveal a social obligation on the part of all within the community to be primary help agents to people in crisis even before parents or family members come in. The use of the phrase ‘*feel safe*’ implies ‘*not feeling unsafe*’ or ‘*not feeling uncomfortable*’. In the situation of ‘*feeling safe*’, the physical and mental health of an individual are sound, implying individual can function to their optimal level and become worthy citizens capable of becoming important assets to their communities. The premium for this form of insurance is paid through conscious demonstration of concern for the well-being of others, and to do what one could to advance the common good, through effective participation in the community. The element of social insurance becomes even more pronounced after death as it is invoked vigorously”:

Example, if someone who has contributed so much in the lives of members of the community dies, his funeral brings virtually everybody in the community together as everyone contribute his or her part for the ceremony. The befitting burial and the huge number of mourners at times become motivating to some individuals who would also start engaging in philanthropic activities for the community with the hope of getting same honour in the event of death”.(UFO3).

People do not just offer their gracious presence to give a fitting burial, but also readily assist in many ways to lessen the plight of the bereaved family in their preparation towards the funeral. Insurance as expressed in the voice above becomes an honour in the event of death and it encourages the living to be community - minded. Thus, community mindedness could

be termed as the base premium for the ‘social insurance’. The benefits for all these are enormous:

“Yes I derive some benefits in a sense that, it takes people to develop. Whenever there is a programme or a project which benefits me in the end, people willingly contribute to its execution, something may be my strength alone cannot do. An example is funeral celebration. I assist bereaved families when they are organising funeral for their departed” admits RFO2.

The SUF3 also underscores:

“Well, I do all these because whenever you are also bereaved, you are assured you will not do all the work alone, your family would also get a lot of help from many other people because of the fact that you do others and others would in turn do to you too in a similar situation.

Failure to pay this premium for the social insurance could be very devastating even after death. *“Nobody even minds you”* UFPI admits. This may be a higher form of indignity visited on anyone upon his death. The reason being that, there is the belief that one must transit successfully into the next world and this is done through giving the dead a befitting funeral. For *“nobody to mind you”* after ones death as admitted by SUF3 is to be declared worthless to the community both in the physical and spiritual worlds.

4.3.0 EFFECTS ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Being an entity whose essence is defined with reference to the environing community, (Menkiti, 1984) the prime importance of the community to the African and the overall effect of the community on a person’s psycho-social life cannot be downplayed. Four subthemes are delineated to reveal the effect of the community on the individuals based on individual’s

perception of it. These sub themes are, Identity, emotional attachment, development and challenge of potential and hope. (Incorporation into the universal). These are discussed below

4.3.1 IDENTITY

According to McMillan and Chavis (1986) an individual draws identity by being a member of the community. Apart from this, Kim and Kaplan's (2004) proposed model of psychological sense of community also emphasises that the local features of the built and natural environment characterize a physical identity of place which in turn affects people's personal and group identity. The identity of people, to a greater extent, is shared because the community provides physical, cultural and psychological environment for common experience. This is significant because individuals' self - esteem and pride becomes a product of positive evaluation of oneself, the group, or the place with which one identifies and shares a common experience with others. Because of the shared nature of identity, certain values are upheld to ensure maintenance of a healthy and a positive identity of both the community and the members. Features such as name, language, tribal marks dressing, dancing, courtesies and festivals are reflective of such values and they provide a sense of connectedness with the past consistent with Kim and Kaplan's model. Anyone who is a member of that community carries such values along with him or her as an identity marker not only for himself but the community where he comes from or lives. For example *"I am mostly identified by name and the tribal mark on my cheek", I am identified because I speak the language they speak"* RPIM admit. Community is a social group therefore individuals living in it hold a common identification of themselves as members of same social category (Stets & Burke, 2000). In an answer to a question regarding how people could be identified in a community, UFO3 said *"How they talk, walk and their language."* SUF3 also corroborates *"Some also have tribal*

marks". The commonality of this identity referred to above is probably grounded in the Akan philosophical doctrine in Ghana that success and meaning of the individual's life depend on identifying oneself with the group (Community) (Gyekye, 1995). This might be very necessary because the ways locales are imbued with personal and social meanings could serve as an important sign or location of the self (Hummon, 1992). On the issue of the name as an identity marker, UFO3 makes an interesting point

"What I mean is that although there are some names that are common, every community has a special name for its people. I for instance, the name am known is a popular name which is found in many other communities and cultures but in my home town, each person has a unique name which if anyone from my hometown hears, automatically, he would identify me as coming from that community".

UFO3 seems to say that each person is named after his community. Much as this literally may not be the case, an implication could be drawn that names are coined out of the particular history and culture of a community. Thus the categorisation of the self into a particular community (having a common culture and history) makes the individual carry a collective symbol; (name) around. Identity markers thus are the common symbols implied in the membership element of the model by McMillan and Chavis on the psychological sense of community.

RMO3 emphasises the shared individual-community identity by asserting that *"when for instance I stay in a different community and I do something bad, the first thing they will ask is where I come from or even when they know my name, it will guide them to know where I come from"*. The emphasis in knowing the community other than the person himself in the extract above show the extent to which the identity of the individual is welded together with the identity of the community.

Going through the voices of the informants further reveal that that the adolescents while wanting to gain acceptance within the communities by sharing in the common identity of the community, also consciously but meticulously create their own unique identities. The excerpt below makes this point clearer:

“When you are respectful to everyone especially the elders, you are easily recognised, especially when you assist the elderly by carrying whatever load they have or run errands for them each time they call on you.”(RFO 2). These imply that certain unique attributes and desires which give one personal identities operate not without recourse to the framework of the values, customs, rules and regulations of the community. Although personal identity is the categorisation of the self as a unique entity, distinct from other individuals, it is clearly evident that people hardly act not in terms of their own goals and desires outside the interest of others but rather, they cleverly link personal identities to specific social identities, thus creating unique ways of expressing membership in communities.. This is because pursuing a cause based on one’s unique identity and interest may be antithetical to the interest of the community and this may also be described as anti-social behaviour (Gyekye, 2003). The following excerpt points to this direction;

“We normally clean our refuse site every week. During such times, some elderly people come there to inspire us the youth so when they see that someone is doing well by working hard, they encourage him or her. However when someone is not pulling his weight or misbehaving, the first question they ask is whose son or daughter is this? Immediately they get to know of your parent’s name, they know you or recognise you.
(UFO3)

The experiences the youth have in their community, such as participating in clean up or other community events influence how they view their community. According to Cox and Tucker

(2011) often these experiences foster emotional ties to friends and community organisations and can lead individuals to “identify with a place because of the positive feelings or sense of belonging they develop.

Identity can be seen as a combination of personal, role and social identities. The reason is that although each person may have his or her own unique interest and desires, one is expected to play his or her role in the community as an effective and a responsible member of the community. He or she is also expected to bear all responsibilities that come with the role. As a young person in the community, the adolescent is expected to contribute physically to community development. Failure to live up to this expectation brings a question on his identity. This may underlie why the informant UFO3 intimate that *immediately they get to know of your parents’ name, they get to know you or recognise you*. It may probably also be because one loses his or her identity by misbehaving or pursuing goals inimical to the interest of the community. Recourse to parent may therefore be the necessary and the only way to identify any young person who engages in anti-social tendencies.

SUM5’s opinion is quite revealing;

”Yes you can be recognised based on one or two features you have. But for me, real identity comes when you leave a lasting legacy for the later generation in your community. People would want to read more about you after you are dead and gone, your name will never die out. There are some communities in Ghana where by their socio-economic status, they matter less but because of some good deeds of certain individuals who hail from the communities, such communities have become prominent and the mention of the names of some these communities, naturally bring to mind certain individuals who are important personalities not only in the history of such communities but the nation as a whole.”

This is a clear emphasis on the common identity of community and members. That is, while people carry elements of the community such as the name, languages etc around to outline their identities, communities are also accentuated by the identities of its members. This identification enhances ones wellbeing in the community. Cox and Tucker (2011) affirm this by saying youth who care about and take pride in their community may enjoy a sense of comfort that leads to a more positive outlook about themselves, the area, and their academic goals.

4.3.2 EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT

The informants' emotional attachment to the communities based on their identification and membership is captured by their trust for their communities and their willingness not only to stay permanently in their hometown during old age but also to have their mortal remains interred in their hometowns. Borrowing from Bowlby's attachment theory, "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings" (Bowlby, 1969, p. 194) must underlie relationship among people in a community. Secure attachment (Ainsworth, 1978) must be seen to build strong dependence, security and trust among people in their communities. There is an obsession from the voices of the informants to be emotionally attached to home communities. This brings into question why adolescent are not usually emotionally attached to places they live other than their hometowns.

Most communities have their unique pattern for organising their people. In a traditional society of Ghana, whether relationships are based on biological ties or not, they are mostly couched in consanguineal terms. (Nukunya, 2000). The pattern of social life prescribes statuses and roles to people who are in particular relationships. Based on this, it can be inferred that the entire aspect of the life of the individual is under the higher need to keep the community together. Individuals are thus nested in a web of relationships that provide basic needs essential for a good life within the community. One of these groups of needs emotional

needs is emphasised by MacMillan and Chavis (1986) as an essential need that is met within the community. The life of the individual is therefore underpinned by how much their emotional needs are met. Where these needs are met, one is sure to be emotionally attached.

The sense of emotional attachment to community was amplified across all the interviews.

The importance of the emotional attachment to a community looms large and determines almost everything. For example;

“For me I have trust in my community because people readily come to the aid of others genuinely in need. I have personally gone to the chief to request for academic aids such as books and I had it, the issue is that there seems to be a sense of pride if one is seen or heard assisting the youth so a lot of people do well in that regard and this makes me trust the community. I am not disappointed at all” (SUM6).

The informant above moves the argument for the emotional attachment into a higher order need of trust for the community implying secured attachment (Ainsworth, 1978) to the community. In the situation of trust for the community, one safely subsumes both his present physical and spiritual wellbeing as well as that of the future under the community. The emotions people have towards their communities are a source of pride as captured in the above voice. Putting trust in someone or something as a result of one’s emotional attachment to it is something that is done under careful consideration. The reason is that there may be consequences on one’s psycho-social health when the object of one’s emotional attachment and trust fails to live up to expectation. From the voice above, the informant underscores his full fledged commitment to the object of trust (the community) and admits that he is “never disappointed all”. Fried (2000) borrowing from attachment theory maintains that attachment to a community can be understood in terms of the deeper meaning of experiencing close, local relationships with people and, by extension to places of relational interaction. Thus if the informant could personally go to the chief for assistance, then it implies deeper and closer

relationships exist among the members of the community to which SUM6 refers, hence his satisfaction. On the contrary, UMM2 admits:

“There is no security in my community. The norm is that while someone goes through thick and thin to work to get something little, someone too uses just one day to deprive the one of all his toil. There are a lot of thievery and robbery cases and the community seems to have lost the battle against that. This does not make me have trust at all in the community,”

In a situation such as the one outlined in the voice above, the informant’s subjective feelings towards the community, relations, social involvement and commitment of personal resources to the community would be adversely affected. This would greatly impact on ones levels of *bonding* and *belonging* to the community: two factors Pretty *et al* (2003) identify as underpinning ones attachment to a community. The manner the informant expresses the menace of robbery in the community shows how serious he takes the situation. Emotional safety comes under threat. According to Kim and Kaplan (2004), when local residents find their homes and community satisfactory, they are likely to experience a strong community attachment. Emotional safety according to Macmillan (1996) can mean a sense of safety from crime in a neighbourhood. More deeply it can mean secure relationships for sharing feelings and concerns (ibid). However, this is not the case mostly in the urban center and this is pointed out illustratively by UMM3.

“ Where I live now if they realise you are really not part of them the Hausas, they will be stealing you, and if you have a problem with the others, their friends will gang up against you ,fight you, quarrel with you and make life uncomfortable, however if you do something bad and they realise you are part of them ,they will not do anything to you, this behaviour urges other young people to do all sort of things, the indiscipline

and insecurity is too much, at times too they use their language which they know you don't understand to say all sort of things. Things may get to the worst when someone having a problem with you would sweep and dump the refuse right at your doorstep and if you dare question the motive, they would say the Zongo²⁰ is for us so if you feel uncomfortable, you should leave the community for them, if you don't leave and still remain there and complain, they will beat you to death.

This excerpt is quite revealing. Indeed it is an audacious attempt at bringing the challenges in the urban areas which are detrimental to the emotional wellbeing of individuals to the fore. In the urban areas, as a result of social change, spatial mobility or migration, kinship groups are no longer localized and the effect is that there is decline in the importance of shared values as a basis of social life. People's Psychological sense of community suffers. To quote Sarason (1974, p.157) "the absence or dilution of the psychological sense of community is the most destructive dynamic force in the lives of people in our society" and this is the basis for a number of challenges adolescents in the interview admitted they are going through. UFO3 expressed her frustrations: *A community that at the end of the day would not give you anything you need to grow up well, no one wanting to help you, I mean whether you make it or not, it is no one's business, who would trust such a community?."*

It is important to stress from the voices including the one above, that adolescents in the urban areas view the community as a paternalistic entity to which they could depend on for meeting basic psycho-social and emotional needs. This can be contrasted with their counterparts in the rural area most of whom would rather see the community not only as avenues to meet needs but also a platform for demonstrating higher order acts of responsibility and goals. Place dependence is linked to attachment in that it considers the goal directed behavioural component of resident's sense of place. Stools and Schumaker (1981) describe place

²⁰ Zongo is a Hausa term used in Ghana to refer to Muslim dwellings.

dependence as the quality of the current place in terms of availability of social and physical resources to satisfy goal directed behaviour. From the voices so far, and in relative terms one can safely admit that though individuals in the urban areas seem to have a number of physical amenities as compared to the rural areas, their socio-emotional needs of bonding and belonging are hardly satisfied making them less dependent on and attached to their communities.

4.3.4 DEVELOPMENT/CHALLENGE OF POTENTIAL

The stage of adolescence is significant in the life of humans. According to Erikson (1956), what is unique about this stage is that it is a special sort of synthesis of earlier stages and a special sort of anticipation of later ones. Youth has a certain unique quality in a person's life; it is a bridge between childhood and adulthood (ibid). There is radical change in the psychosocial life of the adolescents at this stage: the great body changes accompanying puberty, the ability of the mind to search one's own intentions and the intentions of others, the suddenly sharpened awareness of the roles society has offered for later life (Erikson, 1956). It becomes important the community play an essential role to assist the adolescents in negotiating the radical developmental landmarks in order for them to become socially competent and useful to the community. The essential role the community play is echoed:

“Yes, the elders in the community, whenever they see a child of school going age loitering around, they would be quick to question him or her, if the reason is not tangible enough they would follow the child to the parent and question them too. This ensures I am always in school. There are times too when you are helped when hungry or need some assistance in school” (UMM2).

In the extended family system in Ghana, the parent's prime role in bringing up a child is shared by other members of the family and the community. The members of the community are always around to perform socialising roles for the parents. (Nukunya, 2000) As children mature into adolescence, such responsibility will involve not only assisting the child in meeting some basic needs but also the need for the adults around to train him or her to become a responsible adult full of great potentials (ibid). Sometimes disciplinary roles parents should play over their adolescents is even taken up by the elderly in the community as admitted in the voice" *like when I go wrong, they discipline me and also give me some pieces of advice*"(RM2). This voice reveals that disciplinary action is not an end in itself but a means to an end; intended to make the adolescent know the way forward in behaving responsibly. Akotia (as cited in Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005) however admit that:

The communal system that has held the communities together for centuries is being lost to western individualism without the benefit of western intervention programmes and social policies. For example, there is a break in our external family system (Nukunya, 1992; Asenso Okyere, 1993), as many families, especially those in the urban areas, now focus on the nuclear family system. (p. 21).

The hitherto practice of mentoring and discipline exerted by every adult in a community on a child or adolescent in the communal society of Ghana, as admitted in the quote above, has withered, making adults unable to play some important roles in the growth and development of adolescents especially in the urban areas. This notwithstanding, it emerged from the interviews that adolescents still view the community and for that matter the adults as vital resources to challenge their potentials. Communities that do not provide this function to its adolescents are likely to suffer a great decline in the feelings the adolescents have towards it. UFPI put it this way

“Well as I said earlier, I don’t feel comfortable in my community and therefore not satisfied. I want to stay at a place I can get the mind and a peaceful environment to do what I want to do” The same respondent goes on further to say “:

*As adolescent, I am being pestered here and there by men who want to start a relationship with me. These are some of the things that would not make life comfortable for me for which reason I would want to leave and stay somewhere else”.
But nobody seems to care about me! (UFPI)*

According to Pretty *et al.* (2003) sense of community has implications for community dependence, in that the affective, cognitive and behavioural features of the construct can enter into a person’s assessment of the quality of a town and the comparison of this quality with alternative communities. If this is linked to the place dependence construct referred to earlier from Stokol and Shumaker (1981), then one can say the informant’s intention to leave and to stay somewhere else is based on a comparison she had made between other communities and her present community. This may be informed by lack of availability of social and psychological support to satisfy her goal directed behaviours within the present community.

The voices above demonstrate that if a community and its elderly shelve the responsibility of creating the enabling environment for enhancing the psycho- social and emotional wellbeing of its adolescents, it frustrates its youth. The frustration revealed in the voice of UFPI could sharply be contrasted with satisfaction a rural male reveals when he admitted:

“I am a sportsman and I have been excelling. Each time I need to participate in games, I am helped. An example is when I was selected to be part of the team that would represent my region in inter-regional sports competitions. My community organised a fund raising ceremony solely for me so that I would not need anything during the games. This is something that I see as a positive influence on my ambition

to become a great sportsman in this nation. Though this is not where I come from, I can see that by their help I am going far in my ambition” (SUM6).

This voice shows the strong connection between community’s capacity to support development of potentials and adolescents satisfaction and fulfilment towards it. It implies here that psychological sense of community among adolescents in Ghana is a concept that could also be understood in terms of availability of ready support adolescents need in developing their potentials. Irrespective of whether one comes from a community or not, when this function of providing psycho-social support is given to adolescents to develop their hidden potentials, a community is bound to have its youth have strong psychological sense towards it as implied the voice of SUM6. UMO2 makes a point as follows in a response to why he thinks he should have been supported to develop his potential in football.

“Yes because I would have also got big money and it is not only my family that would benefit, but my community and the entire nation. But because they don’t want someone’s progress, the entire community suffers”

He narrates further an experience

I have a friend who is a very good footballer and was called to join the National Under 14 football team. Before we realised, his name had been changed for the name of the son of one of the elders of the community. I was even better than that man’s son. It was good that the man’s son could not make it during the justifiers.

The attitude of selfishness is revealed through this voice as pertaining in the community of the UMO2. Although UMO2 acknowledges that his destiny could have been changed had he been encouraged and supported by the community, he did not refuse to affirm how his personal success could be tied to the community and even the nation as a whole. It implies the adolescents are of the belief that they are part of the community’s developmental agenda. The

young ones in the community encounter various adults from whose experience they learn how to adapt themselves to the kind of society into which they are growing (Mead, 1984). Thus, the destructive attitude of selfishness demonstrated by the elder in the voice above no wonder had eaten up into the life of the informant himself. This is evident in the informant's apparent happiness in the failure of the 'son of the elder' at the justifiers. Community thus must have the quality of making available all the resources that would support goal directed behaviours of the adolescents (Stokols and Schumaker, 1981)

4.3.3 INCORPORATION INTO THE UNIVERSAL-HOPE

The Ghanaian traditional religion has the belief that death is not the end of man (Nukunya, 2003). When death occurs it is only the physical body that is affected but the soul goes to the land of spirits to join other departed souls. Spirituality thus dwells within every culture and every geographical community because as people search for meaning, spirituality becomes embedded in their life (Fabry, 1980). It informs their ethics and desires (Chile & Simpson, 2004). Spirituality involves the relationship between the individual, the collective (community) and the universe. (ibid). According to Nukunya (2003, p.58), "in the land of the spirits, the dead are able to watch over the affairs of the earthly world, punishing offenders and rewards those who conform to accepted ways and put up exemplary behaviours". This implies that life is a journey from the physical to the spiritual world where highest form of satisfaction and fulfilment is attainable. One's lifestyle on earth determines how one accomplishes the highest fulfilment in the spiritual life. Due to this belief, adolescents in the interview highlight an awareness of the existence of spiritual world. However, from their voices, it becomes clear that the point of connection and transition for a successful interaction between the physical and the spirit world is provided for by the community where they find themselves emotionally attached. In a response to where they might want to be buried when they die, informants were emphatic,

“My motherland, that is my hometown outside Accra, because that is where my umbilical cord was cut so that makes my spirit like to be there” (UFO2).

“My hometown in Prampram outside Accra, because all my ancestors are buried there and my spirit wants there” (UMO4)

The desire for the incorporation into the universal world gives hope to the living and inspires them to lead worthy lives on earth. This is because not everyone upon his or her death achieves this need. That is attaining the status of an ancestor to many Ghanaians is the way to getting oneself fully incorporated into the universal world. Ancestors are those who led good and exemplary lives and died honourably and in advanced age (Nukunya, 2003. p. 58). The fact that only people of certain calibre qualify as ancestors regulates behaviour by making individuals lead exemplary lives as to enable them qualify for the honour after their deaths. This is how a rural informant also affirms the position above;

“May be where I stay, I may not be known that much unlike my hometown so when I die, they might not want to bury me on their land since I am not from there and may not have also contributed much to the community. I guess may be when I am able to contribute much, they would bury me there. Because my hometown is where my ancestors were from and I have my relatives there, I would be much concerned and be remitting them. So naturally, I would be contributing much and be given a fitting burial as an honour for my good works”. (RM4)

This notion, to a greater extent, influences ones contribution to the community while alive. According to MacMillan and Chavis’ (1986) model, spiritual bonding is an essential feature of the shared emotional connection element of the psychological sense of community. To them, spiritual bonding is the primary purpose of religious and quasi-religious communities. Ghanaian communities are described by many as highly religious (Salm & Falola, 2002). Perhaps this may be one of the very reasons why the informants demonstrated consciousness

of the existence of the spiritual world and their desire to seek harmony with it. Bernard (1973 as cited in Dalton et al, 2002) calls this factor ‘community of spirit’. A strong case is therefore being made from the excerpts that whether dead or alive, a member of a community is conscious of an obligation to be part of this ‘community of spirit’ which is universal in character and gives hope to the living. Although a community may not meet all the basic needs of an individual while on earth, the fact that one is sure to become an active agent in the ‘community of spirit’ in order to be able to contribute to the daily lives of the family and the community may make the individual have a strong psychological sense towards it. According to Sarason (1993) sense of community throughout history has usually been inextricably tied to a sense of the transcendent, of spiritual experience beyond oneself and ones immediate world. “A sense of transcendence provides a way to understand one’s life” (Dalton *et al*, 2007 p.192). The unanimity in the choice of their respective hometowns other than where they presently live for their life in old age and eventual burial after death shows adolescent’s belief in how their home communities are scripted as pathways for incorporation into the transcendental world.

It appeared to be an anathema to have one’s body buried elsewhere other than one’s hometown. This is how UMM4 explains:

“Because when I am not buried there it would seem as if I do not like my hometown especially so when all my great grandfathers and mothers were all buried there”.

RMO1 explains further

“If I am buried anywhere outside my hometown, my soul would not have the rest it deserves because that is the home of my soul”

The soul according to the extract above has a home and by extension this home is where one has spiritual connection to ancestors. Spiritual bonding according to McMillan and Chavis (1986) is present to some degree in all communities. Emphasis on hometowns as conduits for

incorporation into the universe or attainment of hope may be justifiable because one derives a lasting belongingness and feels rooted (Riger & Lavrakas 1981) and securely attached (Ainsworth, 1982).

In summary, the sense of interdependence in the rural communities fosters a functional attitude of volunteerism and co-operation which deepens horizontal human relationships thus increasing belongingness. A major problem for the urban dwellers however, is that living close to people with whom one has no significant emotional ties and belonging fosters a spirit of competition (Heller, 1989). Mutual aid that characterises the social interaction in the rural areas becomes mutual exploitation to most urban dwellers thereby severing threads of deep seated belongingness.

CHAPTER FIVE

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1.0 OVERVIEW

The study aimed at exploring adolescents' perception of community and psychological sense of community, how they perceive sense of community towards where they may presently be staying and where they originally come from. The other objectives were to find out if there were differences in the way adolescents perceive psychological sense of community in the urban and rural areas. Finally the study sought to address adolescents' emotional attachment to their communities. The results from the study indicated that the adolescents' perception of psychological sense of community is influenced by their perception of the community, how they feel belonged to the community and effect the community possess on them.

5.1.1. Perception of Psychological Sense of Community

The perception of psychological sense of community among adolescents in Ghana is summarised under the conceptual model below

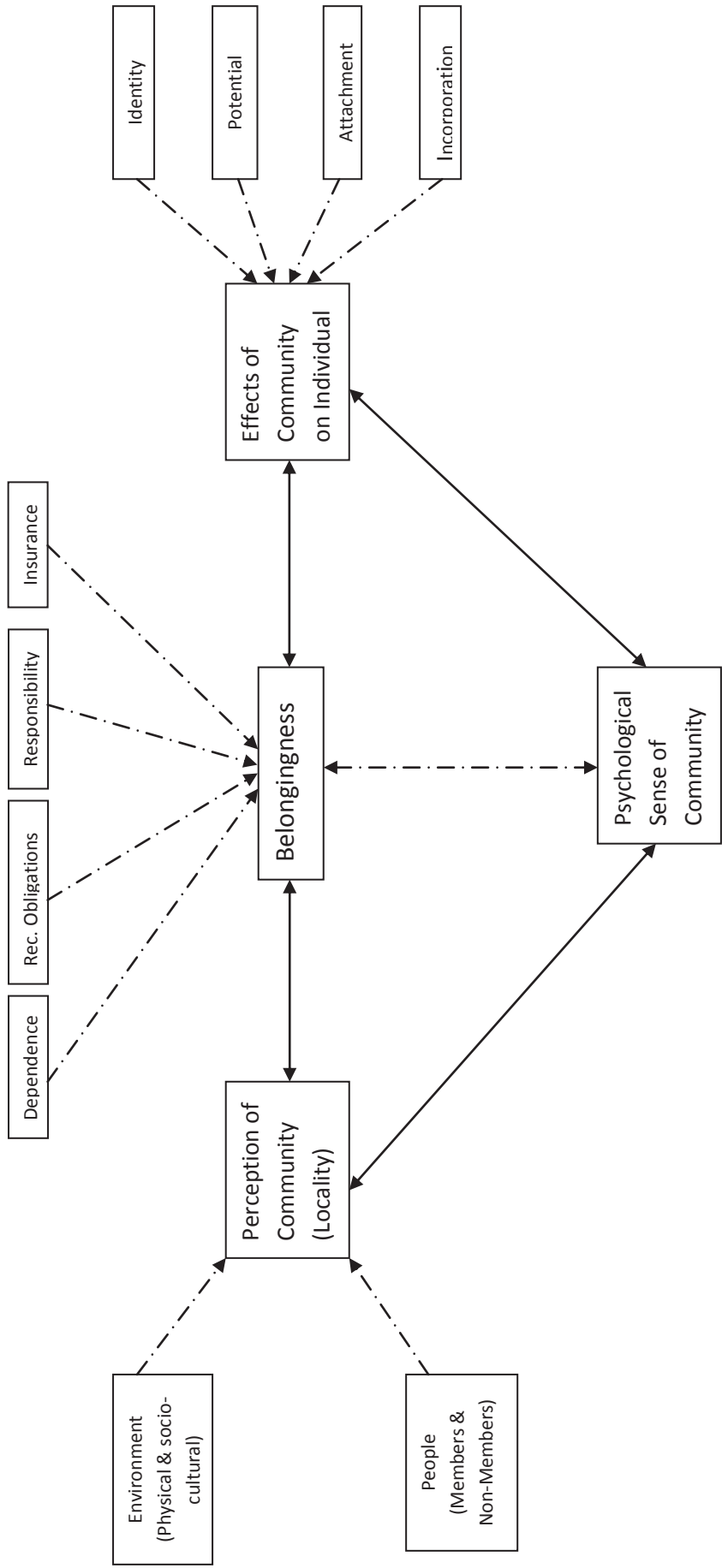


Figure 6: A conceptual model for Perception of Psychological Sense of Community among Adolescents in Ghana

From the model, community is perceived as a geographically bounded entity having components of environment and people. The environment of the community comprises both physical and socio-cultural components. The physical aspects: buildings, trees, roads and the scenery of the community imbue in the people meaning and purpose and underlie their attachment to the place consistent with Tertaglia's (2006) and Kim and Kaplan's (2004) model of psychological sense of community. Place attachment and place dependence are thus very important in understanding psychological sense of community. The socio cultural dimension of the environment comprising the shared values, leadership, culture and norms of the community works to create relational or social bonds and also to some extent, serves as boundaries (MacMillan & Chavis, 1986) to determine membership in the community.

Individual, and to some extent community characteristics; concerns for maintaining harmony, order, consciousness of clean and healthy environment, stimulation through effective community engagement, informing how one perceives the community, influences how one feels belonged. Positive perception of the environment and the people influences increased feelings of belonging while negative perception may reduce feelings of belongingness. Belongingness is a fundamental human motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and an important ethic in the socio-cultural framework of the people of Africa (Menkiti, 1984). Belongingness is driven by the need to relate and depend and incorporate shared community sentiments such as reciprocal obligations and responsibilities into the psycho-social life of the people. Success in the attainment of this fundamental human need of belongingness acts as bases for trust and a buffer against challenges. Adolescents' perception of the effect the community possess over them in terms of their identity, challenge of their potentials and emotional attachment and safety and hope of a successful incorporation into the universal, also influences how the fundamental human motivation of belonging is achieved.

At a stage in life characterised by high need for affiliation (McClelland, 1961) and continuous process of identity negotiation (Erikson, 1963), adolescents need to belong and maintain harmonious relationship with people. This is because the environment and for that matter the community, to a greater degree, influences how development proceed in the life of the adolescent (Bonfrebrenner, 1984). In a communalised setting such as Ghana, belongingness achieved from the perception of community and the effect the community has over the members, influence Adolescents' Psychological Sense of community.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) treat belongingness as a passive concept that is derived by being a member of a community. This study however has revealed that within the socio-cultural framework of the people of Ghana, belongingness is a fundamental concept that is actively attained through incorporation of communal values and provides bases for creation of community related sentiments such as psychological sense of community.

5.1.2. Rural Area

The rural area consisted mostly of ethnically homogenous group who shared common values. The assumption of qualitative homogeneity (Valsiner, 2007) and the relatively small size is thought to foster bonds of kinship, of neighbourliness, and sentiments arising out of living together for generations under a common folk tradition. Social bonds created through dependence on others therefore are basic and fundamental in such a setting. It is influenced by the need to uphold shared community values incorporated in the norms and are supervised by effective traditional leadership. A feeling of belongingness in such a setting is likely to be deep and lasting and may elicit acts of reciprocity and responsibility on the part of the members. Shared identity of the people in the rural area, the extensive family system that allow every child to be the child not only of the biological parents but every adult in the community (Nukunya, 2000), allows for a collective responsibility to guide and nurture the

potentials of adolescents. This fact coupled with an awareness of community as the pathway for incorporation into the universal world, creates emotional attachment. Psychological sense of community is thus likely to be great with this high level of belongingness achieved in the rural setting.

5.1.3. Urban Area

The urban population is multi ethnic; hence the socio-cultural framework with which life is organised can therefore not be common to all people as in the rural area. This may give rise to lack of clarity to the boundary of membership. Integration and Fulfilment of needs (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) such as relatedness are militated against by factors most of which may not necessarily be communal but interpersonal. Wirth (1938) in his classic model emphasised that the size, density and heterogeneity of the membership of urban communities weaken emotional ties. In recognition of the social significance of this fact, Max Weber also pointed out that from “sociological point of view large numbers of inhabitants and density of settlement mean that personal mutual acquaintanceship between the inhabitants which ordinarily inhere in neighbourhoods (rural communities) is lacking (Weber cited in Wirth, 1938, p.11). Dependence in the urban area is thus minimal and in the few cases that they exist, they may be superficial and segmental to groups in the urban area to whom an adolescent may identify with such as family members, ethnic group or religious groups and sometimes peers. Social bonds may not be deeply rooted and place attachment (Tertaglia, 2006) may suffer with regards to the many stressors in the physical and socio-cultural environment of the urban setting. Lack of common identity and opportunities for mentoring adolescents may thus impact on one’s emotional attachment, sense of belonging and eventually psychological sense of community. In effect, informants staying in Accra but come from other communities, perceived psychological sense of community towards Accra lower than their home communities. This occurrence could be explained by the lack of adequate opportunities for

achieving belongingness. Belongingness is revealed through this study to have a relation with identification in that adolescents feel belonged to communities where they can identify with. Strength of identification with a community is found to play a role in several dimensions of psychological sense of community such as membership and shared emotional connection (Obst, 2004). Adolescents identified strongly with their hometowns better than their present communities because hometowns are positioned both as bastion for meeting emotional needs and a bulwark to adolescence lasting attachment and belongingness.

5.1.4 The Semi Urban Area

Though positioned to help in validating the data and its interpretation, Saltpond provided a context not too different from the rural setting. This is because the traditional socio cultural - life of the people appeared impervious to influences brought about by other people who mainly are residents because of work. Unlike both rural and urban communities, informants who do not hail from this setting admit a longing for this community. Positive perception of the community in terms of availability of physical amenities and the friendly people as well as the positive effect these have on the adolescents may have informed longing for this community and psychological sense of community. SUM 6 who is not from this community emphasises this clearly in his voices.

The four dimensions under McMillan and Chavis's (1986) model of psychological sense of community is found to be very important to understanding how people perceive psychological sense of community. However, the context of Ghana and the kind of informants used for the study; adolescents, whose developmental needs and psycho - social challenges differ significantly from the adults required a new model that anchors psychological sense of community on a fundamental human motivation of belongingness. Psychological sense of community among adolescents in Ghana may thus be redefined as a "*feeling of belongingness*

a person perceives in relation to a community, based on the perception of the community and the effect the community has on the person”.

5.1.5. Methodological Issues

The methodological issues that came up in the study need mention. Though a number of people have argued for methodological compatibility of focus group discussion and phenomenological research (Bradbury-Jones, Sambrook & Irvine, 2008), challenges faced in the data collection gave credence to the suggestion by Webb and Kevern, (2000) for the focus group discussion in phenomenological research to be re-looked at. When sacrificing breadth for depth (Smith, 2008) in collecting data, the source of the data (informants) deserves to have unhindered flow of personal experience in an exclusive setting especially when the topic under study is exploratory as in psychological sense of community. Individual interview is suggested to be the way to go in such an endeavour or it could be used together with the FGIs. The current study adopted individual interviews at some point and it yielded richer information. Going through this experience of having to adapt to a technique initially not thought of to validate data and enhance the data collection process, the researcher agrees to some extent with Blumer (1979) that ‘there is no protocol to be followed in the use of any of the procedures of data collection; the procedure should be adapted to its circumstances and guided by judgment of its propriety and fruitfulness’. (p.20)

5.2.0 WEAKNESSES

The study intended to use a heterogeneous sample in terms of ethnic backgrounds for the study and found public schools as avenues to get the sample. An unintended effect of this was that most public Junior High Schools (JHSs) especially are patronised mostly by people from

the lower socio economic bracket because they are free²¹. This gave rise to informants who were similar in terms of socio-economic backgrounds. Generalising the results to all adolescents can be a problem.

Another weakness of this study stems from lack of focus on the personality variables of informants which is hypothesised by Lounsbury, Loveland and Gibson, (2009) as influencing perception of psychological sense of community. Personality variables were important to have been explored because informants who appeared to have high levels of psychological sense of community appeared dutiful and conscientious from their outlook.

All the interviews were conducted while schools were in session. Occasional interruption by teachers to make enquiries from informants required intermittent pauses in the interviews. All these together hampered the smoothness and quality of the interview session.

5.3.0 STRENGTHS

The study offers insights into psychological sense of community among adolescents of Ghana. The cross - context nature of this study is a response to calls by Hill (1996) for psychological sense of community to be seen as setting specific construct. This informs the need for studies into the psychological sense of community to be more culturally sensitive. One of the strengths of the study is its focus on the root term ‘community’. Many at times, studies on psychological sense of community proceed without any attempt to explore informants’ perception of the root concept community. It has been suggested by Ife (1995) that the concept community could be regarded as a subjective experience hence focus on the perception of the community by the informants in this study brought to the fore elements in the community such as the physical environment which have been found to be important to their perception of the construct under investigation.

²¹ Under the new Educational Reform Programme (ERP), a Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) mandates Government to make education free up to the Junior High Schools (JHS). This program is supported with a Capitation Grant of 4.5 Ghana cedis on each student in public schools by the Government

The study confirmed Brodsky's (2006) concept of multiple communities. Though multiple communities exist for informants and play a vital role in their psychosocial development, certain factors have been identified to moderate psychological sense of community in each of these communities to which people belong.

Psychological sense of community is revealed through this study to mean different things to different people in different settings. Belonging in the context of Ghana means a lot to understanding how adolescents perceive psychological sense of community.

5.4.0 POTENTIALS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

5.4.1 Community Psychological Praxis

Community Psychologists are encouraged to be sensitive to salient factors that may influence people's perception of psychological sense of community and participation in community programmes. Dalton *et al* (2007) affirm this duty on Community Psychologist saying "one of the most distinctive contributions of community psychology to the social sciences is our development of concepts and practical strategies for culturally anchored, truly collaborative action research that promotes genuine citizen participation in making decisions (Dalton, *et.al.*, 2007, p.507). This study thus, provides another justification and a framework for a Participatory Action Research (PAR) within communities. It is believed a PAR in communities in Ghana using a framework such as this could help tap the resources of the young people in designing appropriate community intervention projects to deal with challenges such as prevention of crime, epidemic, poverty, removal of all forms of oppression against certain groups in the community or better still empowerment programmes aimed at increasing both individual and community competences to deal with challenges.

The theoretical grounding and methodological strategies that have been used for the measurement and study of community have tended to produce a common feature of 'homogeneity' of people in terms of interests, background, goals and aspirations as constituting community. A community, from this perspective, implies no internal discrepancies and no intra- and inter-individual differences are recognized (Wiesenfeld, 1996) although people may differ significantly on many variables and yet may be integral part of a community. This may have an implication on community practice because of diversity and social justice; two tenets of community psychology which demands collaborative effort with diverse people in a community to design strategies for intervention to community problems.

Governments, city authorities and community leaders in Ghana have for long been embarking on numerous programmes and policies aimed at increasing the consciousness of the young people towards the nation as a whole and communities in particular, however, these have not attained their intended goals satisfactorily. The task of Community Psychologists therefore is to seek partnership with stakeholders: Government of Ghana (GoG), through the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Youth and Sports, (MoYS) and National Youth Council (NYC), community groups and adolescents themselves, in fashioning out transformative intervention strategies aimed at increasing the consciousness of the young people towards dealing with community related problems. To do this effectively, it is strongly recommended that psychological sense of community among adolescents be put in a global context to account for the varying influences globalization is exerting on adolescents and their psychological sense of their communities. The reason for this suggestion is informed by the fact that adolescents may be going through the challenges of having to adjust to new form of communities provided for by globalisation. Thus belongingness attained through face to face relationship with next door neighbours and community members may probably no longer be relevant especially in an era of social changes driven by information-communication

technology. When this epoch provides unlimited access to information from many sources, there may be corresponding unlimited access to obtaining solutions to many problems confronting adolescents. Thus belonging to primary people such as family and community may have gone down. Urban adolescents especially may find themselves in a transitional stage and so may be consciously creating alternative communities.

Obst and White's (2007) study on choice and psychological sense of community could offer insight into psychological sense of community in the urban area. This is because their findings reveal a positive relation between the degree of choice of memberships to communities and psychological sense of community. Urban adolescents especially may have higher psychological sense of communities towards newer forms of communities they may consciously be creating such as interest groups and virtual communities. Rural informants, challenged by lack of access to newer forms of community being created through information technology, may still hold onto the traditional familial face -to -face relationship to achieve belongingness. Rather than designing interventions for young people in communities basing it on normative models, community psychologists should rather develop context dependent models. This can be done against the background of globalization influences and should aim particularly at rapid "ruralisation of the urban areas with the view to increasing belongingness through increased primary, face to face contacts while urbanizing the rural areas with the aim of increasing belongingness from interest based, virtual communities." When sustained programmes and initiatives are developed to achieve this aim, differences in perceptions of psychological sense of community among urban and rural adolescents brought about by effects of globalization, could be minimized to some extent.

5.4.2 Research on Psychological Sense of Community

It has emerged from this study and also from the Kim and Kaplan's (2004) and Tartaglia's model (2006) that the physical environment - which the classic McMillan and Chavis (1986) model fails to factor in the psychological sense of community, plays a key role and must be considered in any future research to assess people's perception of psychological sense of community. This study supports calls for the integration of community psychology and environmental psychology. This would unite the fields and ideally merge the study of person-environment fit from environmental psychology with psychological sense of community research of community psychology and push both to further study of groups, relational and community organisations (Tartaglia, 2006).

Future studies must explore diversity as an element to bring to the fore its influence on psychological sense of community. This is because this study reveals diversity as a factor that militates against belongingness in communities. To examine its relation to the construct under investigation, further studies should explore the views of adolescents from diverse backgrounds in terms of socio-economics, ethnicity, educational and religious backgrounds. Religion and spirituality especially are essential to be given attention to in future research because Ghanaians according to (Salm & Falola, 2002) are religious people hence their perceptions and experiences as well as their feelings and sentiments towards communities may somewhat be informed by their religious beliefs.

5.5.0 CONCLUSION

Previous studies have tended to use the normative model of McMillan and Chavis (1986) to explore psychological sense of community in a wide variety of settings. While this contributes to enhancing the understanding of the construct across different contexts, not much has been

done in terms of how the construct is perceived in Non-Western contexts such as Africa and particularly Ghana. Furthermore, few works exist that focus the study of psychology sense of community on Adolescents although a study by Pretty *et al* (1996) reveal psychological sense of community hold the same relevance for adolescents as for adults. This study aimed at exploring psychological sense of community as perceived by the adolescents in both rural and urban areas of Ghana. The findings show psychological sense of community is setting specific (see, Hill, 1996) in the context of Ghana and is perceived as *a feeling of belongingness a person perceives in relation to a community, based on the perception of the community and the effect the community has on the person*. Perception of psychological sense of community among adolescents in Ghana thus has an implication on community practice and places demands on Community Psychologists to seek partnerships with stakeholders aimed at factoring the sentiments of the adolescents in any community intervention strategies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Semi Structured Interview Guide

A) Knowledge about the Community

- i. What do you understand when we talk about community?
- ii. Can you give an example of a community and state why you think it is a community?
- iii. Would you describe where you stay or your hometown as one? If Yes/No state why?

B) Psychological Sense of Community (McMillan & Chavis 1986)

Membership

- i. Do you feel you belong to where you stay/hometown? Can you explain how it feels like belonging to your community
- ii. What marks your community and its people different from others?
- iii. How do you recognise other members of this community?
- iv. How safe and secured are you in your community?
- v. Do you or how would you personally contribute to your community?
- vi. In your community, how do people identify you?

Influence

- i. How is your community influential to your life and personal goals?
- ii. How important are you to your community?

Integration and fulfilment of needs

- i. Which values or ideals do you share with other members of your community? Why?
- ii. How satisfied are you with meeting of personal needs in your community?

Shared emotional connection

- i. Do you trust your community? If Yes/No, can you please state why
- ii. Which occasions and events bring you and the whole community together?
- iii. What do such occasions and events mean to you?
- iv. Where would you like to spend the rest of your life for example during pension and why?
- v. Where would you like to be buried when you die? and why?

Is there any comment you would want to make?

Summary

Can we briefly go over the main points of our discussion (The researcher presents a résumé of the responses to the key questions). Is this summary complete? Are there any additions or changes you would like to make?

Appendix II

Informed Consent Form

INFORMATION

My name is Johnny Andoh- Arthur, a Student of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Human Development at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) Trondheim, Norway. I am currently spending part of my graduate programme in Ghana collecting data on the chosen area of study for my master's degree thesis. The topic of my research is "Perception of Psychological Sense of Community among Adolescents: A Qualitative Study of Rural and Urban Communities in Ghana". The study would involve interviewing adolescents through a focus group discussion (with consent from their superiors and parents/guardians). The interviews would be audio recorded so that responses can accurately be documented. This would enable the researcher to review the topics and responses later for analysis . Participation is possible if only you are willing to have the interview or discussions recorded.

AIM

This study is significant in that the knowledge of the perceptions of adolescents sense of community would enable community leaders, governments, Non-Governmental Organisations(NGOs) working in communities to factor adolescents in all policies that aim at strengthening communities capacities to support the well being of the inhabitants. More so, very little is known (through research) about this construct in Ghana so a study like this could inform further research.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Participation is strictly anonymous: you would not be identified by your name or your house. All information provided in this study will be held in absolute confidence; the tapes would remain in the custody and control of the researcher always and would not be given out for any purpose to anyone who is not working directly with the researcher. The researcher will not share information which could identify you with anyone or in publication. The information would be destroyed when the entire research is over

PARTICIPATION

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you have the right not to answer any question(s) you feel uncomfortable with and you can withdraw from participation at any time if you do not want to continue.

CONTACT

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact me at *johnnyant2002@yahoo.com*, or by telephone, 0244733284. You can also contact my supervisor, Prof. Birthe Loa Knizek at *birthe.loa.knizek@svt.ntnu.no*

(Signature of Researcher: Johnny Andoh-Arthur)

(Date)

Consent of Informant

I certify that the purpose of the study has been thoroughly explained to me in a language I understand to my satisfaction and I have received a copy of the consent form. I understand that any information obtained from me for this research will be kept confidential. To further ensure privacy, I have the option of using a pseudonym. I understand that participation is voluntary and I have the right to refuse participation at anytime in the course of the interview. I agree to participate in this study.

(Informant: Signature/Initials/thumb Print)

(Date)

Appendix III**Letter of Informed Consent to Parent / Guardian of Students**

Dear Parent / Guardian,

INFORMATION

My name is Johnny Andoh- Arthur, a Student of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Human Development at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) Trondheim, Norway. I am currently spending part of my graduate programme in Ghana collecting data on the chosen area of study for my master's degree thesis. The topic of my research is, ““Perception of Psychological Sense of Community among Adolescents: A Qualitative Study of Rural and Urban Communities in Ghana.” The study would involve interviewing adolescents through a focus group discussion (with consent from their superiors and parents/guardians). The interviews would be audio recorded so that responses can accurately be documented. This would enable the researcher to review the topics and responses later for analysis. Participation is possible if only you are willing to have the interview or discussions recorded

AIM

This study is significant in that the knowledge of the perceptions of adolescents sense of community would enable community leaders, governments, on-Governmental Organisations(NGO) working in communities to factor adolescents in all policies that aim at strengthening communities capacities to support the well being of the inhabitants. More so, very little is known (through research) about this construct in Ghana so a study like this could inform further research

CONFIDENTIALITY

Taking part in this study is strictly anonymous: your ward would not be identified by name, or by organization or school of affiliation. All information provided in this study will be held in absolute confidence; the tapes would remain in the custody and control of the researcher always and would not be given out for any purpose to anyone who is not working directly with the researcher. The researcher will not share information which could identify your ward with anyone or in publication. The information would be destroyed when the entire research is over

PARTICIPATION

Your ward's participation is entirely voluntary. If your ward decides to participate, she/he has the right not to answer any question(s) she/he feels uncomfortable with and can withdraw from participation at any time if she/he does not want to continue.

CONTACT

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact me at *johnnyant2002@yahoo.com*, or by telephone, 0244733284. You can also contact my supervisor, Prof. Birthe Loa Knizek at *birthe.loa.knizek@svt.ntnu.no*

(Signature of Researcher: Johnny Andoh-Arthur)

(Date)

Consent of Parent/Guardian of Student

I certify that the purpose of the study has been thoroughly explained to me in a language I understand to my satisfaction and I have received a copy of the consent form. I understand that any information obtained from my ward for this research will be kept confidential. To further ensure privacy, my ward has the option of using a pseudonym. I understand that participation is voluntary, and my ward has the right to refuse to participate at any time in the course of the interview.

I agree to allow my ward, _____, to participate in this study.

(Parent's/Guardian's Signature/Initials/thumb Print)

(Date)

Appendix IV

Letter of consent from Norwegian Social Sciences Data Services (NSD)

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

NSD

Harald Hårfagre's gate 29
N-5007 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
Fax: +47-55 58 96 50
nsd@nsd.uib.no
www.nsd.uib.no
Org.nr. 985 321 884

Birthe Loa Knizek
Psykologisk institutt
NTNU
Dragvoll
7491 TRONDHEIM

Vår dato: 04.06.2010 Vår ref: 24265 / 2 / IB Deres dato: Deres ref:

KVITTERING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 21.04.2010. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

24265 *Perceived psychological Sense of Community among Adolescents: A comparative Study of Rural and Urban Areas in Ghana*
Behandlingsansvarlig NTNU, ved institusjonens overste leder
Daglig ansvarlig Birthe Loa Knizek
Student Johnny Andob-Arthur

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstillter kravene i personopplysningsloven.

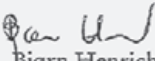
Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, vedlagte prosjektvurdering - kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven/-helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.


Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/forsk_stud/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/prosjektoversikt.jsp>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.08.2011, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen


Bjørn Henrichsen


Inga Brautaset

Kontaktperson: Inga Brautaset tlf: 55 58 26 35
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:
OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no
TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no
TROMSØ: NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@sv.uio.no

Appendix V

Letter of consent from Psychology Department, University of Ghana, Legon, Ghana



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Tel: (233-21) 500381 Ext. 3309/3310
028 955 04 63

P. O. Box LG 84, Legon -Ghana

e-mail:psychology@ug.edu.gh

Our Ref. No.

July 5, 2010

To Whom It May Concern

Introduction of Researcher and Confirmation of Research Protocol

I hereby introduce **Johnny Andoh-Arthur** as the researcher on the topic "*Perceived Psychological Sense of Community Among Adolescents: A Comparative Study of Rural and Urban Areas in Ghana*". He is a former Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree student at the University of Ghana, and now a student in the Master of Philosophy in Human Development program at the Department of Psychology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway. This letter confirms that his research protocol has been duly evaluated, approved and cleared by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) in Trondheim, Norway and the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana, Legon.

Your support and cooperation with him towards a successful data collection is implored.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Charity S. Akotia'.

Dr. Charity S. Akotia
(Senior Lecturer)

(For Head of Department)

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA-LEGON
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

