

**ISLAM AND FAMILY PLANNING IN GHANA: A STUDY OF
MAMPURUGU MUSLIM COMMUNITIES.**

BY

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A Thesis submitted to the Department of Religious Studies,
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology,
In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

August, 2013

DECLARATION

I, Mohammed Umar Ibn Raees declare that except for references to works which have been duly cited, this work is as a result of my own research work under supervision, and that it has neither in whole nor part been submitted for another degree elsewhere.

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ABSTRACT

Islam maintains that the relationship between the husband, wife and the children should be based on mutual love and care, joy, happiness, co-operation, peace, unity, tranquility and the husband and the wife ought to console each other in order to forfeit the adornment of life. In other words, the couples should be family oriented for sustainability and survival of the family. A majority of Muslims in Mampurugu are of the view that children are the gift of God and He will sustain the lives of these children, hence the call for the establishment of large families within the Muslim communities while caring for them is left at the mercy of the Almighty Allah. The assumption, therefore, is that Islam attaches much importance to giving birth to many children but the responsibility of the upbringing of the children by the parents is neglected and rather put into the care of God, hence, there is lackadaisical attitude by Muslim parents towards birth control or family planning in the communities. The general view of a majority of Muslims is that family planning is *haram* (forbidden) but it is rather *Makruh* (not allowed) in Islam. It is observed that family planning would be of great benefit to an individual and the whole nation at large. The holy Qur'an and Traditions of the Prophet were used as references concerning Islam and family planning and the use of contraception. Secondary sources of data in the form of extracts from existing literature in topics related to the subject matter of the study were used. Participant observation technique was also used to gather information for the study. The study revealed that there is no categorical statement in the Holy Qur'an in favor or against the use of contraception, but it is evident that birth control was practiced during Prophet Mohammed's lifetime by *azl* (coitus interruptus). The general ruling of the use of contraception is that it is *Makruh* (undesirable) and not *haram* (forbidden). The scholars should ensure that they explain the Islamic perspective of family planning, the use of contraceptives and the conditions to consider before going for it to the people in the communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My special thanks and gratitude go to Allah (Subhaanahu wa ta'allah) for seeing me through this course with His guidance, blessings and protection. (Alhamdulillah Rabi A'alamiina).

I will also like to take this great opportunity to thank my guide, role model and supervisor, the Very Rev. Dr. Nathan Iddrisu Samwini for his invaluable suggestions offered to put this work into proper shape. I equally thank him for making time available out of his busy schedules to read through and discuss the work with me. May the Almighty increase him in more knowledge to help others.

I wish to acknowledge the effort of Mr. Mohammed Sumaila of Walewale Senior High School for his time and knowledge in reading through the work and making important suggestions.

I owe a great deal of gratitude to all lecturers and staff of the Department of Religious Studies, KNUST for their support during this study. My special thanks also go to Most Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Asante and Mr. Moses Sampa for their encouragement and moral support. I am equally grateful to Mrs. Philomena Yeboah Abekah of the Department of English KNUST for proofreading the work.

The effort of my brother, Mohammed Yussif Baba for working tirelessly with me in gathering information for this research cannot be ignored. Your reward will come from Allah. I also thank my only and dear wife, Amina Harunah and my mother, Hajia Mohammed Martha D/C, for their material and moral support. May Allah bless you all. My prayers go to my late father Mohammed D/C for encouraging me to read Islam as a course since my childhood. May Allah let you have a perfect place of rest.

My appreciation is also extended to Sheihu Salawatiya, Imam Hussein Rashid and Sheikh Iddris Abdul- Rahim al –Raees for their spiritual support and guidance.

To those whose names have not been mentioned, but who helped in one way or the other to make this study a success, I say may Allah, the Almighty guide, protect and bless you all.

I am, however, responsible solely for any identifiable error that this thesis may contain.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father, Muhammed D/C, my beloved mother, Hajia Martha D/C, my beloved wife, Amina Haruna..

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) highlights on issues pertaining to the beginning of human life, moral excellence reproductive health, marriage and parenting. The Qur'an exhorts Muslims to marry, stating: "Marry those among you who are single, or the pious among your slaves....." (24:32). This verse therefore means that marriage is a desirable institution for every Muslim. Procreation of human species may be considered one of the most important aspects of marriage in view of the fact that humankind is regarded to be the vicegerent of Allah on earth. It is against this background that al- Mawdudi (1976) states "Biologically man is a tiller and woman a tilth and the foremost purpose of the inter-relationship between the two is the procreation of the human race". From the Islamic perspective, children are a gift and blessing from Allah who should be properly maintained. Allah has mentioned some of the bounties He has bestowed upon mankind in the following Qur'anic verse (16:72) "And Allah has made for you spouses of your own kind and has made for you, from your own wives, sons and grandsons and has bestowed upon you good provision". In another verse of the Qur'an (18:46) Allah says "wealth and children are the adornment of the life of this world". Islam, therefore, maintains that the relationship between the husband, wife and the children should be based on mutual love and care, joy, happiness, co-operation, peace, unity and tranquility. The husband and the wife ought to console each other in order to forfeit the adornment of life. In other words, the couples should be family oriented for sustainability and survival of the family and the human race.

It is perceived by majority of Muslims that children are the gift of God and He will sustain the lives of these children; hence the practice of establishing large families, mean while the caring of them is left at the mercy of the Almighty Allah. The assumption is that Islam attaches much importance to giving birth to many children but the responsibility of the upbringing of the children by the parents is neglected. There is therefore a lackadaisical attitude by Muslim parents towards birth control or family planning in Muslim communities. Muslims feel that Allah imposes burden on them by blessing them with children which they have to bear. However, the Holy Qur'an states "On no soul doth Allah place a burden greater than it can bear....." (2:286). It is apparent in this verse that Allah will accept from each soul just such duty as it has ability to offer but does not punish a soul for what it cannot bear. This attracts our attention to scholarly investigate into these issues hence, the need for this research.

1.2 Statement of the Problem.

In the Mampurugu Muslim communities, high birth rate is a common feature which has caused a lot of economic hardships, social and psychological problems on the parents, particularly on the Muslim women in Mampurugu. The Muslim women do most of the manual field work. They go to market to trade while their husbands spend most of their time in chatting and debating on political, social and religious issues. From the Islamic perspective, it is the responsibility of the male Muslim to take care of his wife and the children in the family; unfortunately this is not so within Mampurugu Muslim Communities. Some of the men have ignored their responsibilities of taking care of children and this has negative effects on the communities. Some men can be said to be responsible in taking care of their children, while the women are mostly in charge of providing the basic needs, payment of

school fees and providing school uniforms and sometimes help in the payment of utility bills. Apart from these, the women bear the burden of pregnancy, taking care of the household and child training. Muslims in the Mampurugu communities considered it as a religious duty in giving birth to many children without consideration of the family welfare. For this reason, family planning is regarded by the people to be an evil act, grave sin against God and un-Islamic to be practiced. As a result of this, there is high birth rate in Mampurugu Muslim communities which has caused social vices such as school dropouts, street children, teenage pregnancy, alcoholism, drug abuse, “Kayaaye”, high rate of abortion cases and to sum it all high rate of poverty. All these have been attributed to the fact that parents do not have enough resources to cater for these large families and this has greatly affected them and even retarded the general development of the Mampurugu at society. Generally, the attitude of Ghanaian Muslims towards family planning poses many fundamental questions. They believe that children are the blessing and gift of God. Also, it is narrated in Sahih Bukhari (Bukhari Vol 3,p123) that the Holy Prophet is reported to have said “ give birth to many children so that I can boast with my Ummah [people] on the Day of Judgement”. Fadlur Rahman in interpreting this hadith refuted the notion that the Holy Prophet Mohammed (S.A.W) would wish to boast with all the Ummah. He asked a question to the effect whether the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. W. A) would like to boast of street children and armed robbers. This, therefore, calls for research into the aspects of the Islamic religion which deal with family planning. That is, whether giving birth to many children is supported by the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. W. A) or not. What is the importance attached to having many children in Islamic perspective? And what is the importance attached to having fewer children in the Muslim communities like Mampurugu?

1.3 The Aims and Objectives of the Study.

The main objectives of this research work are:

1. To explore the concept of family planning from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet.
2. To identify the types of contraceptives permitted in Islam.
3. To find out the causes and effects of large families in Mampurugu Muslim Communities.
4. To sensitize men that women are not restricted only to giving birth but can participate in social life
5. To highlight the importance of family planning in social development.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

This work may serve as a reference for students who want to do research on a related topic. Also, it will be useful for resource persons who want to do scholarly work and presentations on Islam and family planning. Again, it will benefit the individuals in the society by educating them on the Islamic perspective of family thereby helping them in the management of their families which will assist in maintaining peace, progress and development within the families and the society at large. The work will inform policy makers to adopt proper policies and programmes for the progress and development of the country.

1.5 Methodology and Data Collection

In order to carry out any research work successfully, an appropriate methodology for data collection should be selected and used to enable the researcher to gather the pieces of information needed for the study. For this reason, the following methods for data collection were selected for the study.

For us to achieve our set objectives of the research work, our sources of information were categorized into primary and secondary sources. Participant observation and interviews were the primary sources. Interviews were conducted with different members of the Mamprugu Muslim communities to seek their views and understanding. The communities selected for the study were all district capitals with Walewale being the largest, followed by Gambaga and Yagba which is one of the newly created districts.

A total of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were interviewed from these communities. As all the communities are known to be Muslim dominated areas, fifty respondents were randomly interviewed in each community. Islamic religious leaders of the Tijaniyyah brotherhood, Ahlul- Sunnah Wal Jam'ah and the Ahmadiyyah Mission were interviewed. On the effects of large families, staff of Ghana Health Service, Water and Sanitation, Volta River Authority, Ghana Education Service, farmers, charcoal burners and housewives were interviewed to seek their views with regard to the impact of large family in the communities. This is due to the fact that these institutions provides essential and basic needs to the people. Some children were also interviewed to hear their side of the story. It must be noted that participation and observation methodologies were used because some questions could not be simply asked but be well understood through keen participation and observation.

Furthermore, the study relied on secondary sources in the form of extracts from existing religious scriptures and other published literature written on aspects of the subject of the research. *Yussif Ali's English Translation, Meaning and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an* was used as our major source for exergical purpose. *Al- Mizan* is another Qur'an commentary work which we used in order to come out with clear understanding of issues concerning the subject of the research. These two works

served as our basis for interpreting injunctions in the Qur'an concerning the family, child upbringing, and family planning in Islam. The traditions of the Prophet as the second source of Islamic law are where we referred to for *ahadith* concerning family planning and the use of contraceptives. The works we consulted for reliable information about the character of the Holy Prophet include: *Sahih Buhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Ibn Majah*, *Musnad Imam Hambal*, *Bihar- Anwar*, *Al-Kafi*, *Abu Daud*, among others. These books are considered as the most authentic among all and we relied on them for relevant information for the research.

1.6 Literature Review

To achieve the aims and objectives of the study, an extensive review has been done in the relevant literatures. To add value to this work, many literature works were critically and objectively analyzed. Though many books have been written on family planning and Islam, abortion and birth control, we have not come across any single work solely focused on Islam and family planning in Ghana. Again, many books have been written on marriage and parenting but we have not seen any book which deals solely with Islam and family planning in Mampurugu. The two main sources of Islamic knowledge which include the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) are where we have made reference to support or criticize the practice of family planning and then left the conclusion open for the reader to judge. Literature on Islam and family and planning and those on family planning generally were also reviewed.

Offenhauer (2005), *Women in Islam societies*, has made more effort by discussing topics such as scholarship on women in Islamic societies, dimensions of women's status and bodies of research. Also women in Muslim states politics, women's legal

position and rights, women activism for building the nation and development of human/ women's right..

The ACQUIRE project (2008) in their work *Counseling for Effective Use of Family Planning: Trainers Manual*, made reference on how family planning nurses in America identify their clients and address their misconception, ensure optimal communication, improve clients' perception of risk, help client to make decision for permanent methods and other topics related to family planning are discussed.

In Pathfinder International: *Advancing Reproductive Health and Family Planning through Religious Leaders*. the author Mary .K. Burket addresses issues of reproductive health and the health of the mother and the child with reference to Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana among others. In the case of Ghana she only deals with the Christian youth and children and nothing is mentioned on the Muslim reproductive health in Ghana.

National Research and development Foundation (2003) touches on several aspects of family planning and their significance, rights and responsibilities of children and parents; family planning and abortion in an Islamic perspective are also discussed.

Donahoe (1996), *Men and family planning in Bangladesh* deemed it a duty to investigate whether men in Bangladesh have interest in practicing family planning or not. The author covered variety of topics which include: Male fertility preference, opinions about methods of men's contraception, family planning- decision making and the effort to involve Bangladesh men in family planning programmes. The author explains further that men in Bangladesh are suitable targets for family planning programs. The average men do not want more than two children and do not want them

spaced but closed together. According to the author, it seems that the concerted efforts to involve men in family planning have been few and far between up to their time.

Management Sciences for Health Occasional Papers (2007) points out that the introduction of family planning into Afghanistan required dialogue with and understanding of Afghan people and building of trust. The people's beliefs and other factors that influence their contraceptive choice were identified. It also mentions some of the projects like Accelerating Contraceptives Use are established in the country to cater for the reproductive health of the Afghans and to reinforce the family planning components in the communities. The book, therefore, makes some recommendation for effective implementation of family planning in Afghanistan. These include integrating messages about the values of girls into family planning programmes, encouraging communication between husbands and wives about contraception, promoting couples counseling using the media, emphasizing the health of children and mothers in family planning.

Save the Children (2012), *every woman's Rights* touches on time and space: how healthy timing and spacing of pregnancy saves lives as well as improving the supply of family planning services for the benefit of the people in the communities. Again, stimulating demand for family planning through empowering women is also discussed.

Janet Fleischman and Allen Moore (2009), *A common-Ground Approach to Expanded U.S Role* argue that family planning presents an urgent global health priority for the twenty-first century. Family planning services help women and men around the world to make informed decisions about the number and spacing of their children, which is a major determinant of a newly born child, maternal and family

health. By extension, Janet Fleischman and Moore indicated that, the economic well being of families, communities and even countries is improved by access to family planning services. They also point out that “studies in Zambia shows that every dollar invested in family planning led to four dollars saved in other developmental areas”. Even though the authors could not specifically relate the above to Islam, relating it to Islam would not be out of place. This is because Islam is a universal code of life and also places much emphasis on things that would bring good to mankind.

Amirrtha et al. (2008), *Religious and cultural influence on contraceptives* are of the view that family and marriage are fundamental to Islamic society. Islam recognizes the normalcy of sexual intercourse provided it is within marriage. They stated that a majority of Islamic scholars indicate that family planning is not forbidden. Muslims’ opinions regarding contraception range from permissible to disapproval. Some Muslim fundamentalists insist that contraception of any form violates God’s intentions. They argue that when the justification of contraception is provided such as health, social and economic indications, coitus interruptus becomes recommended provided the method is reversible and does not induce abortion.

Underwood (2000), *Islamic precepts and family planning* also points out that child spacing or family planning is permissible. With respect to contraception, Muslim scholars universally accept the legitimacy of a Hadith (or one of the collected sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (S. W.A)) in which the Prophet indicated that withdrawal is permitted after all if God wanted to create something, no one could avert it. Furthermore, he pointed out that the Qur’an says God does not wish to burden a believer which implies that the quality life of children overrides concerns about quantity. According to Underwood, permanent methods are permissible when additional pregnancies pose a threat to a woman’s health. However, there appears to

be considerable uncertainty among religious leaders and the public alike about the acceptability of some modern contraceptive methods such as IUD and implants.

Ahmad et al. (2006), *Attitude of Religious Leaders Towards family planning* also point out that the Qur'an does not prohibit birth control, nor does it forbid a husband and wife to space pregnancies or limit their number of children. Thus a great majority of Islamic jurists believe that family planning is permissible in Islam. The silence of the Qur'an on the issue of contraception, these jurists have argued that it is not a matter of omission by God, as He is "All knowing". They also note that coitus interruptus or withdrawal is permissible with the wife's consent and there are a number of ahadith that advocate family planning especially coitus interruptus or withdrawal.

Arguments and counter arguments on the position of Islam on family planning and its importance to the development of the communities and again the effects of large families called for investigation into this field of study.

Maqsood (2000), *The Marriage Guide* discusses topics such as how to get marriage, a good Muslim marriage, the key to happy marriage, sexual problems and how to turn sex into sadaqa, and the sign of foretaste of paradise.

Ejibi (2006), *Women's Rights and Responsibilities in Islamic system* discusses the arguments and conventions of being influenced by the extremist feminist thought which in turn derives its thoughts from secularism based on the separation of religion from state. This thought adopted by the feminist movement has been carried to further extreme by separating all morals absolute for the sake of unbridled liberty which wipes out all principles and values. Also, the author of this particular book discusses the challenges facing Muslim women in the contemporary Muslim communities, responsibility of women towards buttressing the fabric of the family in the Islamic

system, the household from the perspective of an Islamic law, women and political participation and democracy, women's rights and economic responsibilities, Islam and development, the role of Muslim women, the role of women and status creation and elimination of all kinds of discrimination against women.

Buckley (2001), *Islamic parenting* emphasizes the fact that Muslim parents should love their wards and again maintains that it is a religious duty upon every Muslim parent to perfectly exhibit their responsibilities by taking care of their families as required by God and the Sunnah of the Prophet.

Halalah (2000), *A comparative between veiling and unveiling* makes an effort to point out the position of Muslim women to maintain their modesty by dressing well as prescribed by Islamic law.

Ebrahim (2004), *Abortion, Birth Control and Surrogate Parents An Islamic Perspective* discusses Islam and health, reproductive control, biomedical parenting, biomedical science and infertility, abortion and punishment for infanticide. He could not discuss why there is the need for Muslims to put their birth rate in check as well as why they attach much value to large families than the small ones in the communities. But our work shall find answers to these questions raised.

Ghazi and Atullah (2004), *Islam and Sex* make reference to the fact that issues pertaining to sexual intercourse have been concealed by Islamic scholars for long and these adversely affect the Muslim families. Great effort has been made by these authors to educate Muslims husbands on how to have effective sexual intercourse with their wives. The use of contraceptives, responsibilities of children over parents and maintenance of the wives are not discussed which are the interest of our study.

Imane (2004), *A Bundle of flowers* discusses many issues concerning Islamic marriage and family life. The regard of kinship, the rights of children, kindness to parents are vividly explained as well as husbands honoring their wives and good treatment of husbands by wives..

Mahrizi (2000), *Woman* focuses on the character of women with regard to family affairs and woman's participation in the social life. He also makes it known that modesty and chastity is the main essence of Islamic veiling. He again criticized some collections of Hadith which seek to undermine the integrity of Muslim women and therefore considered such collection as weak and false. The author, however, did not talk about the recent high birth rates recorded in some Muslim communities which put much burden on the woman hence the topic Islam and family planning needs to be investigated for the benefits of future Muslim generations.

Global Health Program (2012) explains that, guided by the belief that every life has equal value, Bill and Melinda Gate Foundation works to help all people lead healthy and productive lives. According to this health program, family planning is hailed as one of the great public health achievements of the last century and yet over 200 million women worldwide who want to use contraceptives do not have access to them. The world's poorest women and men are not empowered to decide the number of children and timing of their births despite the fact that complications during pregnancy and child birth are a leading cause of death among women in Africa.

The vision of Global Health Program as indicated in the book is to make all women and men in developing countries know about and have access to quality family. This program, therefore, supports voluntary family planning as a means to meet the needs of women and men and to significantly reduce maternal and infant deaths, enhancing

the livelihood of women and reduction of poverty. Ghana as part of the developing countries is faced with the problem of maternal mortality and high rate of poverty especially in most Muslim communities. If family planning is the proposed solution to these problems, then we have to investigate to ascertain what really pertains on the ground in these communities and how family planning can effectively improve the lives of Muslims in the communities. This underpins the need for this study.

1.7 Constraints

One of the major constraints we encountered was lack of detailed written literature on the research area and we relied on other literatures related to the topic and at the same time being on the field for the collection of data. However, with hard work and support from friends, we were able to overcome it. Some of the staff interviewed in the various departments were skeptical about me because they knew me to be a teacher and not a student. The people were having doubts that my findings were for a particular purpose other than academic and for that reason they were not ready to fully cooperate especially on the part of the women because they thought I wanted to know their secrets.

Others thought I was sponsored by NGOS for this work and due to this they expected expensive gifts from me. As tradition demands, the opinion leaders and some Muslim scholars demanded “KOLA” (money) before they could open up for us to source information for this work.

Transportation to the study areas was difficult and threat to our lives due to the bad nature of the roads. We were verbally attacked in several instances because we asked questions about family matters which they considered private. The time frame for this work was short for the collection of the data but with determination we were able to

adjust and come out with this work. Most of the books written on the topic used a lot of Arabic terminologies which needed translation but with the support of Islamic scholars who learnt Arabic as a subject these terminologies were explained to our understanding.

1.8 Organization of the work.

The study is divided into five chapters and each chapter is also sub-divided into sections. Chapter one contains the introduction, background of the study, statement of problem, objectives, significance of the study, methodology and data collection, literature review, constraints and the organization of the work.

Chapter two discusses the Islamic view of family planning, marriage and family in Islam,, overview of Islamic marriage, upbringing of a Muslim child, historical review of family planning in Islam, Islam and the use of contraceptive and methods of contraceptives.

Chapter three treats the status of women in Islamic families, participation of Muslim women in social life, rights and responsibility of marriage couples, parenting and parenthood, child rights over parents, causes of parental irresponsibility and its effects and the importance of family planning in respect of the development of Mampurugu.

Chapter four consists of presentation of response, knowledge of Muslims and opinions on family planning, why Muslims in Mampurugu Communities attach much importance to large families than small ones, the effects of large families on Mampurugu Muslim Communities and data analysis. Chapter five gives a summary of the chapters and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

ISLAMIC VIEW ON FAMILY PLANNING

2.1 Introduction

In chapter one, the topic for this research “Islam and Family Planning in Ghana: A Study of Mampurugu Muslim Communities” was introduced and we also stated therein why we sought to research into this topic. This chapter focuses on the purpose of Islamic marriage, the upbringing of a Muslim child, the historical overview of Family Planning in Islam and the use of contraceptives in controlling child birth. This will enable us to comprehend the Islamic view of Family Planning and implication for quality of life.

2.2 An Overview of Islamic Marriage

Marriage in Islam may be explained as the coming together of a man and a woman as husband and wife with responsibilities bound by Islamic Law (Shari’ah). Allah created man and woman so that they can provide company to one another, love one another, procreate and live in peace and tranquillity. The Holy Qur’an (30:21) says: “And among His signs in this that He created for you mates from among yourselves that you may dwell [or live] in tranquillity with them and He has put love and mercy between your hearts. Undoubtedly in these are signs for those who reflect”.

The concept of ‘*Ibadah*’ (worship) is very wide and that the cardinal purpose of Islamic marriage is to serve as a form of worship between wives and husbands. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. W.A) says: “When a man marries, he has fulfilled half of his religion, so let him fear Allah regarding the remaining half” (Al-Kafi 1982) The remaining half here may mean taking good and proper care of the wives and children as commanded by God Almighty.

With regard to the purpose of Islamic marriage, Nasir (1992); mentions the views of Al-Ghazali, a Sunni eminent thinker who puts forward five benefits of marriage as follows:

Production of children, defeating the carnal lust, giving calmness to one self, brings settlement to the heart, and self-discipline. He regards the survival of the offspring as the most important advantage saying: 'procreation is the origin and for its sake marriage has been enacted and legalised for the purpose of maintaining the offspring and so as to keep the world from being devoid of mankind, lust has been created only as compelling and inciting force for keeping the generation. (Woman :2004)

Doi (1984) explains the ultimate purpose of Islamic marriage as follows: Islam is particular in providing the most possible wholesome means for bringing up the offspring. To give birth to children and neglect them is a crime towards society, towards the children and even towards the parents themselves. The child, who is deprived of ample love of his or her parents, not properly tutored in Islamic way of life at an early age and is left to babysitters and nurseries will develop many anti- social behavioural patterns and may end up with crime, perversion and corruption. Such a child may never find his or identity as he or she could have felt in a systematic manner during his or her childhood. Without a family life, governed by Islamic order and discipline, how can we expect a child to have the Islamic conscience and value of righteousness?

According to Doi (1984), marriage in Islam, broadly speaking, is a means of emotional and sexual satisfaction, procreation and a form of an *Ibadah* ;:worship of Allah and obedience to His Messenger. Allamah al-tabataba'i; a great Shia exegete, takes the main objective of marriage to mean the permanence of species and procreation of the same offspring. At the same time, he considers subsiding and satisfying the lust and partnership in material living

and housekeeping to be the real essence of marriage, viewing them as preliminaries and preludes for marriage or consequential advantages.

However, Al- Ghazali's view regarding the survival of children as the most important advantage of marriage has been criticised by many Islamic scholars. Thus, it is vulnerable to criticism due to the following reasons raised in al -*Mizaan* vol. 2. There is a profound emphasis in the Qur'an on the matter of tranquillity and relief in two Qur'anic verses (al-A'raf:89 and Rome: 31) where it has been stated that the objective of creating man and a woman is to find rest and calmness.

If the issue of marriage is founded on procreation alone with no other purposes, there will be no difference between an animal and man. This is because the animals produce the same kind and their offspring can survive though they neither commit themselves to a family and its system nor require specific regulations. Al- Ghazali also states that the procreation of the kind and the permanence of the offspring is the philosophy of marriage and not its cause. Therefore he considers getting married to a barren and menopausal woman as something permissible. From the views presented above, it is learnt that the Islamic marriage seeks to achieve several purposes and that we should not accept the one-sided view point in respect of marriage which is the multiplication of children or giving birth to many children while ignoring the other purposes of marriage which are equally important in family life.

Doi (1984) says: What emerges from careful consideration of the Qur'anic injunctions and the traditions of the Holy Prophet is that , marriage is '*wajib*' (compulsory) for a man who has the means to easily pay '*mahr*' (dowry) and maintain a wife and children, who is healthy and fear that if he does not marry he may commit '*zinah*' (fornication). It is also compulsory for a woman who has no other means of maintaining herself and fear that her sexual urge may push her into fornication. But it is '*Mandub*' (recommendatory) for a person who has a

strong will to control his sexual urge and not fall prey to the evil temptation of Satan but whose only aim is to have children. However, marriage is ‘*Mubah*’ (superogatory) for a person who fears that marriage will not keep him away from his devotion to Allah. It is therefore against this background that marriage is not binding on a believer who does not wish to have children.

The general notion of marrying and producing many children does not apply to all but for those who wish to have children on condition that they can cater and properly take care of the wives and children.

2.3 Marriage and the Family in Islam

The word family (usr) is defined by *the Cambridge International Dictionary of English* as “a social group of people consisting of a parent or parents and their children”. From the Holy Qur’an however, the term ‘*ahlul*’ is often used by Prophets to mean their children and wives. For instance, Prophet Musah (A.S) used the word ‘*ahlul*’ to refer to his family when he was travelling back from Madyan to Egypt. The Qur’an (28:29) says:

Then, when Musah (Moses) had fulfilled the term, and was travelling with his family, he saw a fire in the direction of Tur (mount). He said to his family: Wait, I have seen a fire; perhaps I may bring you from there some information or a burning fire-brand that you may warm yourselves.

As can be observed from the verse, Musah (A.S) appeared worried about the effect of the weather on the family hence; he was to search for fire to enable the family warm themselves against the cold weather. This implies that Musah (A.S) cared for his family. The display of love and protection of a family may be a preparation for spiritual development as it was done by Musah; hence there is the need for families to be maintained and protected.

The Holy Qur'an (66:6) has cautioned believers to be mindful of their families by stating "Oh you, who believe, save yourselves and your families from hell- fire."

Family here is interpreted by most exegetes especially al-Muraghi to mean wives and children. (Al-Muraghi (26)162). This therefore implies that the good Muslim among the Ummah is the one who cares for his family.

According to Doi (1984) "The Family is the nucleus of the Islamic society, and marriage is the only way to bring about such an institution. It is only logical that Islam sets up the rules to regulate the functioning of the family whereby both spouses can find peace, love, security and relatedness". Doi added that "Islam wants to build a model society that is why it gives maximum attention to the family affairs of the believers. If the foundation of the family is strong, the foundation of the nation will be strong. Therefore Islam does not leave the rules of the individual members of the family to mere human speculation". The Holy Qur'an charges male Muslims to take up their responsibilities by taking proper care of their wives so as to allow peace, love, and security prevail within their families. The Quran (4:34) states:

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given one more [strength] than the other, as such they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard. [First] as to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill conduct, admonish them, [next] refuse to share their beds and [last] beat them [lightly] but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means of annoyance .

In order to keep peace and love in Muslim families, Allah has declared in this verse that men are in charge of managing the affairs of the family effectively. "*Qawaamuuna*" which means (protectors and maintainers of the women and the whole family at large). Is a duty conferred on men to exhibit a high sense of responsibility in the management of their families.

In this direction, Tabataba'i (2004 p.187) says:

In a family circle the relationship of parents to their children is like that of the roots of a tree to its branches because the continuity and survival of the branches of the tree depend upon its roots. Parents are also the founders of the children's life. Since the human society is comprised of the two categories, i.e., parents and children, parents are the main roots of the human society.

Based on this, it is clear that children depend on their parents for survival and so, failure on the part of parents to provide proper care and maintenance to the children due to lack of resources (to cater for these large families) may lead to them becoming liabilities . This could lead to their inability to survive or fit into the society. This way of life affects and retards the development of Muslim communities and the whole nation at large.

2.4 Upbringing of a Muslim Child

The '*huquq*' (Right) and the work that a person must perform are called duties, orders and obligations. Children are considered as part and parcel of their parents and that the parents work for their children's survival as well as their own. It is the duty of the parents to implement orders by conscience and religious laws with regard to their children and to bring them up very well, so that they may grow to be decent and well trained human beings. Parents are duty bound to train their children in both ethics and morals from the very day that they begin to understand words and signs. Parents must not frighten their children with superstitious subjects, they must prevent them from committing evil and parents must also avoid lying, ill-speaking, using bad language and obscene words in the presence of the children. Cursing and out casting children from the families should be avoided. Parents should perform decent deeds and train children to be chaste. The love for justice and humanity should be imparted to the children at their early age in order to help them fit into the society. The Holy Prophet said to Imam Ali: "Oh Ali, Allah has cursed the parents who

would cause their children to be disobedient of them by cursing them” (*Wasa'il-ush-shiah* 1409 A.H) Also Imam Ali said: “the right of a child upon his father is that he should give him a nice name, train him well [in ethics and morals] and teach him the Qur'an” (Nahjul-Balagh, saying 399, Sermons of Imam Ali r.a).

It is also the religious duty of the parents to make the child God-conscious by training him/her to always observe the five daily prayers. It is said by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) that: “When your children are grown up to seven years, teach them prayers, and if they are ten years old seriously admonish them for it [in order that they establish prayers]; and separate their sleeping beds from each other” (*Kanzul-ummal* vol. 16, hadith No. 45330). The children can learn good and desirable behaviours from the teacher selected for them. That is, the teacher would become the source of inspiration which would cause the refinement of their spirits, the purification of their hearts and the cultivation of good ethics. Seeking knowledge is compulsory upon every believer, be it male or female. The Holy Prophet states: “Seeking knowledge is a duty incumbent on every Muslim” (*Al-Kafi* : 1982).

In another tradition it states: “Seeking knowledge is a duty incumbent upon every Muslim man and woman”. (Bihar Al-Anwar: 1387 A.H). These two traditions indicate the need for parents to educate their children on any knowledge and sciences which would be beneficial to human development. Also, it is a religious duty of the parents to educate all the children [boys and girls]. Therefore, the negative attitude of some Muslim parents in Mampurugu communities who do not place much importance on girl-child education or discriminate against them goes contrary to these prophetic sayings.

It is a fact that education is the bedrock of the development of every nation and that the child should be provided with proper and quality education so as to enable him/her to handle his/her own affairs and again to contribute to national development. In addition to education

the children's other basic needs like food, shelter and clothing must be provided by the parents for their health and physical development. Parents should take their children along to social gatherings in order to equip them [the children] with social customs and praise worthy etiquettes that would guard them when their age calls for participation in such social gatherings or family visits and discussions. Tabataba'i (2004) explains that the Holy Prophet used to carry Hassan and Hussain along on his shoulders to programmes and family visits. It is even said that the grandsons used to sit on his back during prayers and he will wait for them to come down before he continued with his prayers. This shows that the Prophet loved children and moved with them to any place even if it meant carrying them on his shoulders. It is again the responsibility of the husband to provide the wife with proper and quality food so that the child can also enjoy the right of suckling from the mother for physical growth and development. Imam Ali said: "No milk is greater in prosperity than the mother's milk for the baby to suck from" (Wasa'il-shi'ah 1409 A.H).

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) said: "there is no milk for baby better than the milk of its mother".(Mustadrak Wasa'il section 48). The Holy Prophet again added that: "Yes, the reward of a woman during her pregnancy until childbirth, and unto when she weans the child, is like that of a stationed (soldier guarding the Muslims borders against the attack of pagan enemies) for the sake of Allah. So if she dies during that, she will have the rank of a martyr". (Manlaa-Yahduru-ul-faqih 1392 A.H). From these narrations, it is learnt that the reward of a woman in breast feeding the child is equal to a martyr and this position can be achieved if the husband provides quality food for the wife to produce milk for the child. Any circumstance, for example, too much burden on the family due to lack of planning, which might cause the child not to enjoy the right of sucking might affect the future development of the child.. It is also the religious duty of parents to assist their children in improving their talent and also giving them vocational training for their livelihood. The Holy Prophet said: "Have your

children to learn swimming and shooting” (*al-Kafi* 1982). With reference to the Holy Qur’an, the wealth of the man and the children are regarded as his personal property which should be maintained and protected. The Holy Qur’an regards wealth and children which man possesses as trials or test from God. Allah says: “Your wealth and your children are only a trial [test], whereas Allah, with Him is immense reward Qur’an (64:15). Again Allah says “And know that your possessions and your children are a test, and that which Allah has, is immense reward” Qur’an (8:28). From these two verses, it is clear that the wealth and children are a great test to a believer and whoever passes this trial or test shall be rewarded immensely. The question now is how does one pass this great test? We can successfully pass the test if we properly take care of the children with the resources at our disposal. Wealth and children are mentioned in these same verses to mean that the wealth can judiciously be used in taking care of the children in order for one to be rewarded in this world and the hereafter. To this end, Muslims are advised by the Holy Prophet that they are all caretakers [of families] and each one of them shall be accountable to their Lord on how they took care of their families. If one’s family is properly maintained and managed well, then paradise shall be his abode, but, if the opposite is the case, then, his place shall be in the hell-fire.

2.5 Historical Review of Family Planning in Islam

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2007:589) defines family planning (*Tahdidu Nasri*) as “the practice of controlling the number of children that are born by using contraception”. “Dictionary.com”, an online Dictionary also defines family planning as “a programme to regulate the number and spacing of children in a family through the practice of contraception or the methods of birth control”.

Cultural Dictionary says “it is birth control: the control of number of children in a family and of the interval between them especially by the use of contraception or the concept or programme of limiting the size of families through spacing and the use of contraception”

Family Planning, therefore, can be understood as the act of keeping procreation in check or the act of limiting the size of a family or controlling the birth rate through the use of contraceptives and spacing of children.

The question which often arises in Muslim communities has always remained whether the use of contraception is permitted in Islam or not. And this needs to be discussed with regard to family planning. The basic sources of Islamic Laws include the Qur'an, Sunnah and the use of '*Ijtihad*' (analogy). It is out of these sources that we shall assess the morality and the permissibility of the use of contraception in the Islamic perspective or its objection.

The Qur'an as the first source of Islamic Law does not make any categorical statement either in favour of or against the use of contraceptives. The weak analogy which is often used in the condemnation of the use of contraceptives is the verses of infanticide. The verse says "kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well for you. Verily killing them is a great sin" (17:13). In another verse it says "kill not your children in a plea of want; we provide sustenance for you and them" (6:151). These verses were revealed to put to stop the inhuman practice during the '*Jahiliyyah*' [pre- Islamic era] in Arabia where girls were considered as bad luck, disgrace and liability; hence, the moment they were born they were buried alive. That is, the custom of killing of infant female children prevailed in Arabia for long until Islam came and prohibited this barbaric practice.

Ebrahim(1994) explains that: The '*azl*' (coitus interruptus) or the withdrawal method by nature is different from the infanticide in the sense that, the infanticide is the actual killing of the already existing child whereas contraception involves no killing since the supposed "child" does not yet exist. It is a common fact that during the process of reproduction, only one sperm succeeds in fertilizing the ovum. Does this mean all the other countless sperms that eventually die are dead children?

Mawdudi (1976) reflected on the mentioned verses of infanticide and came to the conclusion that “if procreation is stopped due to scarcity of resources and food, then it would be tantamount to the crime of infanticide”. It is worth noting that, although Islam prohibits this pre- Islamic practice, no deduction may be made from this prohibition to condemn contraception. The Holy Qur’an is in favour of natural fertility control hence it encourages mothers to nurse their children for two years. It says “The mothers shall give suck to their offspring for two years”. (2:233). Omran (1973) inferred that “This verse implies a minimal spacing period of thirty- three months between children: nine months of pregnancy and twenty-four of lactation. During this period the chance of pregnancy is reduced by physiological effects of lactation which controls fertility in a natural manner”.

Imam Abu Bakr Jassas, an illustrious Hanafi scholar in his commentary (Ahkam Qur’an (1)535), states: Imam Abu Hanifah held that, the Qur’anic verse, “Your wives are tilth (sic) onto you, so approach your tilth when or how you will”. (2:223), means that you have the option of practicing ‘*azl* ‘(coitus interruptus) with your wife if you so desire. We can, therefore, say that Qur’an is silent on contraception, which means that we must refer to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) to search for his views on the use of contraceptives.

Ebrahim (1994 P.35) narrates, Reverend Thomas R. Mathus, an Anglican Clergy and famous English Economist is said to be the father of the birth control movement. In 1798, he published an essay on “principles of population as it affects the future improvement of the society”. In his work, he did not recommend the use of contraceptives; he rather advocated late marriage and self- restraint in matrimonial life in order to keep the population in check. The movement gained momentum when Francis (1968) stressed the necessity of making use of contraceptives in order to control the population. He further stated that birth control was practised in Europe and America around 1888 while the success of this movement may be

ascribed to the Industrial Revolution in Europe. People living in rural areas flocked into the urban areas in search of jobs in the factories. This caused the cities to be overpopulated and housing became a problem. Taking advantage of the situation, rent was raised and it became difficult to manage a large family. Women were forced to leave their homes in search of work in order to bring revenue to the family. Thus, it was impractical for them to become pregnant often, because that would be neither in their interest nor in their employers'. So, they had to make use of contraceptive devices.

(A Report on Family Planning Schemes for Pakistan 1965-70) says: Among Muslim countries that were pioneers in implementing birth control or Family Planning included: Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia. After Pakistan attained independence from Britain in 1947, there was a speculation that the country might face problems and this called for the establishment of Family Planning services throughout the country. This provision was made to educate and motivate experts in Family Planning and therefore a separate division of Family Planning was set up in the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Welfare. To ensure and to justify the implementation of Family Planning, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Welfare in Pakistan issued a declaration that the Qur'an does not raise any objection to the practice of Family Planning but that there are numerous supporting evidence in the traditions of the Holy Prophet where he permitted his followers to practise birth control. To add to this, the Ministry emphasized that al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyyah were in favour of birth control. That is the classical Islamic scholars gave their approval to the practice of family planning or birth control. Although it is not '*haram*' (forbidden) to practise birth control, it is rather '*makruh*' (undesirable) as it is generally agreed by a majority of Islamic scholars. The reasons for practising birth control would naturally differ from one individual to another but what the government in Pakistan was calling for was affirmative action at the national level in implementing family planning throughout the country.

According to Ebrahim (1994) some of the Muslim scholars, naturally, denounced the policy of family planning as alien to Islam. Foremost among scholars in the condemnation of family planning included; Sayyid Abu al- A'la Maududi, of the Jama'te Islam, Mufti Muhammad (S. W.A) Shafi, of Darul-uloom, Karachi and Ihtisham al Haq Thanwi also in Karachi. They made use of the platforms in the mosques throughout the country and with their pens in rejection and reaction against this policy. He summarises their arguments against family Planning as follows:

- Family Planning is akin to infanticide.
- Family Planning is unnatural and as such contrary to human nature.
- Family Planning is based on disbelieve in the providence of Allah.
- Family Planning would be tantamount to ignoring the Prophet's wish that Muslims should increase in numbers.
- Family Planning will lead to disastrous social consequences.
- Family Planning is a sort of conspiracy of the Western imperialists against the development to the nation

He, however, noted that, there were some scholars who were in support of the Family Planning Programmes. Among these scholars included Fazlur Rahman, the then Director of the Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad, Khalifa Abdul-Hakim, Akhtar Hameed Khan, and Muhammad (S. W.A) Sahahidullah. They strongly supported the family planning programmes and considered it upon themselves as a religious duty to refute the objections put forth by some of the Muslim scholars against family planning.

Abdul Hakim (1959) in his work "Islam and Birth Control" argues that " birth control could not be recognised as infanticide for if this was true, the parents by the millions would have mourned their loss of children after every interrupted sexual intercourse". Shahidullah(1962)

as quoted by Ebrahim (1994) in his work “Family Planning and Islam” also argues that: “Practising birth control in any way means that one does not have faith in the providence of Allah. He remarked that Islam and common sense would not approve of married people with insufficient means continuing to beget children who would neither be fed nor given proper education”.

Rahman (1964) points out that “on the Day of Judgement the Prophet would not be proud of a numerically large Ummah composed of semi-starved weaklings, diseased persons and ignorant men and women”. It is learnt from the above arguments that there is no categorical statement in the Holy Qur’an condemning birth control. Moreover the Holy Prophet of Islam did not stop his followers from engaging in ‘*azl*’ (coitus interruptus). However, the Islamic scholars are of the concern that making birth control devices freely available could lead to the rise of sexual perversions or promiscuity within the society and this might turn as a sin against Allah the Almighty and could lead to destruction of the society. Family Planning in Islamic perspective therefore is *makruh* (undesirable) and not *haram* (forbidden).

In the third world countries like Ghana and the rest, the governments intervened directly with regard to birth control. That is to say, they establish family planning programmes on a national scale. This was prompted by the high birth rates and the accelerating discrepancy between the high population growth and the low rate of economic growth.

Ebrahim (1994) explains that it is true that organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) practically refuse to allocate loans to the Third World Countries unless and until they promise to implement Family Planning Schemes and Ghana is not exempted from this condition.

The (*Ghana Trend Analysis for Family Planning reports of 1993, 1996 and 2002*) explain that in Ghana, government support for Family Planning programmes began in 1969. Some of

the major programme put in place according to this analysis include: Contraceptives Social Marketing (CSM) (1987-1990 Project), Family Planning and Health Programme (FPHP) (1990-1996) and more recently Ghana Population and AIDS Project (GHANAPA) (1996-2000). The report also added that, Ghana National Population Policy of 1994 set up the following objectives for the control of birth rate in Ghana:

- To reduce the total fertility rate to 4.0 by 2010 and to 3.0 by 2020.
- To achieve a minimum birth spacing of at least two years for all births by 2020.
- To increase the modern contraceptive prevalence rate to 28 percent by 2010 and to 50 percent by 2020.

To achieve these set objectives, the Reproductive and Child Health Unit (RCHU) of the Ghana Health Service (GHS) which is in charge of and responsible for Family Planning was established.

The trace or practice of Family Planning is evident in Mampurugu Muslim Community from the time of the colonial rule up to date. Hajjiah Memunatu Halidu, one of the leading members of 'Faila' (a sect in Tijaniyyah who emphasised much on the love of mankind) Women Association in Walewale in an interview said they used to use some tablets popularly known as "family planning" for the prevention of pregnancy but it was done in secrecy. Hajjiah Ayi Iddris also a leading member of 'Faila' Women Association testified to the use of the tablet (family planning) but she explained further that it was only used by non-married women. Alhaji Tia Adjei ex-secretary to the National House of Chiefs was of the view that, although condom was used by some youth to prevent their girls *maama* (friends) from getting pregnant, it was not known by all but only a few. Abdul –Samed Booro, Unit Committee Member of Zaa'u in West Mampurisi, explains that a particular herb popularly known as *doo bia* literally, a man's child was used to delay ejaculating into the vagina until the man was off

the woman that he could ejaculate. This was used to protect the women from becoming pregnant because the sperms will not reach the ovum for fertilization to take place. It is observed that the withdrawal method was used by the youth then, but majority of the youth of today in the community uses condoms in secret because it is considered as sin against God and an act of disgrace in the communities. According to Mr. Baba a worker of Kparigu clinic said Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) realised the high growth rate of population in Mampurugu and then started launching educational campaign programmes all over the community. In a speech delivered by the former District Chief Executive for East Mampurisi, Mr Issaka Bawa, he underscored the fact that the district needed to embrace Family Planning to help reverse its high population growth rate of about 3.5 percent. He added that if this growth rate is viewed against the background of an economy made up of mainly subsistence farmers with low earnings, then it becomes clear that family planning is a must in the district. Mr. Baba also said, to check the high growth of population in the Mampurugu Community, the Planned Parenthood Association, established a clinic at Kparigu in West Mampurusi District in the year 2000 with the aim of reducing the population growth and to treat minor physical illness.

2.6 Islam and the Use of Contraceptives

Contraception according to the *Longman English Dictionary*, “is the practice of preventing a woman from becoming pregnant when she has sex, or the methods for doing this: birth control: the pill is a proper method of contraception”. Contraception is also defined by Ebrahim (1994) as “any measure undertaken to avoid the possibility of giving birth to children. Hence, such a measure necessarily implies the non-fulfilment of one of the purpose of marriage, namely procreation of the human species”. He added that the type of contraceptives which was used during the era or the life time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) is known as al ‘*azl*’ which may mean to put apart, to set aside, to remove or

separate. Technically speaking, Khan (1973) explains *azl* as “the process of withdrawal by the man at the time of emission to prevent insemination of the ovum”. Imam al-Shawkani has made an effort by compiling all the sayings of the Holy Prophet with regard to *azl* in his celebrated work *Nayl al Awtar* of which some are quoted below:

- Jabir narrates, “We used to practise *azl* in Prophet’s Life time while the Qur’an was being revealed”. In another version of the same *hadith* it reads, “We used to practise *azl* during the Prophet’s life time and he was informed about this and he did not stop us”.
- Jabir narrates “A man came to the Holy Prophet and said ‘I have a slave-girl, and we need her as a servant around the palm groves. I have sex with her, but I am afraid of her becoming pregnant.’ The Prophet said, ‘practise *azl* with her if you so wish, for she will receive what has been predetermined for her’.”
- Abu Sa’id narrates, “The Jews say that *azl* is minor infanticide, so the Prophet said, ‘The Jews are wrong; for if Allah wanted to create something, no one can divert Him’.”
- Umar Al Khattab narrates, “The Prophet forbade the practice of ‘*azl*’ with a free woman except with her permission.”
- Judhamah bint Wahb narrates, “I was there when the Prophet was with a group of people when he said, ‘I was about to prohibit the *ghila* (the act of engaging in sexual intercourse with a woman in lactation), but I observed the Byzantines and the Persians, and saw them do it, and their children were not harmed. Then they asked him about *azl* and the Prophet said ‘It is infanticide’.

The first three *ahadith* mentioned above indicate that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. W.A) (S.A.W) was aware of the *azl* in his lifetime but did not stop the Muslim Ummah from its

practice. The fourth Hadith suggests that the permission of the wife (free woman) should be sought by the husband before engaging in the practice of 'azl'. The second and the third *ahadith* make it clear that whoever is destined to be created will be by Allah's infinite plan. The fifth Hadith poses a problem because the practice of 'azl' is likened to minor infanticide.

Ibn Hajar in his commentary on *Sahih al- Buhari* and *Fathu Baari* pointed out that "some scholars regarded the Hadith narrated by Judhamah as weak (*da'eef*) in view of the fact that it contradicts a number of ahadith (on that issue), and he notes that these scholars questioned how it could be possible for the Prophet to condemn the Jewish teaching and elsewhere teach the same thing. (fathu-Baari 1410 A.H).

Ibn Hajar further explained that other scholars like Tahawi and Ibn Rushid hold the hadith of Judhamah as abrogated. Finally, Ibn Hajar argued in support of Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyyah that:

The Jews were contradicted because they held that pregnancy could not occur if 'azl' was practised, which means that they ranked it with infanticide in preventing progeny. The Jews were corrected and informed that 'azl' does not necessarily prevent pregnancy if Allah so will it to happen, and if Allah does not will creation, then 'azl cannot be regarded as true infanticide. However in the hadith of Judhamah, 'azl' has been termed "minor infanticide" because the man who practises 'azl' is trying absolutely to prevent pregnancy, so his intention is the same as infanticide. The difference between the two is that infanticide is a direct and deliberate act. In it, both the intention and the action are 'combined, whereas 'azl' is restricted to intention only [that of not having any dependent]. Accordingly, it was termed a minor form of infanticide. (Ibn Hajar(9) 309)

The *hadith* of Judhamah does not categorically consider the practice of 'azl' as being haram. Such a practice is *makruh* or undesirable but not absolutely forbidden.

Al-Ghazali in his work “Ihya ulum” (1302 A.H, 2:52) explains the remark “it is minor infanticide’ may be his remark about ‘minor disbelief’ which may be *makruh* (undesirable) but not illegal”.

Imam al-Ghazali explains further that:

The custom of ‘azl’ is lawful but not commendable for the reason that the merits of depositing the semen in the uterus are given up. For instance, it is Makruh or not desirable, not recommendable, if a person sits idle in a mosque without remembering Allah. The concept is that not using a thing for which it is intended is Makruh.

The candid opinions of the four Sunni schools of thoughts and Shiah school are also important to be consulted with regard to the use of contraceptives. These schools of thought include; the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi’i, Hambali and Ja’fari.

Musallam (1983) explains the position of the Ja’fari on this, to mean that the use of *azl* with a free woman is only permitted with her specific permission but allows for the establishment of the woman’s consent as precondition in the marriage contract.

Al- Kasani (A.H.1322), a renowned scholar of the Hanafi School considers it as *makruh* or undesirable for the husband to practise *azl* with the wife (free woman) without her permission because she has the right to have a child. However, if the practice of *azl* is of her approval then there is no cause for alarm since she is prepared to forgo her right. Anas (1971) in his work “*Mu’atta*”, a popular book for the Maliki School of thought ‘states that a man has no right to practise *azl* with his wife (free woman) without her consent’.

Ebrahim (1994) referring to the works of Imam al- Nawawi, a scholar of the Shafi’i school of thought explains that:

al azl' is to engage in sexual intercourse, prior to the ejaculation, the man removes his sexual organ and allows the emission of sperms to take place outside the sexual organ of the woman[...] This act is *Makruh* in any condition whether the women consent or not. But if his wife [free woman] consents to it then it is not *haram* [forbidden] and if she does not give her consent, there are two opinions and the correct opinion is that it is not *haram* [forbidden].

Ibn Qudamah, jurist of the Hambali school of thought says that the practice of *azl* without any reason is improper or *makruh* but it is not forbidden. *Azl* should not be practised with a woman without her consent. (Ibn Qudamah (7)23-4). All the above schools of thoughts realised the need to seek permission from the wife because it is her right to enjoy maximum pleasure in the act of sexual intercourse and to have children.

2.7 Reasons for The Use of Contraception

With reference to the Holy Qur'an, Allah the Almighty wishes and desires for His servants ease and enjoyable life and does not wish for their hardships and sufferings. It says: "Allah desires for you ease: He desires no hardship for you" (2:185). In another verse it says "He has not laid upon you in religion any hardship." (22:78). These two verses imply that any way of life that may lead believers to hardships, sufferings and difficulties should be avoided because God the Almighty does not desire for you in such a situation. Al-Ghazali (A. H. 1302) in his work *Ihya* states that for the sake of protecting the wife's life from the risk of child-birth or in the case of financial difficulties which befall on the family, then the use of *azl* can be justified.

Sheikh Ahmad al-Shabarasi (1973) of Egypt pointed out the validity and the reasons for the use of contraception as follows:

- When the woman's health is threatened. For instance, if the woman is already suckling an infant, it would be harmful both to herself and her child if she becomes pregnant.
- If either one or both partners have a disease.
- [If the husband's finances are insufficient to support more children.
- Genetic defect that can be transmitted.
- When the wife needs chance to rest between pregnancies.

Considering the reasons presented by al-Ghazali and Sheikh Ahmad Shabarasi, the use of contraception should be encouraged especially if it concerns the life of the woman and the child. It has been observed that the Holy Qur'an is silent or does not make any explicit reference to the use of contraception but it is evident in the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet that believers can practise birth control especially in the form of *azl*. All the four Sunni and Shiah schools of thought generally ruled out that the use of contraception especially the *azl* is *makruh* (improper or undesirable) but not *haram* (forbidden). The conditions used to justify the use of contraception include: if the health of the wife is threatened, the chance of transmitting genetic disease, the burden of frequent giving birth, insufficient finance to support more children and when the woman needs rest between pregnancies.

2.8 Methods of Contraceptives

From the above discussions, it is learnt that the only contraceptive method which was used during the Prophet's Lifetime was *azl* but modern biomedical sciences have devised new methods and more is yet to be discovered because research in this area is carried day in- day-out. The methods of contraceptive are therefore grouped into reversible and irreversible.

2.8.1 Reversible Methods.

As the name suggests, it is temporary and not permanent in nature. The following are some of the examples of reversible methods of contraceptives:

1. Douche.
2. Rhythm method.
3. *azl* (withdrawal).
4. Spermicide only (suppositories, foaming tablets, etc.).
5. Condom (sheath).
6. Diaphragm (cap)
7. Intra-uterine device (I.U.D: e. g, loop, coil etc).
8. Progestogen
9. The Pills.

The purpose and the aim of the withdrawal method *azl* is to prevent the sperms from reaching the uterus and by so doing fertilization will not take place in the ovum. All the other methods mentioned above have the same aim and by analogy they will be accepted since the use of contraceptives is generally accepted as *makruh* and not *haram*. The women are therefore cautioned not to use these methods because they might threaten their health.

2.8.2 Irreversible Methods.

The irreversible methods are permanent in nature and as such they cannot be reversed. Below are some examples of the irreversible methods:

- Vasectomy.
- Tubal ligation.
- Hysterectomy.

These methods involve surgical operation which will permanently make both the man and woman incapacitated from procreation. Thus, both the woman and the man would be rendered permanently incapable of biological reproduction. Al- Nawawi (1958) points out that for destroying the veins of testicles with (intake) of camphor or any other similar thing is a type of castration and castration is *haram* (prohibited). Islamic scholars stand against irreversible contraceptives on the grounds that the Prophet forbade castration.

Wood (1974) argues that castration involves removing the testicles or testes, organs which produce not only sperms but also the male hormones that are essential to maintain a man's masculinity; including his sexual drive [...]. It (vasectomy) does not produce the state of weakness and indifference which is normally believed to accompany castration. It is reported from Sa'd Ibn Waqas that "Allah's Messenger objected to Uthman Ibn Ma'zun living celibacy. If he had given him permission, we would have had ourselves castrated".(Sahih Buhari, *kitab Niqah*, part 7. 5). It is again reported from Abdallah Ibn Masud that: "We were on expedition with the Holy Prophet and we had no women with us. We said, 'should we have ourselves castrated? He, [the Prophet] forbade us to do so"(Sahih Muslim *kitab Niqah* 3:553-4).

Irreversible Methods of sterilizing men and women are not permissible because the Islamic jurist have used the prohibition of castration as an analogy to consider it as *haram*.

2.9 Female Use of Contraceptives.

Throughout our research, we have not come across any evidence either in the Holy Qur'an or in the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet discussing female use of contraceptives. The sanctioning or permissibility of female using contraceptives needs to be treated as a distinct issue.

Ibn Taymiyyah (A.H.1326), a renowned Hambali theologian was asked a question in his book *Fatwa* pertaining to female use of contraceptive devices. "Is it lawfully *halal*

[permissible] (*ja'iz*), for a woman to insert a “medicine” at the time of sexual intercourse so as to prevent the sperm from reaching the uterus? And if that medicine stays inside her after intercourse and it is not removed, is it permissible for her to offer her obligatory ritual of *salah* and engage in fasting (*Sawm*) after taking the *ghusl* (ritual bath) or not? He replied “as regard her offering the obligatory *Salah* and engaging in fasting they are both valid in spite of the fact that the “medicine” remains inside her. But as regard the permissibility [of using such a medicine] there are different opinions among the ‘*ulamah* (scholars) and it would be more prudent not to use it; and Allah knows best”. (*al Fatawa al kubrah*, 1:60, no 36).

In commenting on the reply given by Ibn Taymiyyah, Ebrahim (1994) explains that Ibn Taymiyyah in no way condemned the practice but advised that one should be cautious in using such “medicine” and that it would be more preferable for the woman not to use it. That is, the “medicine” could harm or affect the woman’s health.

2.10 Conclusion

The subject of “Birth control and Muslim family” constitutes this chapter. We have understood that Islam attaches much importance to the family than anything else. This is because it is the foundation of every society. That is, the family is the nucleus of the Islamic society and marriage is the only way to bring about such an institution. The Holy Qur’an charges male Muslims to take up their responsibilities by taking care of their wives and the children, they should ensure that love, peace, unity and security prevail in their families. It is also learnt in this chapter that effective upbringing of Muslim children by providing them with their basic needs and moral training will assist them grow into decent and well trained human beings. We have again identified the purpose of Islamic marriage to include: procreation, defeating the carnal lust, self-discipline, peace and tranquillity. One can go in for marriage for the purpose of procreation as well as other purposes. In other words, you can marry for the sole purpose of peace and tranquillity or defeating the carnal lust. The term

Family Planning is also understood as the act of keeping procreation in check or limiting the size of the family by the use of contraceptives and spacing of children.

Islamic scholars allowed the practice of family planning or birth control for certain specific reasons: when the wife needs a chance to rest between pregnancies, if either or both partners have disease that can be transmitted, when the woman's health is threatened and if the husband's finances are insufficient to support more children. The research again reveals that there is no categorical statement in the Holy Qur'an in favour of or against the use of contraception, but it is evident that birth control was practised during Prophet Muhammad (S. W.A) (S.A.W) lifetime by the use of *azl* (coitus interruptus). The general ruling on the use of contraception is that it is *makruh* (undesirable) and not *haram* (forbidden). The chapter indentified two methods of contraception: reversible and irreversible. The Islamic jurists considered the reversible method to serve the same purpose as *azl* hence it is permissible but *makruh* (undesirable) while the irreversible method is seen as castration and therefore considered as *haram* (forbidden). The female use of contraceptives is therefore cautioned due to health reasons but not that it is declared as *haram* (forbidden).

CHAPTER THREE

MUSLIM WOMEN IN SOCIAL LIFE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY PLANNING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAMPURUGU.

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter two, we tried to explore the Islamic view on Family Planning and the use of contraceptives. We indicated that the practice of family planning is *Makruh* (not recommended) but not *haram* (prohibited). Using the reversible contraceptives by married couples is *Makruh* while the irreversible method is *haram*. The focus of this chapter, however, is to discuss the status of women in Islam, the participation of Muslim women in social life, child rights over parents, rights and responsibilities of couples and the importance of family planning with respect to the development of Mampurugu.

3.2 Muslim Women in Social Life

Our interactions with the people of Mampurugu revealed that majority of male Muslims in Mampurugu are of the opinion that women have been created only for housekeeping and childbirth. People of this opinion argue that charging women with any other responsibilities which they are not created for by nature is tantamount to a sin against God. This extra responsibility can lead to failure and disappointment in the lives of women. Thus, women should only engage themselves in giving birth to children and taking proper care of them and not to participate in social life. In other words politics, government administration, military, business and the likes should be undertaken by men exclusively. It is, therefore, against this background that this sub-heading tries to investigate whether women are created only to give birth to children or otherwise. Herewith, we shall demonstrate the pivot of the social activities from the Qur'an and Prophet's Sunnah. It is evident in the Holy Qur'an that women have ever taken oath of allegiance which is an allegiance to government. Swearing an allegiance to

government is the most salient manifestation of the political activity in every society to be practiced. The Qur'an (60:12) state:

O people when believing women come to you giving you a pledge that they will not associate anything with Allah, and will not steal, and will not commit fornication, and will not kill their children, and will not disobey in what is good, accept their pledge and ask forgiveness for them from Allah, surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

Oath of allegiance taken by the women is a pledge of adopting Islam as their religion and the acknowledgement of the Prophet as the head of government (leader" or "president"). Al-Awrat (1996) reports that during the second allegiance of *al Aqabah* (swearing allegiance to Prophet), multitude of Madinah men took oath of allegiance to Prophet after *haji* rites in which two women by names Umm Imarah and Asma' were among them. Also, it is said that allegiance had been sworn to the Prophet by other women at Makkah besides these two women from Madinah. ([Fath-Al-Bari vol. 11, p.220).

The Holy Qur'an assigns a great responsibility to women by ordering them to enjoin the good deeds and forbid evil ones which are the social responsibilities binding on both Muslim men and women. The Qur'an (9:71) says:

And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians of each other: they enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and pay the poor- rate, and obey Allah and His Messenger; (as for) these, Allah will show mercy to them; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise .

This verse indicates that both believing men and women serve as guardians over each other and so this divine duty and social responsibility cannot be separated by male and female. It is therefore incumbent upon both Muslim men and women to undertake and commit themselves to discharge this social duty and divine responsibility without discrimination.

Performing economic and social activities is something permitted by the Prophet and those before him. Thus, Islam allows Muslim women to partake in economic activities on condition that they seek permission from their husbands and again keep their modesty during the work. To support this, Qur'an makes reference to the daughters of Prophet Shu'ayb who were actively involved in taking care of animals as their economic activity. The Qur'an (28:23-26) says:

And when he came to the water of Madyan, he (Musah) found on it a group of men watering, and he found besides them two women keeping back (their flocks). He said: what is the matter with you? They said: we cannot water until the shepherds take away (their sheep) from the water, and our father is a very old man. So he watered (their sheep) for them, then went back to the shade and said: My Lord, surely I stand in need of whatever good. Thou mayest send down to me. Then one of the two women came to him walking bashfully. She said: My father invites you that he may give you a reward of you having watered for us. So when he came to him and gave to him the account, he said: fear not, you are secure from the unjust people. Said one of them, O my father, employ him, surely the best of those that you can employ is the strong man, the faithful one.

In considering these verses, the daughters of Prophet Shu'ayb were shepherds, relating and speaking with men; shyness and modesty have been manifested and confirmed by Allah. The engagement of Muslim women in business and employment for their livelihood and for the development of the society was extensively common during Prophet's time. Thus, women were actively engaged in all kinds of profession and trade without any restriction. Khawwat bint Jubayr used to sell cooking oil. (Tarajum al- Nisa p.537). Some women like Salamah, Umm Hanni and others worked on farms and reared domestic animals. (al -Mu'jam al-Kabeer, (24), 427). The trade of selling women's adornments was the business of Zaynab al-Aattarah, Mulaykah bint al- Aqra', al - Thaqafiyyah and Asma' bint Makhrabah while Zaynab bint Jahsh occupied herself with handicrafts (Usd Al-Ghabah (5) 452, 548).

A woman by name Zaynab was the doctor of bani Awzd and she often treated the patients while other women like Qaylah, the mother of bani Namar, used to practice commercial business.

The right of ownership by doing business and exerting effort by women and men to earn a living is confirmed in the Qur'an. Thus, they both have the right over what they earn. The Qur'an (4:32) states: "Unto men a fortune from that which they have earned, and unto women a fortune from that they have earned". The verse pointed out clearly that both believing men and women are entitled to their livelihood and ownership.

A Muslim woman occupying the highest political office is something permitted in Islam. The story of queen Shebah and her sovereignty has been mentioned in the Qur'an without any criticism. It is stated in the Holy Qur'an that "verily I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given abundance of everything, and she has a mighty throne" (27:23). Upon receiving Prophet Suleiman's letter, she treated it with high respect and then consulted with her chiefs in order to find solution to the problem at hand. "She said: Oh my chiefs, surely an honorable letter has been delivered to me. Oh chiefs give me advice respecting my affair; I never decided an affair until you are in my presence" (27:32). The quoted verses have proven that the Queen was a woman of opinion, consultation and truth seeking.

Participation of women during Jihad in the early part of Islam and after was prevalent and well known to all. In other words, the believing women used to offer assistance to the warriors at battlefields; they prepared food and took care of the patients among other things. It is reported that "during the battle of Uhud, when the Muslims left the battlefield, Umm Imarah stayed behind holding a sword to protect the Prophet".(Sahih Muslim (5),199). Umar Ibn al- Khattab often said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying during the battle of Uhud: To every side I turned my face I saw only Umm Imarah fighting to defend me". (Sahih

Muslim (5), 196). Apart from women being seen in battlefront fighting to defend Islam, others were preparing food, supplying water and providing medical care to the wounded warriors. Anas bin Malik is reported to have said: “”During the battle of Uhud, Ayisha and Umm Salamah (wives of the Prophet) carried the water skins and poured water into the mouths of the thirsty warriors.”” (Journal of Farzanah issue1, 9). To add to these, Umm Atiyah is reported to have said: “I have accompanied the Messenger of Allah to seven battles remaining behind the men (in tents), cooking and preparing food for them.” (Sahih Buhari (6), 418).

Muslim women had participated in the early two migrations which occurred during the early Islamic era which are considered to be socio-political movements. The political dimensions of the migration can be identified to include the banishment and rejection of the regime ruling over the people, the communication of the message of the new religion and the presentation of the political precautions tactic of Islam. The Qur'an (35:50) made special reference to the migration of women together with the Prophet to Madinah by stating:

O Prophet, surely We have made lawful to you your wives whom you have given their dowries, and those whom your right hand possesses out of those whom Allah has given to you as prisoners of war, and the daughters of your paternal uncles and the daughters of your paternal aunts and the daughters of your maternal uncles and the daughters of your maternal aunts who fled with you.

Ali Qutub (n.d.) said one of the women who had participated in this migration was Asma', the wife of Zubayr. Asma' said: “in this migration I was pregnant and on arrival in Madinah I gave birth to my son at Quba”.

The women were not only allowed to undertake the migration but they were thoroughly examined. That is, the immigrant Muslims were examined to see whether they were fit to be in the Muslim community or not. The Qur'an (60:10) says:

you who believe, when believing women come to you as fugitives, examine them; Allah knows best their faith, then if you find them to be believing women, do not send them back to the unbelievers, neither are these (women) lawful for them, nor are those (men) lawful for them.

Ibn Abass is reported to have said: The examination or interrogation of the immigrant women was that the women should confess and admit that “I pledge and assure here that I have not migrated out of grudge against my husband or out of desire and inclination towards the new land or for gaining worldly converted objects or profits, but the only purpose for which I have migrated is the love of Allah and the Prophet” (Sahih Buhari (8), 249). It is said by some scholars such as Mahirizi (2004 p.89) that among the women who migrated and were subjected to examination were Damimam bint Bishir, Subay ‘ah bint al - Harith, Borrough bint Aqabah and Abdah bint Abdul - Aziz.

The evidence presented from the Qur’an and Sunnah go to prove the permissibility of women’s participation and involvement in socio- economic and socio- political affairs which debunk the notion of the people in Mampurugu that Muslim women are created to produce children or to serve as ‘baby manufacturing machines’ as well as being managers of the homes.

3.3 The Status of Women in Muslim Families

Women are the mothers of all and they deserve to be honored and revered. This is because without the women, the family which is the foundation of every community cannot hold. Their effort in building the communities should be recognized by their male counterparts. Women are mates of men and neither can one live without the other. Men and women are complementary to each other in human life. In this regard, Allah says “..... they are apparel for you and you are apparel to them.....” (Qur an 2:187).

Al-Tabataba'i commenting on this verse notes that *Libaas* (apparel) is been indicated in the verse to mean whatever man covers his body with. Metaphorically, both men and women curb each other from evil and cover each other's defects. They are both supposed to cover each other's nudity as well as to beautify each other as cloth is used for. In reference to the prophetic sayings, it is reported from the Messenger of Allah that "Women are verily the mates of men" (Musnad Ahmad (6), 256). In a different narration but the same wording, it says "they are verily equally to men" (Mawsu'at Atraf al - Hadith Nabawi (3)55, 266).

Mahirizi (2000) says "Women are verily mates, '*shaqayiq*' which means they are alike and equal to them in morals, behavior and nature, in a way that it can be said that women have not been separated from men." He added that the root of the term *shaqayiq* gives the meaning of full brother or sister from the same father and mother. It is affirmed in the traditions of the Prophet that men cannot go to paradise unless they pass through women or the approval of women, for, it is said that paradise is under the feet of women. It is reported from Allah's Messenger that "paradise is verily under the feet of women" (al - Tabaqat Kubrah (4),274). In another narration it is said that "paradise is under the feet of mothers." (Kanzul-umal (16), 461). A man can only be recognized as the best among all in any community if he treats women fairly by recognizing their rights, honoring and dignifying them. With regards to this, the Prophet said "the best of you are those who are too kind to their wives" (Sunan Ibn Majah (2),636). He again said "None honors the women but the magnanimous and none insults them but the mean deprived" (Mukhtasar Tareekh Demashq (7), 50). To add to this, Imam Baqi said "He who takes a woman (marries) should certainly respect her because the wife of anyone is a means of his pleasure. Therefore anyone who marries a woman should not spoil or disgrace her (by disregarding her respectable rights)" (Bihar Anwar (103), 224).

Kind treatment, love and honoring of women can be other means of increasing the faith of faithful men, maintaining peace for the soul, body and the mind. Imam Musah Ibn Ja'far narrated from his father that the Prophet said: "However much the faith of a man increases, his regard for women increases" (Bihar-Anwar (103),228).

3.4 Rights and Responsibilities of Married Couples

According to Tabataba'i (2004), the work that a man must perform for someone who is a beneficiary is called *huquq* (rights) and the work that a person performs is called duties, orders, and obligations. Both the man and the woman have their duties and functions to be carried out as a husband and a wife for the effective management and progress of the family. The following are responsibilities and rights of the married couples: it is the responsibility of the married couple to reconcile in terms of disagreements and misunderstandings even at the point of divorce or during *Iddah* (the awaiting period). The Qur'an (2:228) says:

Divorced women shall wait for three months period. And it is not lawful for them to hide what Allah hath created in their wombs, if they have faith in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. Women shall have right similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree over them and Allah is exalted in Power, Wise.

Considering this verse, Islam tries to maintain the married state as far as possible, especially where children are involved. It checks hasty action as far as possible and leaves the door to reconciliation open at any stage. The parties are allowed for a period of time to make up their minds to see if adjustment is possible. Reconciliation is recommended, but if they are really determined against reconciliation it will be unfair to keep them tied indefinitely. In a similar verse Allah says: "When ye divorce Women, and they fulfill the term of their *Iddah*, do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands if they mutually agree on equitable terms. These instructions for all among you who believe in Allah and the Last Day....."

(Qur'an 2:232). Even at the point of conflict the couples are advised to reconcile with each other for peaceful co-existence within the families. Imam Ali said: "In any condition conciliate the wives, talk with them warmly and through kind words, thereby, they change their actions into good ones" (Bihar-Anwar vol. 103. 223).

Islam as a religion opens the chance for the liberty of both the husband and the wife to manage their family affairs within the Islamic context. It is therefore their responsibility not to put more restrictions on each other. Too much restriction on women and children is not permissible in Islam. As a result, those men who restrict their children and wives are regarded as the worst people among all in the communities. Imam Ali said "The worst man is he who restricts his household" (Nurul-Absar).

It is the duty of the man to properly maintain the woman. That is , provide her with food, shelter, and clothing and also take care of her health conditions. It is important to maintain her according to the status of life even at the event of divorce. This is because there is hope for reconciliation. Allah says:

Let the woman live in the same style as ye live, according to your means: Annoy them not so as to restrict them. And if they are pregnant then spend (your substance) on them until they deliver their burden; and if they suckle your (offspring), give them their recompense together according to what is just and reasonable..... Qur'an (65:6).

The Prophet said: "O you young people if one of you is capable of marrying, then do it, because it is good for your eyes (not to stare at women) and protects your private parts (to remain more pious)". (Wasa-il-Shi'h (14)153). Capable here is interpreted to mean taking care of the wife by providing her basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing among others. The necessity of providing maintenance is explained into detail and stressed in the last farewell sermon of the Prophet (Hajjatu-Wada) where it is said that "beware about your

treatment of women. You have accepted them with the word of Allah, and have made lawful sexual relation with them with the word of Allah.....as you have a duty to provide them with reasonable maintenance and clothing.”

It is the duty and responsibility of both of them to train the children for their moral, spiritual and physical development. The children should properly be brought up through the effort of the parents especially the mother in order to help them fit into any society they find themselves. According to Imam Ali “the right of a child upon his father is that he should give him a nice appellation, train him well and teach him the Qur’an”. (Nahjul-Balgah 399). In another narration, Imam Sajjad said: “the right of a child is that you know he has emerged from you and in this world his right and wrong are attributed to you. You are responsible for his fine teachings and training, guiding him to his Lord Almighty and Gracious, and, assisting him to obey Him. Therefore be sure that if you do a favor to your child, you will obtain it and if you act viciously against him it will come back to you too.” (Manla-Yahduruhu –Faqihi (2), 622).

It is also the duty and responsibility for parents to keep and maintain the house clean and attractive. Good personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness promote the health condition of an individual and the whole society at large. The Messenger of Allah said: “Try to be clean as much as you are able to. Verily, Allah has based the foundation of Islam on cleanliness; hence, never can a person enter Paradise but the clean ones” (Kanzul - Umal 26002.). In reference to personal hygiene, Imam Musah Ibn Ja’far said: “there are five Sunnah about the head and five others related to the body. The first five concerning the head, are: washing the mouth, trimming the mustache, combing the hair and drawing up water through the mouth and nostrils. The second five concerning the body, are: circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, depilating the armpit, clipping the nails and cleansing the private parts (with water, tissue, cloth etc water is preferable).”(Al-Khisaal, p.125). It is again the

responsibility of the man to take care of both the wife and the children. Doi (1984) said: “In the *Hanafi* School of law, as laid down in *Durrul- Mukhtar*, the wife will be treated as *asl* (root) and the child as ‘*far*’ (branches) in establishing priority in awarding maintenance although both are inseparable and their maintenance is ‘*Wajib*’ (compulsory) according to the jurists of all schools”.

Both couple have the right to live; everything should, therefore, be done to protect their lives. Thus, the right to life should be enjoyed by the couple. Any circumstance that may lead to the removal of their lives should be stopped or prevented. Life is so precious and sacred in Islam and it cannot be taken for granted or for any sacrificial purpose. It is incumbent on every human being that under no circumstance should he be a victim of removing human life. Allah says: “Do not kill a soul which Allah has made sacred except through the due process of law.” Qur`an (6:151). He further states: “If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide there is forever and the wrath and curse of Allah are upon him and dreadful penalty is prepared for him” Qur`an (4:93). The Prophet in his farewell pilgrimage emphasized the need to protect life and property by stating “O People, Your blood, property and honor is made forbidden upon one another. The respect for these things is such as it is the respect of this Day.....” (Bukhari). The sermon identified the right to life and safety which believers should use in regulating their life styles.

Education is the bedrock and source of light for every kind of development; therefore the couples have the right to enjoy the fruits of education up to the highest level and should not be denied by any circumstance. Our reading of the Qur`an states: “Allah exalts those who believe among you and those who have knowledge, to ranks” (Qur`an 58:11). God, according to this verse only exalts those who are believers and those who have knowledge irrespective of their sex. The traditions of the Prophet spelt out the need for women to seek knowledge at all cost. This is because it is a duty bound on them to search for it. The Messenger says

“Seeking of knowledge is a duty incumbent upon every Muslim man and woman” (Bihar-Anwar, (1), 213). He again said “What excellent women the women of al –Ansar are, their bashfulness could never curb them from learning the rules of religion” (Bihar-Anwar..(1),249). The first era of Islamic history contains numerous examples of science acquisition and knowledge seeking by women. It is learnt from some scholars that Zaynab al-Attarah, who was dealing in things of women’s adornment, once questioned the Messenger of Allah about the way of the creation of the world. The Messenger responded by explaining to her the creation from the beginning till that present time. Al -Sadooq (n.d.) revealed that when Asma’ bint Ummays returned from the migration to Abyssinia, she consulted with the wives of the Prophet to know whether “there is any Qur’anic verse revealed about women”. Upon hearing a negative reply from them she contacted the Prophet saying “The women are sustaining loss and detriment” the Prophet asked “what for?” she said: “Because not even one Qur’anic verse has been revealed concerning them”. Instantly the verse 35 of Surah Ahzab was revealed. The mentioned evidence proves the fact that Muslim women were deeply concerned in search for knowledge. The case is however, different in the communities today because the women are overburdened with large family issues which do not permit them to seek knowledge. Instead, it confines them to the house, hence, their engagement in producing children.

3.5 Parent and Parenthood

Generally, it is explained by some scholars like Mahirizi (2004) that the term parent often refers to the father and mother of a child while parenthood refers to the biological parent who performs the role of a parent. On the other hand, parenting refers to the social parents who perform the role of bringing up a child who is not their own. From this explanation, two types of parents can be identified: biological parents who physically gave birth to the child and social parents who are not biological parents but they assist in bringing up the child. The

social type functioned in most Muslim communities as we were told during our interaction. Its absence today has led to many social vices in the communities.

3.6 Functions of parents

In every family, the parents are to perform the following functions;

1. Provision of physical needs for the child.
2. Provision of health needs for the child such as food, clothing.
3. Emotional role as parent to free the child's mind from any tension and stress.
4. Help the child to be part of the society by attending socialization programs.
5. Provision of moral training for the child.

Failure on the part of the parents in the fulfillment of any of these functions is tantamount to sin against God and the society at large. It is therefore advised that the parent should control their birth rate in order to properly cater for the children with the little resources at their disposal.

3.7 Child Rights over Parents

Scholars like Al- Uthymeen (n.d.) established that children in accordance with the Islamic concept means both male and female. In accordance with the true Islamic teaching, both male and female are alike in the sight of Allah. However, each is physically prepared and equipped to perform certain tasks and duties that are suitable for his/her nature. Also, all are equal in religious duties, except for certain exceptions that are defined and illustrated by Allah. Only these differences are to be acknowledged and honoured in accordance with Islam and its teachings.

Muslim children owe their parents rights of obedience and dutifulness; the parents also owe the children some rights. These rights existed before they were born and the parents are

required to pay due diligence regarding the rights of the children in accordance with the principles of Islam. The children have the right to belong to good, loving, ethical and God fearing parents. As a result of this right, Muslim men and women are cautioned to be extra vigilant and careful when selecting their partners. The behavior of the parent often reflects on the children and due to this reason selecting well behaved partners will be to the advantage of the children (Tabataba'i 2004). Al- Qardawi in his presentation on this topic quoted the Prophet to have said "Make a good choice for (your) spouse, for blood will tell" (Ibn Majah). It is therefore the right of the children to have parents who are loved, noble and of righteous character. The child also has the right to genetic purity. It is possible indeed that the parents may have a disease that could be transmitted to the child and in order to prevent this, they may resort to the use of contraceptives. This right is, however, often neglected by many Muslim parents. Killing an embryo through abortion without any medical advice is becoming fashionable in Mampurugu communities. This act is however a great sin in the sight of Allah and against the children's right to life. Similarly, the ignorant Arabs used to burry infant baby girls alive in order to avoid disgrace. God cautioned them by saying "when the female infant buried alive will be questioned for what crime she was killed" Qur'an (81:8-9). Allah again warned the killing of children due to economic incapability by stating: "Kill not your children on the plea of want, We provide sustenance for them and for you" Qur'an (6:151). Even though the child has the right to life, it has no right of taking its own life because it is crime against Allah and it is considered as the work of cowards. On the Day Judgment a great punishment awaits those who commit suicide. The Qur'an commands: ".....nor Kill (or destroy) yourselves for verily Allah hath been to you Most Merciful" Qur'an (4:29). The general meaning of this verse is that Muslims must be careful of their own and other people's lives and remember that Allah showered His mercy and love on all creatures. In His words, Allah equates the killing of a human being with massacre of all the human beings. This is

because the killer of one person deals with humanity and the humanity is the same in one person or in one thousand persons. God further warns those who kill their children due to economic crises by stating in the Qur'an: "And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Surely, the killing of them is a great sin." Qur'an (17:31). The verse strongly prohibits aborting the unborn child due to financial insufficiency and those who faulted in this act shall attract punishment from God or by paying *diyah* (blood-money) reparation. Preserving the life of both unborn and born child is the sole responsibility of the father. The Qur'an reads "And if they (women) are pregnant then spend on them until they deliver." Qur'an (65:6). This implies that the father shall take care of the pregnancy from day one until delivery. However, scholars have made it mandatory upon the mother to nurse her child if the child refuses to be nursed by other than his mother or if the father doesn't have sufficient funds to hire a wet nurse. The Qur'an (2:223) has satisfactorily detailed the rights of nursing by saying:

The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, or father on account of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they both decide on weaning by mutual consent and after due consultation, there is no sin on them. And if you decide on a wet nurse for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay what you agreed on a reasonable basis. And fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Seer on what you do.

Allah also says:

And if they are pregnant, then spend on them till they deliver. Then if they give suck to the children for you, give them their due payment and let each of you accept the advice of the other in a just way. But if you make difficulties for one another, then some other woman may give suck for him. Qur'an (65:6).

From these verses, the father is responsible for providing for the woman quality and proper food till she delivers. The father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on reasonable basis. Under Islamic Law, Allah has made breastfeeding a right of the child irrespective of whoever does it. It is a religious obligation for a woman in a marital home to breastfeed the child but if divorced, then nursing is dealt with *nafaqah* (financial support) which is established by Shari'ah. The *nafaqah* of the child is the responsibility of the father. The father has to compensate the mother for nursing but if she refuses, then it is obligatory on the father to hire a wet nurse for the child. Provision of food for the children is necessary because it keeps them healthy, prevents them from disease and helps them to grow. Their bodies need water to get rid of waste through urine, sweat among others. A drink such as milk or juice contains food mostly as well as water for the healthy growth of the children and to make them strong. Children need more nutrients than anyone and every effort should be made in providing them with food that is balanced. God words says: "O you people, eat of what is on earth, lawful and good, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan for he is to you an arrowed enemy" Qur'an (2:168). In considering this verse, it has been realised that the child does not need just food but one that is proper and nutritious. The word *toyib* in the verse is interpreted to mean pure, clean and wholesome, nourishing and pleasing to taste. Quite apart from the wholesomeness of the food, it should be lawful for the Muslim *Ummah*. Allah emphasizes this in another verse by stating "O you, who believe, eat of the good things that we provided for you. And be grateful to Allah, if it is in Him Ye worship." Qur'an (2:172). It is therefore suggested by these two verses that the common perception in most Ghanaian Muslim communities, that providing a child with nutritious food such as meat, cheese, fish, eggs among others will lead him/her into stealing does not hold.

It is the fundamental right of the child to have a proper and meaningful name. Islam encourages parents to choose good names for their children for proper identification. Islam

recognizes the fact that names have great effects on children on this earth and the hereafter. Children should not therefore be given names that will embarrass them or make them unhappy to identify themselves with. Names have effects on persons in the sense that they are associated with them throughout their lives and again their descendents will bear the same names. It is recommended by the Prophet that the *Ummah* should select good names for their children. He says "You will be called on the Day of Resurrection by your names and your fathers' names, so choose good names for yourselves" (Abu Dawud) To support this further The Prophet said: "The dearest names to Allah are 'Abdullah and 'Abdur-Rahman." (Sahih Muslim). Abu-Musa said, "I was blessed with a son so I brought him to the Prophet and he named him Ibrahim" (Sahih-Bukhari). It is deduced from these narrations that the most preferable names in Islam are the beautiful names of Allah with the word servant attached to them or the names of the Prophets of God. The children also have the right of changing their names if they do not fit their interest or if they have bad meanings or implications. The Prophet also used to change some names for better ones. He changed, for example, Harb (war) to Silm (peace), an area called Afirah (dirty) to Khadihra' (green) among many others.

Children, according to Islam, have the right to be properly brought up, raised and educated. This means that children should be given suitable, sufficient, sound and adequate religious, ethical and moral guidance to last them for their entire lives. They should be imbued with true values, the meaning of right and wrong, and true and false, correct and incorrect, appropriate and inappropriate and among others. Allah stated in the Qur'an (66:6) "O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is Men and stones. The Prophet in this direction also said: "Every one of you (people) is a shepherd. And every one is responsible for whatever falls under his responsibility. A man is like a shepherd of his own family, and he is responsible for them." (Bukhari and Muslim). Children therefore are a trust given to the parents. Parents will be responsible for this trust on the Day of Judgement.

Parents are essentially responsible for the moral, ethical and the basic and essential religious teachings of their children. If parents fulfil this responsibility, they will be freed from the consequences on the Day of Judgement. The children will become better citizens and a pleasure to the eyes of their parents, first in this life, and in the hereafter. It is stated in the Qur'an (52:21)

And those who believe and whose families follow them in Faith, to them shall we join their families: Nor shall We deprive them (of the fruit) of aught of their works: (Yet) is each individual in pledge for his deeds.

Moreover, Allah's Apostle, said: "Upon death, man's deeds will (definitely) stop except for three deeds, namely: a continuous charitable fund, endowment or goodwill; knowledge left for people to benefit from; and pious, righteous and God-fearing child who continuously prays Allah, the Almighty, for the soul of his parents" (Muslim). In fact, such a statement reflects the value of the proper upbringing of children. It has an everlasting effect, even after death.

Al- Uthymeen (n.d.) pointed out that many parents especially the Muslims from almost every society, regardless of creed, origin, social and economical status among others have neglected this very important imposed right of their own children on them which is most unfortunate. Such individuals have indeed lost their children as a result of their own negligence. Such parents are so careless about the time their children spend without any benefit, the friends they associate themselves with, the places they go to and so on. Such parents do not care; they are totally indifferent about where their children go as well as when they come back and this causes the children to grow up without any care and supervision. Such parents do not instruct, direct or guide their children to the proper way of life as well as the right attitudes towards others. Such parents, are however, so caring about their wealth. They are extremely concerned about their businesses. They exert every possible effort to lead

a very successful life in terms of material gains. Children are not only to be well-fed, well-groomed, properly dressed in accordance with the weather and for appearance, but their educational, religious training and spiritual guidance should also be catered for. The heart of a child must be filled with faith. A child's mind must be entertained with proper guidance, knowledge and wisdom. Clothes, food, housing, schooling are not, by any means, an indication of proper care of the child. Proper education and guidance is far more important to a child than food, and appearance.

He further outlined that the right of children in Islam upon their parents is to spend for their (children) welfare and well-being moderately. Over-spending or negligence is not condoned, accepted or even tolerated in Islam. Such ways will have a negative effect on the child regardless of the social status. Fathers are urged not to be miserly to their children and households, who are their natural heirs in every religion and society. Why would one be miserly to those who are going to inherit his wealth? Children are entitled to such an important right. They are even permitted to take money moderately from their parent's wealth to sustain themselves if the parents decline to give them proper funds for their living.

Children also have the right to be treated equally in terms of financial gifts. No one should be preferred to the other. All must be treated fairly and equally. None should be deprived of his gift from the parents. Depriving of, or banning from the right of inheritance, or other financial gifts during the lifetime of the parents or the preference of a parent for one child to the other is considered to be an act of injustice. Injustice will definitely lead to an atmosphere of hatred, anger and dismay among the children in a household. In fact, such an act of injustice may, most likely, lead to animosity among the children, and consequently, affecting the entire family environment. In certain cases a special child may show a tender care for his aging parent. This can cause the parent to grant such a child a special gift, or issue him the ownership of a house, a factory, a land, a farm, a car, or any other valuable items. Islam,

however, considers such a financial reward to such a caring, obedient child, a wrong act. A caring child is entitled only to a reward from Allah. It may be that the heart and feelings of a child may change at one point in time, causing him to become a naughty and or a harmful child. By the same token, a naughty child may change, at any given time, as well, to become a very caring and kind child to the same parent. Hearts and feelings are in the hands of Allah, and can be turned in any direction at any given time and without any previous notice. This is one of the reasons for preventing the act of preference of one child to another .It is narrated by Abu Bakr that the Prophet was approached by one of his companions, al-N'uman bin Basheer, who said: "O Prophet of Allah! I have granted a servant to one of my children (asking him to testify to that gift)." But the Prophet asked him: "Did you grant the same to each and every child of yours?" When the Prophet, was answered in the negative, he said: "Fear Allah, the Almighty, and be fair and just to all your children. Seek the testimony of another person, other than me. I will not testify to an act of injustice." (Bukhari and Muslim). Injustice is therefore prohibited and forbidden in Islam. However, if a parent granted one of his children financial help to fulfil a necessity such as medical treatment coverage, the cost of marriage, the cost of establishing a business, such is not considered as an act of injustice and unfairness. Such a gift will fall under the right to spend in the essential needs of the children, which is a requirement that a parent must fulfil. On the other hand, any negligence in these parental duties can lead to the loss of a child or ill treatment of the parents at a later ag

3.8 Importance of family planning in consolidating development in Mampurugu

The benefits of family planning to the married couples may include the following; couples/ partners plan for the number of children they want and when they want them, improves the health of mothers and children through child spacing and couples have more time to share with each other.

It is observed from these communities that well planned families or small families pay more attention to and concentrate on Islamic activity which concerns more about their closeness to God. It is a well known fact that large families are associated with numerous problems such as provision of food, health, shelter, payment of school fees, domestic challenges and both the child and the parents lack concentration in their Islamic practices. This is because they often think of solutions to the problems confronting the family. Some Muslims in the communities do not even observe the five daily prayers on market days due to the fact that they are busy struggling to get the families to survive up to the next market day. We again observed that on market days most of the parents do not provide food for the children who then fend for themselves. Those with smaller families or planned families manage with their resources to their own advantage. They, therefore, have fewer problems which allow for much concentration during their performance of Islamic rituals. A religious service with faith and concentration give one the insight of God and again brings one closer to Him.

Education is the bedrock to the development and progress of every society and parents especially the mothers are not ignorant about this fact. Most mothers in Mampurugu through their own effort provide both Islamic and secular education to their children without the concern of the fathers. Thus, the mothers try their best to educate their children by paying school fees regularly and providing other teaching and learning materials to the children for effective learning. To make sure that the children attend school at the right time, the mothers normally prepare the children for school as early as possible and carry them to and from school on bicycles and motorcycles. The best alternatives for the reduction of the mothers' sufferings and burdens are to adopt family planning policies thereby controlling their birth rate in order to effectively educate their children with the little resources at their disposal.

The infertility of the land in Mampurugu has resulted in annual low farm productivity and the families depend on the trading activities of the women for survival. Our interactions with the

women revealed that they assist each other in solving their economic problems by setting up small businesses or promoting their economic status through their own contributions commonly known as *adaase*. ‘Adaase’ is a system of collective contribution by individual members in a group which members receive in turns for the establishment or promotion of businesses. Some of these businesses include shear butter processing, groundnut oil processing, rice processing, food selling and other related small businesses which are undertaken in the community. The women sustain the families through these businesses, pay their wards’ school fees and also assist some of their husbands by providing them with their daily needs. The Chief Imam of Walewale, Imam Ramadam recognized and appreciated the contribution of women in sustaining the families by stating that: “Had it not been for our women, most families would have collapsed due to poverty and hunger. They therefore deserve to be recognized and as such deserve special prayers for the good work and numerous lives they are saving in the community”. Access to family planning promotes sound, economic investment in developing communities like Mampurugu.

Families of many children but fewer resources cannot provide the required nutritional needs for all of them and this could affect the health, growth and development of the children. A malnourished child is exposed to all kinds of diseases and other health complications. However, with family planning the basic health needs of the child could be catered for with the resources planned for its health, growth and development. Children from large families in Mampurugu always cry and fight over food because the parents cannot provide enough for them which affect their growth and health conditions. Provision of family planning services will improve child health and survival. The use of contraceptives will have an impact on the health and wellbeing of the child. Ensuring that women have reliable access to family planning will save the lives of many children. Complications during pregnancy are the number one killer of young women in Mampurugu and with the use of contraceptives; it

could minimize the death of young women in the community. Babies born to young mothers especially teenagers are also at greater risk than those mothers who are old and family planning services are absolutely the key to sustaining lives and accelerating development in the community.

It is observed that Agriculture is the backbone of the development of every community in Ghana, but in recent years the attitude of some male farmers in Mampurugu towards farming is discouraging. Under normal circumstances, it is the men who are supposed to provide food for the family but it is not so in the community. It has been observed that most of the work on the farm is performed by the women. The women pay for the services on the farm, do the sowing as well as the harvesting and the processing. Most of the women in the community are involved in the cultivation of soya bean, groundnuts, pepper, beans, for their own benefit and the sustenance of the families. Large families often have large number of children who cannot be taken care of by their parents. If the people of Mampurugu seriously adhere to family planning, the burden on women and the overcrowding of the hospitals will be reduced. This is because eating balanced food will maintain one's health but large families cannot get the required nutrition for healthy living

The youth in Mampurugu are not able to fully exercise their reproductive health which makes them unable to avoid unwanted pregnancies. This causes many of them to drop out of school and be exposed to sexually Transmitted Diseases like HIV/AIDS. Most of the people in the community have not made reproductive health a priority and it has lost grounds to other health issues such as the infectious diseases.

Family planning which is not only sandstone but also integral part of reproductive health is a solution to unemployment facing Mampurugu and the whole nation at large. If the youth

accepts the practice family planning, they will have chances of completing school and end up getting better jobs for the survival and progress of their families.

The cost of ignoring family planning includes poverty, poor health and high illiteracy rate. Failure to meet the reproductive health and sexual needs of the adolescent child and young people in Mampurugu and other Ghanaian communities contributes to the high rates of unintended pregnancies and HIV/AIDS in the country. The high rate of teenage motherhood in Mampurugu reduces the girl's child chances of studying to higher levels in education. This renders most of them unemployed and compels most of them to move to the south to serve as head porters *Kayaye*. Others even do this business while carrying children underage at the backs. The most unfortunate thing is that the teenage mothers move to the south in order to struggle for their own survival and that of the child but they end up coming home with pregnancy or more children without knowing the one who is responsible for the pregnancy or the child as we saw in chapter two of this study. This goes a long way to cause economic and psychological problems in the communities. If contraceptives are made available to the couples it will help curb the situation. Family planning is not a privilege but a right, yet many Muslims in Mampurugu do not pay heed to it. The access to family planning will improve the lives of people in the community and will, each year, help avert maternal mortality. Abortion cases which are dangerous to the women's lives would be reduced.

3.9 Conclusions

We learnt from the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet that Muslim women are not created only for childbirth and housekeeping but can also to participate in social life such as engaging in business, politics and government administration and military . The permissibility of Muslim women to participate and co- operate in socio- economic and socio- political affairs for the development of families and communities are evident in the Qur'an and Sunnah as we saw in this chapter. Women are mothers for all and deserved to be respected, honored and

revered as recommended by Shari'ah. Women are the foundation of every family and they deserve to be recognized in all aspects of life. The rights and responsibilities of married couples are; the couples are to reconcile in terms of disagreement and misunderstanding. Islam opens chances for the liberty of both the husband and the wife to manage their family affairs but within the Islamic context. It is also their responsibility not to put more restrictions on each other. It is the duty of the man to properly maintain the woman and the children (provide food, shelter, and clothing and health needs). It is the duties and responsibilities of the couples to train the children for their moral, spiritual and physical development. Keeping and maintaining the house and the environment is the due responsibility of the couples for the promotion of good health. Both couple have a right to life and safety and it should be preserved and protected. The couples have the right to be educated up-to the highest level for their own development. Parents refer to the father and mother of a child while parenthood is the biological parents who perform the role of parents. Social parents refers to those who perform the role of bringing up the child who is not their own.

Family planning is of many benefits to couples. That is, it helps partners to have a number of children they want when they want them, it assists to improve the health of the mothers and children through child spacing. It helps the couples to better plan for their needs (food, clothing, and education). It gives couples more time to share with each other. Access to family planning will improve the lives of mothers and children. Maternal mortality will be reduced; abortion cases which are dangerous to women's lives would be minimized.

CHAPTER FOUR

FAMILY PLANNING AND CHILD TRAINING IN WALEWALE, GAMBAGA AND YAGBA

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter three we highlighted the status of women in Islam and their participation in social life. The rights of married couples and their children as well as the practice of family planning in respect to the development of Mampurugu were discussed.

This Chapter, however, seeks to investigate what pertains in the Mampurugu Muslim Communities in the Northern Region of Ghana and how Muslims in these Communities understand issues of Family Planning. The importance and effects of large families in these communities shall also be investigated.

In the research design, one-to-one interviews, discussions, personal interaction and field observation were used as methods to seek views and responses. Three set of questionnaires were sent to one hundred and fifty (150) Muslim respondents in selected towns within the Mampurugu traditional area. The target groups included men, women and children who belonged to the Tijaniyyah Muslim Community, Ahlul-Sunnah Waljamah Muslim Community and the Ahmadiyyah Muslim Community. In addition, a number of Muslim individuals and groups were engaged in personal interactions.

4.2 Muslims Knowledge and Opinions on Family Planning.

Muslims in Mampurugu area were asked about their level of understanding and opinion on Family Planning. In other words, they were asked whether they are aware of Family Planning or not. In response to the question “*Bo nya do'am sa' asi?*” (What is family planning?), 34 men out of 150 Muslim respondents were able to define the term family planning correctly.

36 do not have any idea while 2 men were silent. 74 Muslim women respondents perfectly defined the term family planning as putting population growth in check while 4 of the women understood it to mean tablets.

Sources of Family Planning information received in the communities include TV, public educational programs such as campaigns in the communities and radio programs. It was noticed that about 86 of the respondents had their information from nurses-in-charge of public health at the hospital, 20 of them had the information from TV and radios, 9 from written documents while 35 from public educational programs organized by PPAG. 98 of the respondents were told by the nurses about the possible side effects of Family Planning while 52 were not educated on the possible side effects but only received explanation on the use of the contraceptives and the need to practice birth control for the development of an individual and the whole nation at large.

As to whether the practice of Family Planning is *haram* (forbidden) or *Makruh* (permitted), 99 of the respondents considered the practice as a sin against Allah, the Almighty and therefore considered it as Haram. The other 51 were of the view that it is not good from their own perspective but cannot take a stand as to it being *haram* or not.

With regard to whether they would like to practice family planning, 97 women out of the 150 would like to practice family planning because they are always overburdened by large families while the remaining 53 respondents said it will go against their husband's will which may affect their marriage. A majority of men, 86 of them indicated they will not involve in the practice because it is considered forbidden in their religion and therefore it is a sinful practice. The remaining 64 men said they would like to practice family planning due to economic difficulties which negatively affect the up-bringing of their children.

4.3 Why Muslims in Mampurugu prefer large Families to small Families

From personal interactions, discussions and one-to-one interviews, Muslim in Mampurugu were asked for the reasons and factors that contribute for establishment of large families. From the answers to the question, it can be observed that Mampurugu Muslims have traditionally seen large families as a sign of wealth and prestige. In other words, children are valued more than anything else in this world. Abu Damba, a radio presenter at Eagle FM in Walewale explained that anyone who wants to raise a small family is like having the behavior of an animal in the bush. But those animals in the house give birth to many children which is good for human to emulate. Alhassan Abu, a farmer in Walewale said; it is better not to give birth than giving birth to one or two children because you will not be respected with this small family size in the community. Jahanatu, a trader also in Walewale is of the view that decisions of those with small families are often not taken into consideration due to the inferiority complex attached to small families. Thus, those with small families always feels reluctant to contribute in terms of decision making because they are afraid to be questioned by those with large families by being asked “how many are you and you are contributing?”. This implies that people in the communities would like to boast of large families. It also allows people to accord them high respect; hence giving birth to many children is in order to avoid people in the communities looking down upon them.

It was further observed that titles and key positions have not been given to people with smaller families for it is believed that they cannot perform effectively. Also, people look down upon chiefs with small families and sometimes their directives are not obeyed. Durana Muhtari Mahami, the chief of Walewale pointed out that every chief needs to have children so that they can assist in running the affairs of the community. He added that it would be a disgrace for a chief to be calling upon other people’s children from different families instead of his own to assist in running the affairs of the community. Issahaku Mahama, the chief of

butchers in Walewale, stated that having a larger family in itself is a great honor. For him, a man without a large family is without honor. Abu Nasamu of Gambaga Imam's house affirmed that children are the source of power and wealth and without them chiefs would not be recognized, rich men would not be respected and landlords would not be regarded. He further added that a poor person with many children is better than a rich person with two or no children.

Children are also source of labor especially to help in farming activities, construction and running of businesses in most Muslim communities in Mampurugu. Eventually, children become the primary providers of assistance to the elderly and hope of the future. Hawah Harunah, a daughter of the late Imam Yahaya of Walewale said children help much in running the affairs of the house and that of farming and trading. She explained further that a family of one or two children cannot work in the house and at the same time on the farm. There is therefore the need to give birth to many children so that while some are working on the farm, others are at business and some will take charge of the household affairs for easy running of the families. For Shahadu of Yizesi, children are the work force for the survival of the family and without them life could be unbearable. He explained further that it is the children who work on the farms, take care of animals, and supply water for the household and to the market for business. Mahama Dabanadoo, a member of Imam Karim's house in Walewale made reference to the recent economic crises in the country and pointed out that "by-day" (daily wages) of today in the community is seven (7) Ghana Cedis per person and wondered where will one get money to plough and to work on the farms? But with many children, they can help in the farming activities as well as take care of the animals. He explained again that two or three children cannot work on a large farm hence; the best alternative is to give birth to many children to provide labor for the production of food for the family.

Hajarah Saaka, an Arabic instructor in Walewale Nuru-Islam Primary School said the children are the parents' hope for the future and if unforeseen circumstances occur and a family of two children fail them, where will their future hope lie. Therefore, it is only with large families that can accomplish their hopes. Sheikh Saeed, Gambaga Jami'u Imam (Friday Imam) supported this view and argued that if one's desire is to produce professionals like accountants, bankers, teachers, doctors, nurses in the family, then definitely you have to give birth to many in order to achieve this desire.

Another factor that gives rise to the establishment of large families among Mampurugu Muslims is in fulfillment of their religious duties. It is observed that Muslims in these communities in response to the question why do they marry consider it as a religious duty to give birth to many children for, it is the wish of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S. W. A) to boast of large families in the hereafter. Again, they consider it as a religious duty to marry up to four wives and this may result in giving birth to many children thereby resulting in the establishment of large families.

Ahmed Mohammed Faila, the leader of Ahlul-Sunnah in the area argued strongly in favor of large families and explained that it is a religious duty upon Muslim men to marry four wives and to give birth to many children in order to make the Holy Prophet boast with his Ummah (community) in the hereafter. He again explained that children are the gift of Allah of which He gives to whom He wishes and so any Muslim who is involved in practicing family planning directly causes murder. Based on this, he totally condemned the practice of family planning and considered it to be *haram* (forbidden).

The common saying which we observed among the people pertaining to this is that: *Po'a yinniraana nyela dokoori* (a man with one wife is more or less a bachelor). These words are

used to mock those with one wife and to serve as a challenge on them to involve in polygamous marriage so as to produce many children.

However, Ibrahim Awuni, the Ahmadiyyah Missionary of Gambaga and Bawku asserted that the cultural set up in Mampurugu is what makes people to produce many children but not that it is a religious duty. That is, some people want to produce more children so that after their death they will be survived by their children and this is purely cultural and not Islamic. According to him, polygamy does not mean raising large families. He explained that there are people with four wives with small families while others have single wives but large families which he thought all depends on the will and plan of God. He argued vehemently against the saying that the Prophet would wish to boast of large families in the hereafter and considered it as a weak point. He emphasized that the Prophet would not like to boast of armed robbers and street children as his people in the hereafter. He therefore called on Muslim parents to exhibit high level of responsibility in properly taking care of their children so that they can fit into any society. On the use of contraceptives, he said married couples are allowed to use it provided it has nothing to do with their blood stream. He explained further that the use of contraceptives in controlling the families should be restricted and limited to only married couples but not the unmarried because they have no family to plan. He cautioned the constant advertisement and distribution of contraceptives which he thought may lead to immorality and sexual promiscuity in the communities.

Osofo Adams Mohammed another Ahmadiyyah Missionary for the Walewale Circuit pointed out regarding family planning by making reference to Qur'an 4:3 which says believers should marry two, three or four on condition that they can deal justly with them: but if they can't then they should marry one. To him, this implies that the justice should be extended to the children and if the parents cannot provide basic needs for the children then it is better to limit the size of their families so that they can be managed well. He added that man plans and

Allah also plans but Allah's plans are the best and so Islam is not against Family Planning but it is restricted to married couples.

In an interview with Abdullah Mohammed Jaamah; an Islamic scholar and a leading member of Tijaniyyah Sufi Order in Walewale, he explained that Islam encourages Muslims to marry and give birth to many children so that on the day of judgment the Prophet will boast with his Ummah (community). Going by this according to him, Islam is not against giving birth to many children but rather places much emphasis on taking care of them. This means that it is not about giving birth to many children but taking proper care of the children is what is desirable. He also asserted that contraceptives are there for a purpose and if you have a genuine reason to use them in a family, it is not against Islamic principles but a habitual usage of those contraceptives to challenge nature (God) is not allowed. He made reference to the era of the Prophet where *Sahaba* (companions) used to practice *azl* (withdrawal method) and the Prophet never kicked against it. To add to this, he supported the usage of the pills by some Muslim women to prevent them from getting their menses during the month of *Ramadan* (fasting) and *Hajj* (pilgrimage). This is because it is difficult for the women to compensate or pay the missing days but he cautioned the misuse of the contraceptives to promote immorality. He advanced his explanation by pointing out that the Qur'an has given chance for Muslims to marry up to four wives on condition that they can deal justly with them but if they cannot then they should marry one. Based on this, he said by *Qiyas* (analogy) you can give birth to many children as you wish on condition that you can properly take care of them but if you cannot then it is good to give birth to one child for easy and proper upbringing and training. Another condition which Abdullah Mohammed Jamah placed on the permissibility of family planning is old age and limited resources. That is, old age with limited resources to cater for the children makes it permissible to use contraceptives. He also said if the man does not want to commit fornication with another woman and also fears that

having sexual affair with the wife will make her pregnant then he is permitted to use contraceptives with the wife.

The constant preaching on the encouragement of early marriage in these Muslim Communities is another cause of establishing large families in Mampurugu. Through observation we realized that the women often start giving birth to children immediately they get into marriage as early as possible and by the time they grow old they would have established large families. Hajia Memunatu Halidu, a sister of the Imam of Walewale, expressed her grief over the alarming rate of illegal early marriages, teenage pregnancies and the way and manner these young women are mishandled by the youth in the community. According to her, it is now like a norm in the communities for the young people to start giving birth at early ages. The most unfortunate thing is that some of the young men while still attending school have given birth to two or three children with different young women. The cost of bringing-up these children is therefore on the parents of the students especially their mothers. This poses economic, social and psychological challenges to the families.

We were told by Amina Issah of Gambaga Imam's House that some Islamic scholars like members of the *Tablig* brotherhood and *da'wah* groups of Ahlul-Sunnah waljamah regularly visit these communities to preach and seriously condemn family planning and encourage giving birth to many children. This, they claim is the duty and requirement binding upon every Muslim and for anyone who does not give birth to many children shall find himself or herself in hell fire . She added that these scholars have gone far in discouraging parents from allowing their children to take immunizations because they claim it is a means of preventing them from giving birth to many children in the future. The situation has even gone out of control because we observed that at the communities, most of the Muslim youth are highly involved in fornication and to our understanding some J.H.S and S.H.S students have children while in school in Walewale and its surroundings. We came across a form one

female Muslim student in Walewale Senior High School by name Humu Nuhu who gave birth at the age of fourteen due to the influence of her friends. Humu again attributed the establishment of large families to the wishes of their parents and the *Mallams* who constantly advice them to marry early. The *Mallams* often explain that it is a *Sunnah* to do so for the fact that Ayisha got married to the Prophet at the age of twelve. Also, the young women are always being encouraged to give birth to many children for the Prophet wishes to boast with them, as such one might not know which child will save one in the future. It is also painful and a great disappointment for one to die without children or not leaving a child to his credit.

Those with large families are often honored after their death unlike those with small families. In an interaction with Mma Marriya Adam of Moshi-Fong Muslim community in Langbisi, she explained that the funeral of the one with many children is more celebrated and well organized than the one with no children. She explained further that if one dies without giving birth it is considered the same as a woman who has still birth and that the funeral is only performed by giving sadaqa or charity to children (Yaara). However, if a married person with children dies, the funeral will be performed by organizing the three, seven and forty days as well as the *yunpaali* (one year) ceremonies.

It is a common belief among Muslim women in Mampurugu Muslim Communities that one does not know a blessed child and so it is possible to give birth to a blessed child if one produces many children. Most of the respondents made reference to Dr. Mahmudu Bawumya, the New Patriotic Party's (NPP) running mate in the 2012 general elections and Abuba Saibu, Manager of Nasona Oil Company who are from these communities and being the youngest children of their parents. According to Hajia Sisala, a friend of Bawumya's mother, if the parents of the mentioned personalities were to have small family sizes they would not have given birth to them. Thus, the more one gives birth to many children, the likelihood of getting a blessed child.

Other factors which directly or indirectly influence the growth rate of families in Mampurugu Muslim Communities include the improvement of health standards. According to Fataw Yakubu, a nurse in Walewale, infant and child mortality has reduced drastically in Mampurugu Communities due to immunization campaign programs, malaria control programs and other programs organized in the districts by the Ghana Health Service and other organizations. He said these programs have led to an increase in the population size.

Traditionally, migration was largely associated with the search for new and better jobs for the survival of the families. More recently, *Kayaye* (head porters) has seriously taken place in Mampurugu Muslim Communities where an increasing large number of the youth, particularly the women, Senior and Junior High School graduates move to the cities to search for opportunities to fulfill their high economic and social aspirations. Unfortunately, another routine behavior of these Kayayes has cropped out where the young men regularly impregnate the female ones and send them home to deliver without any financial or material support from the males. Apart from the increasing number of the children which widens the family size, it is a burden on the families which retards the development of the individuals and the whole community at large.

Zeinabu Sumaila of Abarika House (Abarika yiri) in Walewale explained that for the past four years, her son who is in Accra has sent four different pregnant girls home and three have successfully given birth and are living with her. The fourth one, however, has been sent to a sister in a different village because of the crowding nature of her room and the lack of food to feed them. Mma Hawabu of Yidana house (Yiran yiri) in Gambaga expressed her grief and painful experiences while in tears because her daughter returned from the south with three children without knowing their fathers and again she is afflicted with epilepsy. In a similar discussion with Mba Ziblim Salifu of this same house, his daughter returned from Accra with pregnancy and he took care of her till she delivered the baby who is seven years now without

knowing his father. To this, he said it is a burden on him to take care of the boy's health and education which will affect his economic base and again pose psychological and emotional problems for him and the entire family.

Security is another reason why people in Mampurugu Muslim Communities establish large families. To avoid being attacked, undermined in these communities, large families should be raised to deter others from attacking family members.

Halidu Idrissu, the headmaster of Yizesi J.H.S. explained that members of large families in the communities are highly respected and people are afraid to cause trouble for those families. This is because it will be a great disaster if these large families are to attack the small ones. He added that the women from large families do not receive any maltreatment from their husbands for the husbands' fear of being attacked by these large families.

To add to these, Ibrahim Awuni, an Ahmadiyyah Missionary of Gambaga and Bawku, attributed the main reasons for the establishment of large families in Mampurugu Muslim Communities to tradition and cultural practice, the continuity of lineage and the African perception that those in high authorities should give birth to many children.

4.4 Effects of Large Families on Mampurugu Muslim Communities

Through field observation and interviews, we tried to find out the effects of large families on Muslims in the Mampurugu area and the whole nation at large. Through observation we realized that, the number of farmers has been decreasing because the youth migrates to the cities in search of better jobs while the elderly grow weak and cannot work on the farms to produce food for these large families especially the children. That is, the weak cannot produce food to meet the demand of these large families and as a result of this, the variety, quality and quantity of food produced in the communities is negatively affected.

Mbe Abdul-Rahmani Issifu in Walewale attests to this fact by saying, our children have gone to south for jobs and our age does not permit us to be engaged in active farming. Also the youth are not around to learn the farming transferred to us by our fathers and this will in turn have negative effect on our agricultural productivity. They rather give birth to many children without producing food to feed them. We observed that, in future, food production may not match population growth in these communities if the attitude towards Family Planning and farming does not change. Population growth in these communities would eventually outstrip food supplies because most of the members of these areas are subsistence farmers. We also learnt that the communities are often hit by major famine during the beginning of the farming season which start around May/June: where large families always suffer from hunger because their resources are put into cultivation and parents lack additional funds to buy food in order to feed these large families.

Ziblim Salifu of Yidana's house in Gambaga stated that during the early stage of the farming season, the communities often are hit by famine where the large families depend on left over flour from grinding mill ('Manikazum'). According to him, the situation has recently changed due to the high production of water melon. He explained that, during this time in the communities most people depend on the watermelon as food for survival.

There is high dependency rate in the communities especially among wives who have given birth to many children but their husbands fail to cater for them. This compels the wives to often resort to their brothers and other family members for help which turns to have adverse economic and psychological effects on the families. This dependency sometimes causes disputes and disunity especially if these family members are unable to offer the assistance.

Salamatu in Wulugu expressed her bitterness and grief saying she has given birth to twelve (12) children, all at home without visiting the hospital because her husband could afford or

failed to pay for her transportation to Walewale hospital. She added, though with the mercy of Allah, all the children are alive. The husband cannot feed them and that it is her brothers who always give her food and other assistance to take care of them.

Adai Sumani in Kparigu shared a similar experience saying she has given birth to four sets of twins and other four children in the house without visiting the hospital. She said, due to the husband's inability to take care of them, she is always not at peace or in good terms with the husband throughout their relationship. She explained further that her husband often neglects her when she is pregnant and it is the brothers who are responsible for the children's welfare and growth. According to her, he however reconciled with her whenever the child was fully grown and he impregnates her again. At the time of our interaction with her she together with her twelve children were staying with her brothers.

A known fact is that water is life and without water, human beings, plants and animals cannot survive. Mba Musah Mohammed, a retired worker of Ghana Water Company in Walewale, said that these communities used not to experience water shortage but recent increase in family sizes in the communities has turned the place to have periodic extreme water scarcity lasting for many days especially during dry seasons when wells dry up. Tahiru Osman, project manager of Water and Sanitation Project in Walewale, explained that if the current population trend does not change there will always be shortage of water in the communities. Thus, the population growth is putting more pressure on the wells, rivers, taps and the few available bore holes. He added that the domestic use of water increases every day in the communities due to the increase in family sizes which put pressure on the machines which pump water to Walewale and its surroundings and more importantly to the schools and hospitals. This situation causes the price for a drum of water to rise.

Sumani Yidana of Gambaga Water Company shared similar views with regard to water shortage in Mampurugu but called on government to provide good portable water to the communities which he thinks is the key problem facing the entire Mampurugu.

We noticed that the struggles for water and food have caused depletion of natural resources and natural habitat available in the communities. Human activities for livelihood like cutting down trees for firewood, burning of charcoal and hunting to generate income in order to satisfy the needs of these large families cause environmental pollution and encroachment on the natural habitats. These activities are responsible for the greatest extinction of plants and animal species. Burning of charcoal and bush fires are the greatest means of destroying and polluting the environment and most people in the surrounding villages of these communities largely depend on these activities for survival. In order to provide the basic needs of these large families, most of the economic trees like sheanut trees, old and tall trees in the bush have been processed into charcoal and sold to the southern part of the country. Others also use the locally processed timber to roof their buildings. Interacting with Fatawu Wudana, a carpenter at Kperiga, we learnt that the habitual felling of trees by the use of dormant machines is now rampant in the communities which should be a matter of concern because it is gradually turning the land into a desert which in future will affect economic development. In the same development, Pastor Iddrisu Salam of Wulugu Winners Chapel Church did indicate that though charcoal burning is the major occupation for the survival of families in this community, something should be done to protect the environment for future generations.

The amount of arable land per person in the communities has been shrinking due to the fact that the farm lands are replaced each year by homes, shopping centers, roads and other infrastructural development to satisfy the growing population. The pressure on the land to produce food and other activities has contributed to the decline of arable lands by causing the wearing away or erosion of top soil which provides nutrients to plants. According to Mba

Bawah Musah of Gambaga the decline of the arable lands in the communities has prompted farmers to search for new fertile lands for the production of food to feed the families. He added that they often compete and struggle over the few existing fertile lands by claiming ownership which normally leads to land disputes where lives and properties are some times destroyed. Halidu Shani, a farmer and photographer in Walewale attributed the low productivity of food to feed these large families to lack of fertile lands which compels the farmers to continue cultivating on farms of their great grandfathers which is now infertile thereby yielding no good harvest.

Housing is a critical component in the social and the economic fabric of all communities and Mampurugu Muslim Communities are not an exception. Most Muslim parents with large families continue to face housing problems. High rate of poverty and low income earnings are the factors attributed to this problem. Haadi Abdul-Raman of Walewale said the high cost of building materials has made large families not to be able to maintain their houses which were built by their father's several years ago. These houses are in deplorable condition and overcrowded. In other words, they live in substandard and uncompleted houses. A majority of the members of these communities cannot afford good accommodation due to the large families and the economic hardships of the place affect their economic growth and development.

Ahmed Zakaria Musah, medical doctor at Walewale District hospital said the hospital has recorded several cases where buildings collapsed on children, killed some and disabled others. He added that some abortions occur naturally while others are as a result of the inability of the mother to carry the pregnancy to maturity due to either injury or any form of disorder. This he referred to as miscarriage. Another type of abortion explained by Dr. Ahmed is the induced one- thus, intentionally brought on because the pregnancy is unwanted or presents a risk to a woman's health. Induced abortion (unwanted pregnancy), the focus of

this work, is one of today's intense social problem in Mampurugu Muslim Communities where high rate of teenage pregnancy cases are recorded which often calls for abortion hence it affects the development of the individual and the whole society at large.

Abubakari Abdulai another medical doctor at the Walewale District hospital said though abortion services are rendered to all manners of persons in the communities, Muslims are the majority which he attributed to ignorance, neglect, selfishness and misunderstanding the principles of Islam. He added that every day about five Muslim women come to them for abortion. He therefore called on Muslims to regulate the growth of their families in order to properly take care of the children with the resources at their disposal. He mentioned again that if Muslims do not adhere to family planning but engage themselves in establishing large families then hunger, disease, wars among others which he considered as 'natural family planning' shall occur in the communities and the nation as a whole .

Ahmed Zakaria Musah supported population check by natural disasters and made reference to the death rate in the world by stating that about five million children die every day due to famine, diseases and other natural disasters. It is therefore against this background that both Dr. Ahmed and Dr. Abdulai call on Muslim parents to adopt family planning for the betterment of the Muslim communities and the nation as a whole.

Abdulai, the medical officer also revealed that most of the Muslim women, who do not wish to have children again, resort to the practice of unsafe abortion where some drugs are abusively used for this purpose. We were told by Ayisha Issifu of Janga that about 30 or 40 paracetamol tablets can be used to cause abortion. She explained further that some women use alcohol, "blue" (substance for washing clothes) broken bottles, "*sundapo*" (a type of plant) and so on for the same purpose. These things affect their health and sometimes lead to death due to over bleeding.

Issah Nafisah, a nurse in Kparigu community pointed out that school girls mostly the J.H.S and S.H.S Muslim students visit the hospitals everyday for abortions. She, however, suggested to the students to practice family planning but she maintained that if this suggestion is not adhered to, it will affect their health conditions. She emphasized that if care is not taken most of them may not be able to give birth in future due to regular abortions.

Charity Okai, nurse in charge of family planning in Walewale Hospital, however, said the Muslim Communities are now responding and patronizing the family planning practices especially the three month injectable method which is good for their own development. She said the method helps the couples to plan for their children's needs (food, clothing, health and education). Charity did indicate that family planning is better than abortion and to her, family planning does not kill babies but it makes the ovaries weak which does not allow fertilization to take place. She made reference to many instances in the communities where Muslim women were delivered of babies and within some few months they were pregnant again. She advised Muslim parents to use contraceptives like the condom which is not costly (three for ten pesewas) in order to curb this problem for the health and growth of the children.

The sanitation problem in these communities is mostly attributed to the nature of large families which in one way or the other causes serious threat to public health. Liquid and solid waste, refuse, sewage disposal are evident in the communities and it is said that the family members who use the refuse dumps are many and that it easily becomes full whenever it is emptied. This is compounded by lack of basic sanitation concept in the communities which affects the people's health.

Mutaka Salifu a Zoomlion worker in Walewale though did not refute the fact that the sanitation problems are caused by large families attributed the cause of these problems to indiscipline and indiscriminate disposal of waste which can be seen everywhere in the

communities. Abdul-Salam Abdulahi, Senior Sanitary Inspector in the community said if proper measures are not taken to solve the sanitation problems it will pose serious health problems. He added that polythene bags mixed with the soil will affect crop germinations and will go a long way to affect agricultural productivity. He again said that animals found eating the polythene bags instantly die which incurs losses to the farmers, hence affecting their income levels.

In a discussion with Musah Haruna Abunkpula, meter reader at VRA- Walewale, it became obvious that electricity is of many uses to many homes and businesses in the communities. He said that though a large number of people in Mampurugu are poor and some families live without electricity or running water in their homes, those who are connected to electric power have difficulty in paying their bills. He again said, high charges of electricity bills is caused by high rate of energy consumption and most large families consume more energy which attract high bills which cannot be settled because of consumers' low income levels. According to Abubakar Yussif, a bicycle repairer in Walewale most houses are often disconnected because of lack of money in settling their bills. He added that some children leave school early to earn money to support their families to settle their utility bills which affect their academic performance. In a related development, Uzaidu Maishanu in Gambaga related that sharing the electrical points used among the individual family members usually cause serious misunderstanding among them which in one way or the other disturbs the peace of the family and for that matter the communities.

Though it is a right for every Ghanaian child to enjoy education, majority of the children in Mampurugu communities are still out of school due to the pressure on their parents. In a discussion with Saasi Saibu, Assistant Director in charge of supervision at the Ghana Education Service in Walewale, he affirmed the fact that it is always difficult paying school fees of large families. He made references to himself who is employed but sometimes faces

difficulty in meeting the financial needs of his children and the payment of their school fees and wondered what will be the fate of those who are unemployed and again lived in the deprived communities. He emphasized again that most students in the communities are brilliant with good Junior High School (J.H.S) results but their parents cannot pay their admission fees to enable them to further their education to a higher level thereby ending their academic aspirations. To support this, Mba Mohammed Yomyom, an Arabic language instructor in Walewale said his three daughters could not make it to Senior High School due to lack of money to pay their admission fees but he is planning to send them back to school whenever the money is ready. Saasi Saibu again added that, the lucky students who find themselves in schools are often faced with the problem of inadequate learning materials due to the inability of the parents to provide. Thus, it places much pressure on the parents due to the demand for learning materials by the children. He attributed poor feeding as a problem facing large families which affects the academic and physical development of the children. With regards to the pressure on the educational facilities, Saasi explained that the constant increase in family sizes in the communities will call for the expansion of schools' infrastructure, demand for learning materials such as chalk, textbooks and dual desks which will be additional burdens on the government. In addition to this, he agreed to the fact that increases in large families calls for an increase in the number of teachers thereby increasing in government wage bill. Teachers are always frustrated with large classes and this might bring poor classroom management and poor results which go a long way to affect the academic performance in the communities and for that matter the nation. He summed it up by saying if family planning is effectively adhered to by families, it will help curb the situation. He was, however, of the view that Muslim communities will not agree to its implementation because it is considered haram.

We visited the two main hospitals in the communities where it was clear that almost all the wards were congested to the extent that some of the patients especially the children were lying on the bare floor due to lack of beds. Yakubu Fatawu, a nurse in charge of children's ward in Walewale hospital attested to the fact that sometimes three children occupy one bed and again benches are often used as beds for the children which is not good for their comfort and response to treatment. He expressed his disappointment in some Muslim men who do not show up during the admission of their children and rather leave everything to the women which is unIslamic and uncultured. He mentioned again that most of the children in the communities are not registered under the National Health Insurance Scheme and due to this their parents often disturb nurses on duty to discharge them early in order to avoid the payment of high hospital bills when discharged.

Adiweh Faustina, a nurse in the community did indicate that the few doctors and nurses in the communities are overstretched due to patient overcrowding and that something should be done to solve this problem. She also said the equipment are overstretched and need to be replaced with modern ones in order to meet the modern standard.

Ibrahim Awuni, an Ahmadiyyah missionary, however, said putting pressure on health and educational facilities does not call for limiting the size of families because it is the sole responsibility of the government to provide the necessary facilities while the parents are to provide the basic needs of the families. That is, the government should provide educational and health facilities and the parents should be prepared to work for the families. It is a right for every legitimate child to enjoy a share of his parents' property when they pass on. It is, however, almost always difficult in sharing the inheritance when the children of the deceased are many, he maintained. The problem of inheritance is still evident in most large families in the communities which sometimes causes instability and disunity within these families.

On his part Harunah Abdul-Hameed, an Islamic scholar in Walewale said large families often are confronted with the problem of inheritance even if the deceased person left behind a will. He was of the view that disputes over the sharing of properties disturb the peace of the deceased person in the grave and therefore calls for the establishment of small families for easy sharing of properties or the properties should be shared among the children before passing on. He added that the problem of inheritance gets complicated when the deceased person has both legitimate and illegitimate children. In other words, he said based on Islamic ruling illegitimate children do not qualify to inherit the properties of their fathers and that it is always difficult to apply this ruling which poses serious problems among these children.

It could be deduced from the field study that majority of Muslim women are aware of family planning than their male counterparts because of their regular visits to the hospitals. They also bear the burden of these large families and for this reason they wish to practice family planning. The research uncovered the reasons why greater importance is attached to the establishment of large families in these communities. These include: children as sources of wealth and prestige, children as laborers and security, children being the hope for the future, children for the continuity of lineage and the African perception that those in high authority should give birth to many children. The chapter again revealed the effects of large families on the people include: food and water shortage, depletion of natural resource and natural habitats, shrinking of arable lands, deplorable housing condition, abortion, sanitation and electricity problems, pressure on health and educational facilities and the problem of inheritance.

4.5 Types of Marriage in the communities

This section seeks to find out whether monogamy or polygamy is practiced in the communities of the study. We set to explore the number of wives married by the husbands. The statistics are presented below;

In Walewale 13 men responded to marrying 1 wife, 19 men were recorded as belonging to those who were married to 2 wives, 9 male respondents belonged to those with 3 wives, 8 respondents were married to 4 wives and 1 man was married to six wives with 44 children but recently divorced 6 of them.

In Gambaga 12 of the male respondents were married to 1 wife, 20 of them with 2 wives each, 10 were married to 3 wives and 8 of them were married to 4 wives. In Yagba 10 of the respondents had single wives, 21 of them had two wives each, 13 of the men were married to 3 wives each, 4 of the respondents had 4 wives each while 2 men had 5 wives each.

This statistics proved that the total number of those married to 2, 3, and 4 wives is more than those married to single wives. Though monogamy is practised in the three communities, polygamous marriage is highly practised in the communities under study. The practice of polygamy here could be for religious reasons. This is because Islam allows believers to marry up to 4 wives on condition that the men are capable and can deal justly with the wives. It could also be based on the perception that marrying many wives raises the social status of the man. Also men are conditioned to marry up to four and any additional wife is considered *haram* as we have seen in the few cases in Walewale and Yagba.

4.6 Child spacing by the women.

Women in the communities under study were asked about the intervals between child births. Out of the 50 female respondents in Walewale, 42 said the interval should be 2 years, 6 agreed to 3 years interval while 2 of the respondents are of the view that it should be 4 years interval. In Gambaga, 36 of the women opted for 2 years interval between children, 8 of them proposed 3 years interval and the remaining 6 respondents answered for 4 years interval. 37 of the female respondents in Yagba chose 2 years intervals, 8 of the respondents went for 3 years and 5 respondents opted for 4 years interval. As the statistics show, a majority of the

female respondents in the communities would prefer giving birth after every two years. This could be due to Shari'ah recommendation that Muslims can wean their children at the age of two.

4.7 The desire for more children

The question we seek to investigate is; 'DO married couples desire for more children?' Out of 50 married couples respondents in Walewale, 20 married men and women without children desired for children. 16 respondents with 1 to 5 children desired for more children, 11 married men and women with 6 to 10 children desired for more children and 3 married men and women with 15 to 20 children still desired for more children.

In Gambaga 18 married men and women without children desired for children, 18 married men and women with 1 to 5 children desired for more children, 8 of the respondents with 6 to 10 children desired for more and more children and 6 of the respondents with 15 to 20 children still desired for more children.

Out of the 50 respondents in Yagba, 21 of married men and women without children desired for children, 16 married men and women with 1 to 5 children desired for more children, 7 respondents with 6 to 10 children desired for more children and 6 respondents with 15 to 20 children desired for more children.

It is observed from this statistics in the three communities studied that the number of couples without children who desired for children is high, those with 1 to 5 children desired for more children, 7 respondents with 6 to 10 children desired for more children while those with 15 to 20 children still desired for more children.

4.8 Factors that account for the desire for more children.

This sub- section seeks to identify the factors that account for the people in the three communities under study to want more children. Our research revealed that the desire for children by married couples in these communities is high.

In Walewale 6 of the respondents were of the view that they want more children for old age security, 6 of the respondents again attributed their desire for children to prestige and social status and ten (10) of the respondents desired for more children for labor purposes. 12 of the respondents said they want more children for family continuity while 16 said it is due to religious reasons.

In Gambaga, 5 of the respondents desired children because of old age security, 8 of them were of the view that it is for family continuity, 5 respondents desired children for prestige and social status, 13 of them want more children for labor purpose and 19 respondents desired for children due to religious reasons.

In Yagba 4 of the respondents chose for more children due to old age security, 6 of them said it is for social status, 9 of the respondents were of the opinion that it is for family continuity, 15 of the respondents stated that it is for labor purposes and 16 of the respondents said they desired for more children for religious reasons. This statistics point out that though the people in these communities have other reasons for their desire for more children, labor purposes, continuity of family and religious reasons were paramount.

4.9 Types of accommodation in the communities.

On the type and nature of houses that accommodate this large number of people we realized that 1 respondent lived in a bungalow in Gambaga. 47 of the respondents lived in local structures and two lived in quarters. In Yagba all the 50 respondents lived in local structures.

The data collected again reveal that in Walewale about 3 to 4 children live in a room. In Gambaga about 4 to 5 children live in a room and in Yagba 2 to 6 children live in a room.

The statistics shows that a majority of the respondents interviewed in the three communities under study predominately lived in locally built houses. We were told by the respondents that the children live with their mothers in a room no matter their number until they grow and build their own rooms. The locally built structures popularly called '*atakpami*' (mud houses) were built by the parents. A majority of these houses are family owned, for they were built by their great grandparents.

4.10 Source of livelihood in the communities.

Large families cannot be sustained without depending on any means of survival. This section sought to find out the source of livelihood for the survival of these large families in the communities under study. In Walewale, out of 50 respondents, 21 male respondents were farmers, and 4 were traders. In Gambaga 18 of the male respondents were farmer, 3 traders, 3 teachers and 1 respondent was a student. In Yagba, 20 of the male respondents were farmers, 4 traders and 1 respondent was a student.

With regard to the source of livelihood of the women, in Walewale 13 female respondents were farmers, 9 were traders, 2 were hair dressers and 1 female respondent was a teacher. In Gambaga 12 female respondents were farmers, 11 were traders and 2 of the female respondents were house wives without any source of livelihood. In Yagba 22 of the female respondents were farmers and 3 were traders.

The statistics proved that farming is the main means of survival in these three communities. The most interesting thing about these results is that both the men and women compete in farming which goes to disprove the common notion that farming is for men only.

4.11 Income of parents in the Communities.

This section aims at finding out the monthly incomes of parents in the communities under study to see whether the amount earned is reasonable enough to sustain the families. Out of 50 respondents in Walewale, 36 of them earned GH¢ 20 monthly, 10 earned GH¢ 50 a month, 2 earned GH¢100 and another 2 of the respondents earned GH¢ 600 .

In Gambaga, 27 of the respondents earned GH¢ 20 monthly, 19 of them earned GH¢ 50 a month and 4 earned GH¢ 100. In Yagba 47 of the respondents earned GH¢ 20 monthly and 3 earned GH¢ 50. It came out clear from these results that those who earned GH¢400 to GH¢600 in Walewale were employed by the government. A majority of the famers earned GH¢ 20. This low earning is attributed to the reason that majority of the respondents were subsistence farmers. It was said that GH¢20 is just an estimated figure but sometimes it could come to as low as GH¢ 5 for two months or more. It must be noted that due to the current economic crises facing the nation, GH¢ 20 cannot sustain a family of 5 children for a month.

4.12 Child education in the communities

Education is the bedrock for the development of every society. Our interest in this part of the work is to find out from the children interviewed who bears the responsibility of their education. In Walewale 10 of the children interviewed were educated by their fathers, 18 were educated by their mothers and 22 of them were educated by both parents.

In Gambaga 13 children were educated by their fathers, 18 of them were educated by their mothers and a further19 children were educated by both parents. In Yagba 19 of the children interviewed were educated by their fathers, 16 were educated by their mothers and 15 of them had their education under the care of both parents. This statistics also proved beyond reasonable doubt that the responsibility of the father taking care of the child's education has been shifted to the mothers which again is an additional burden on them. Thus, most of the

mothers provide food, school uniforms and sometimes payment of school fees to the children in these communities

4.13 Child Moral training in the communities

Every child born by Muslim parents is supposed to undergo both moral and religious training in order to come closer to Allah and to fit into the society. It is the responsibility of both parents to assist the child to develop morally. The children of the communities were asked about who performs this very important responsibility.

11 children in Walewale received their moral training from their fathers, 16 children received this training from their mothers and 23 children received their moral training and counseling from both parents. In Gambaga, 12 of the children had their moral training from the fathers, 16 of them were trained by the mothers and 22 of the children were trained by both parents. 16 of the children interviewed in Yagba were morally trained by their fathers, 14 of them were trained by the mothers and 20 children were trained by both parents.

From this statistics it can be deduced that both parents counsel and morally trained the children but the mothers applied more effort in this regard. The mothers are often blamed for a child's misbehavior but in reality it is the responsibility of both parents to give moral and religious training to the children. It was even reported by some of the respondents in the communities that most women are divorced by their husbands due to lack of cooperation and immoral behavior of the children.

4.14 Knowledge of contraceptives

We tried to investigate at this moment about the knowledge of contraceptives in the selected communities. In other words, we sought to ascertain whether the people have ever heard of or seen any of the contraceptives. In Walewale 38 of those interviewed answered "Yes". They had the knowledge of contraceptives through radio discussions but had not seen any of the

contraceptives. 12 of the respondents answered “No”. They have never heard or seen any of the contraceptives.

In Gambaga 15 of the respondents answered “Yes” to mean they know about contraceptives through radio discussions and 33 of the respondents answered “No” they never had any knowledge about the contraceptives. In Yagba 3 of the respondents responded “Yes” to imply they had information about contraceptives and 47 responded “No” they never had information on contraceptives. The statistics clearly showed that a majority of the respondents in these communities especially Yagba does not have knowledge of contraceptives and its use.

4.15 Conclusion

In conclusion, the data collected in this chapter has dealt with comprehensive issues of family planning in three Muslim communities; Walewale, Gambaga and Yagba. Marriage has been seen as a traditional requirement and religious duty binding on the youth in the communities and this therefore inspires the majority of the people to get married.

In these three communities, it was shown from the study that only few respondents had single wives. That is, the majority of them married more than a wife and this therefore means that they practiced polygamous marriages which caused the establishment of large families in the communities. It was further established in the chapter that those with 5 children and above were more than those with less than 5. Some of the elderly men of 60-70 years had 20 children and more which proved that there is high birth rate in the communities. This chapter revealed that the majority of the female respondents’ preferred giving birth after every two years which suggest that the women do not pay heed to spacing of children. In other words, spacing of children is not a common practice in these communities

We understood in this chapter that the desire for children by those without children is very, very high and those with 5-10 children desired more. The chapters pointed out the reasons for the desire for more children in the communities include prestige or social status and security. The paramount reasons for the desire for children however are for labor purposes, continuity of family and for religious reason.

.The chapter exposed the type of accommodation which the people lived in and it was discovered that a majority of the respondents lived in locally built structures popularly known as *atakpami* at Mampurugu are weak. This is because they were built a long time ago by the parents and grandparents. In addition, about 1-5 children shared a room with their mothers which cause serious congestion in the rooms.

It is learnt from this chapter that most of the respondents depended mostly on farming for their survival although other sources of livelihood such as trading were also used. It is again revealed that the female respondents in these communities competed with the men in farming.

We have come to understand from this chapter that, economically residents in Walewale, Gambaga and Yagba had an average income of GH¢ 20 in a month. Those who earned more than this amount were government employees and well to do business men and women in these communities. The low earnings of the respondents is attributed to the fact that most of them were subsistence farmers who lived from hand to mouth.

Majority of the people in these communities especially those from Yagba did not have knowledge or information about contraceptives but the others did through radio discussions but had never set eyes on any contraceptives.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction.

This chapter is the concluding part of the study. It presents the summary of the chapters, the concluding remarks, and recommendations.

5.2 Summary of chapters

The study looked at Islam and Family Planning in Ghana: A Case Study of Mamprugu Muslim Communities. The first chapter discusses the overview of the problem identified, hence the background of the research. Section two of the chapter examines the statement of the problem. The aims and objectives of the study and the significance of the study are discussed in sections three and four respectively. Sections five and six discuss the methodology employed to gather the data and the review of related existing literature on the study respectively. The problems encountered during the research are discussed in the seventh section of the chapter. The chapter finally contains the organization of the entire thesis in section eight.

The second chapter gives a detailed understanding of the Islamic viewpoint on family planning, issues on Islamic marriage, the purpose of Islamic marriage, the up-bringing of a Muslim child, the historical review of family planning in Islam and the use of contraceptives in spacing child birth. We understand that Islam attaches much importance to the family than anything else. This is because it is the foundation of every society. That is, the family is the nucleus of the Islamic society and marriage is the only way to bring about such an institution. The Holy Qur'an 66:6, 7:89 and 30:31 charges Muslim men to take up their responsibilities by taking care of their wives and the children, they should ensure that love, peace, unity and security prevail in their families. It is also learnt in this chapter that effective upbringing of

Muslim children by providing them with their basic needs and moral training will assist them to grow into decent and well trained individuals. We have again identified the purposes of Islamic marriage to include: procreation, defeating the carnal lust, self discipline, peace and tranquillity. One can go in for marriage for the purpose of procreation as well as other purposes. In other words, you can marry for the sole purpose of peace and tranquillity or defeating the carnal lust. The term Family Planning is also understood as the act of keeping procreation in check or limiting the size of the family by the use of contraceptives and spacing of children. It is, however, discovered in the communities that most husbands do not take their families' welfare into consideration especially children and women which is contrary to the teachings of Islam.

Islamic scholars allow the practice of family planning or birth control for certain specific reasons: when the wife needs a chance to rest between pregnancies, if either one or both partners have a disease that can be transmitted, when the woman's health is threatened and if the husband's finances are insufficient to support more children. The chapter again reveals that there is no categorical statement in the Holy Qur'an in favour of or against the use of contraception. It is, however, evident that birth control was practised during Prophet Muhammad (S. W.A) life time by the use of *azl* (coitus interruptus). The general ruling on the use of contraception is that it is *makruh* (undesirable) but not *haram* (forbidden). The chapter identifies two methods of contraception: reversible and irreversible contraception methods. The Islamic jurists consider the reversible method to serve the same purpose as *azl* hence it is permissible but *makruh* (undesirable) while the irreversible method is seen as castration and therefore considered *haram* (forbidden). The female use of contraceptives is, therefore, cautioned against due to health reasons but not that it is declared *haram* (forbidden). It is revealed in the communities the notion that family planning is a sin against God and therefore must not be practised. While Islam considers the practice of family

planning as Makruh, a majority of Muslims in Mampurugu considered the act as haram which contradicts that of Islam. The chapter ends with a concluding remarks.

Chapter three focuses on illustrations from the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the basis of the status of Muslim women and their participation in social life. It is learnt from the chapter that Muslim women are not created only for giving birth and housekeeping but can also participate in social life such as engaging in business, politics, administration, military and so on. The permissibility of Muslim women to participate and be involved in the socio-economic and socio-political affairs for the development of families and communities are evident in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Women are mothers for all and deserve to be respected, honored and revered as recommended by Shari'ah. We showed that women are the foundation of every family and they deserve to be recognized in all aspects of life. In the case of Mampurugu, it was discovered that most women are relegated to the background and do not take part in family decision making and again are not recognized. This attitude of men in Mampurugu contradicts the teachings of Islam.

The rights and responsibilities of married couples include: the responsibility of the couples to reconcile in terms of disagreement and misunderstanding. Islam opens chances for the liberty of both the husband and the wife to manage their family affairs but within the Islamic context. It is also their responsibility not to put more restriction on each other. It is the duty of the husbands to properly maintain their wives and the children (provide them with food, shelter, clothing and health care). It is the duties and responsibilities of the couples to train the children for their moral, spiritual and physical development. Keeping and maintaining the house and the environment is the due responsibility of the couples for the promotion of health. Both couples have the right to life and safety and it should be preserved and protected. The couples have the right to be educated up-to the highest level for their own development and the families at large. The chapter reveals that most women's rights in Mampurugu are

violated. It is again learnt that it is the duty of the husband to take care of the wife and children but unfortunately most women in Mampurugu rather take care of the families especially child education which is contrary to the teachings of Islam.

Parents refer to the father and mother of a child while parenthood is the biological parents who perform the role of parents. Social parents refer to those who perform the role of bringing up the child who is not their own. The chapter again spells out the functions of parents to include; provision of physical needs for the child, provision of health needs for the child, to free the child's mind from any tension and stress, help the child socialize with others by attending social programs and provision of moral training for the child. Children owe the right to well behaved parents, right to life and safety, right to genetic purity, right to legitimacy, good and nice name, right to religious, morals and ethical training, right to training in sports and self-defense, right to basic needs-food, shelter, health, education and maintenance, right to equality and right to inheritance. On the other hand, it is discovered that large families, financial problems, peer group influence, teenage parenting are the main causes of parental irresponsibility in Mampurugu. The effects of irresponsible parenting which include: denying the child parental care, denying the wives and the children proper maintenance, child labor and abuse, child neglect, lack of proper education for the child, denying the child the right of intimacy, lack of child affection, and immoral life style of the children are evident in these communities. The research also reveals that most wives and children are not properly maintained by the husbands.

It is also indicated in the chapter that Family planning is of many benefits to the married couples. That is, it helps partners to have a specific number of children they want and when they want them, and assists in improving the health of the mothers and children through child spacing. It helps the couples to plan better for their needs (food, clothing, and education). It gives couples more time to share well with each other. Access to family

planning will improve the lives of mothers and children. Maternal mortality will be reduced; abortion cases which are dangerous to women's lives would be minimized. It is, therefore, discovered that most men in Mampurugu do not pay heed to the practice of family planning and rather see it as immoral and unIslamic. The chapter ends with a concluding remark.

Chapter four discusses the opinions and understanding of family planning by Muslims, large families and their effects on Mamprugu Muslim Communities. It could be deduced from the field study that the majority of Muslim women are aware of family planning than their male counterparts. This is attributed to their regular visits to the hospital but the men rejected it due to religious reasons which they consider as forbidden but in reality it is not so as we have learnt about the ruling with regard to family planning in chapter two.

The study uncovered the reasons why much importance is attached to the establishment of large families in these communities to include: children are considered as a source of wealth and prestige, they serve as labor and security, children are hope for the future, children are for the continuity of lineage and the African perception that those in high authority should give birth to many children. These mentioned reasons cannot hold because it is discovered that children of today undergo much sufferings in the communities due to neglect of responsibility by many parents. Also, most children in these communities run to the southern sector in search of non-existent jobs instead of assisting their parents at work places such as farms and market squares.

The study again reveals that the effects of large families on the people include: food and water shortage, depletion of natural resources and natural habitats, shrinking of arable lands, deplorable housing condition, abortion, sanitation and electricity problems, pressure on health and educational facilities and the problem of inheritance. If family planning is seen as a right

and seriously adhered to, it will assist in curbing the above mentioned effects of large families in the communities.

The data collected in this chapter have dealt with comprehensive issues of family planning in the three Muslim communities of Walewale, Gambaga and Yagba. Marriage has been seen as a traditional requirement and religious duty binding on the youth in the communities and this therefore inspires a majority of the people to get married. Marriage as we learnt in chapter two is not binding on a believer who does not wish to have children because it is *Mubah* (superogatory) on them to marry and not *wajib* (compulsory). The chapter again reveals that only few respondents have single wives. Thus, the majority of them married more than one wife and this therefore means that they are highly practicing polygamous marriages which is a major ingredient in the establishment of large families in the communities. People in these communities practice polygamy because it is seen as religious duty.

This chapter reveals that the majority of the female respondents prefer giving birth every two years which suggests that the women do not pay heed to spacing of children. In other words spacing of children is not encouraged in these communities. Islam encourages parents to wean their children after two years or above which therefore suggested that child spacing is permitted. It is observed in the communities that the stage at which a child walks is possibly the right time for another pregnancy. The stage at which a child walks varies from child to child and cannot be used by women as justification for another pregnancy because it will affect the growth of the child. Adequate spacing of children improves the health of both the mother and the children and again gives parents the chance to plan their families. The act of *do-ankuna* (wives sending newborn babies to their parents homes) was practiced in the communities purposefully for the spacing of children but the failure of women to practice this act brought about lack of child spacing which affects the growth and development of both the mother and the child.

We understand from this chapter that the desire for children by those without children is very, very high just as it for those with 5-10 children. The chapter points out again that the reasons for the desire for more and more children in the communities include prestige or social status, security but the paramount reasons are for labor purposes, continuity of family and for religious reason. We learnt in chapter three of this study, however, that it is not about giving birth to many children but taking care of them that is paramount and *wajib* (obligatory). Again in chapter *two* it is discovered that effective upbringing of Muslim children will assist them grow into decent and well trained individuals. The study also reveals that the purpose of Islamic marriage is not necessarily for procreation but for defeating carnal lust and self discipline. In other words, marriage could be instituted with the sole purpose of peace and tranquility in the family and not giving birth to children.

The chapter exposes the type of accommodation which the people lived in. It is gathered that a majority of the respondents live in locally built structures popularly known as *atakpami* (mud houses). It is discovered that most of the houses were built by their grandparents which are in deplorable conditions due to lack of maintenance which is a threat to their lives. In addition, about 1-5 children share a room with their mother which causes serious congestion in the rooms and causes complex health problems. Good and comfortable accommodation will improve the health conditions of both the mother and the child.

It is learnt from this chapter also that most of the respondents depend mostly on farming for their survival although other sources of livelihood such as trading are also pursued. It is again revealed that the female respondents in these communities compete with the men in farming which then disproved the perception that farming is exclusively done by men.

We have come to understand in this chapter that economically, residents in Walewale, Gambaga and Yagba earn at least GH¢ 20. However, those who earn more than this amount

are government employees and well to do business men and women in these communities. The low earning of the respondents is attributed to the fact that most of them are subsistence farmers who live from hand to mouth. A majority of the respondents in these communities especially those from Yagba do not have knowledge or information about contraceptives but others do though they have not seen such contraceptives before. The chapter ends with a concluding remark.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

The study was aimed at finding out the position of Islam and family planning in Ghana with Mamprugu Muslim Community as a case study. From the data collected it can be seen that the aims of the study have been achieved. This is because it has explored the concept of family planning with respect to the Quran and in the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. It has also identified the types of contraceptive permitted to be used by Muslims in family planning. The causes and the effects of large families in the communities under study are revealed. In addition to these, the study has also highlighted the importance of family planning the development of Ghana.

5.4 Recommendations

The problems identified in this research need serious attention in order to get solutions to them for the benefit of individual members in the communities and the whole nation at large. Based on the findings presented, we put the following recommendations forward in order to help achieve the objectives of the work.

Parents should take the following recommendations into consideration:

1. Both parents should set objectives for the family based on how they want the family to be and the size of the family for effective management and control.

2. The parents should recognize each other's contribution to the development of the family without being bias or discriminating against the women.
3. Both parents should work hard for the survival of the family. This is because the laziness of one puts burden on the other.
4. Parents owe children rights and effort should be made in fulfillment of these rights for the growth and development of the child.
5. Men's superiority over women should be stopped in order to open the opportunity for all to come together to make decisions with regard to the peaceful co-existence and progress of the family.
6. Husbands should try as much as possible to maintain the wives and the children in order to avoid vices like street children, child labor and so on in the communities.
7. Parents must establish and make firm foundations of praiseworthy ethics and decent attributes in their children so that they can fit into any society.
8. Parents should put their children under the care of a teacher from the time they get aptitude for education.
9. At the time of marriage, the husband and the wife must be aware of their rights and obligations as well as the Islamic teachings regarding family and household chores and how to accomplish them.

To the Islamic scholars we recommend that:

1. Religious education on the rights of married couples and their children should be intensified in these communities until there are known by all.
2. Friday's sermons in the mosque and others should highlight on the responsibilities of parents towards their children.

3. There is the need for to explain the Islamic perspective of family planning, the use of contraceptives and the conditions under which it is permissible in Islam in these communities.
4. Scholarship and sponsorship packages should be set up in the communities by the Muslim authorities to take care of the health needs of the children and women as well the brilliant but needy children in the communities.
5. Early marriage, polygamy and parental irresponsibility are the common features in the communities. The Islamic scholars should therefore constantly and regularly preach to believers that marriage goes with responsibilities; Muslims should marry according to their means. Muslim men are permitted to marry up to four wives on condition that they are capable and can deal justly with them.
6. Scholars and intellectuals should write articles on family planning in the media and magazines so that a true picture is presented to the people

Recommendations to the government are as follows:

1. The government should institute a clear cut policy on family planning by passing laws on the number of children married couples should give birth to.
2. Personnel should adequately be trained for effective delivery of family planning services to the communities
3. Family life education should be taught as a course from basic up to tertiary level.
4. Funds should be made available for management and effective delivery of family planning services to the communities.
5. Government, NGOs and philanthropists should join hands by embarking on educational programs in order to sensitize the people on the need to control their families for national development.

6. Nurses should be motivated to accept postings to all communities for the education and delivery of family planning services to the people.
7. Social welfare departments and child support agencies should be established and resourced throughout the country to take care of the vulnerable children.
8. The School Feeding program should be extended to all communities to serve starving and malnourished children.
9. Local government representatives in general and counsellors in particular should take appropriate steps to create awareness amongst the masses about family planning.

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Alhaili Tia Adjei Retired	Pensioner.	18 th July 2012
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Hajia Memunatu Halidu	Member of omen Women Association.	20 th July 2012
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Ishaku Mahami	chief of butchers.	15-03-2012.
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