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**Understanding the Implications of Land Grabbing for Rural
Women in Northern Ghana: Case Study of the Daire
Community in Savelugu-Nanton District**

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List of Acronyms

ISS	International Institute of Social Studies
LAP	Land Administration
MOLNR	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resource
RLC	Regional Lands Commission
SDGS	Sustainable Development Goals
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
UN	United Nations

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Abstract

This research paper examined the gendered implication of land grabbing in northern Ghana focusing on the Diare community in the Savelugu-Nanton District. Over the past decades, land grabbing across Ghana have attracted scholarly research and policy debate on the adverse impact of land dispossession on local communities. However, despite the limited research the implication of land grabbing for livelihood of socially differentiated local communities may have been far more complex than often assumed. Using semi-structured interviews with purposively selected 12 participants, this study examined how and to what extent the lives and livelihoods of different women based on their marital status, age and class have been affected by localized process of land grabbing. The study identified that the current processes of land grabbing are characterized by forceful eviction and dispossession of women of their lands. As a result of land grabs, women reported experiencing a decrease in their food security, loss of livelihoods, and loss of incomes. As customary institutions that privileged men as owners of land remain crucial within the study community, women tend to be underrepresented in terms of negotiations in land deals. There exists a gendered power relation in the community that shapes women's exposure to land grabbing. Women, however, experience the impact of land grabbing differently that helps them find alternative livelihoods. The study concludes that by intersecting with existing patriarchal gender relations, land grabbing in the Diare community further excludes and marginalizes women from access, control and transfer of lands and other resources.

Relevance to Development Studies

It focuses on land, livelihoods and gender relations make this research paper very relevant to development studies. In the contemporary contest of ongoing land grabbing across Africa, a critical investigation and understanding of the intersection of patriarchal gender relations and land grabs is key in identifying the potential 'winners' and 'losers' in the processes of land grabbing. The study contributes to deepening our understanding of how and why gender power relations contributes to the exploitation and marginalization of women in development process. This, in turn helps to address the problem of unequal access and control of land resource from a social justice perspective.

Keywords:

Land grabbing, Rural women, farmers, Livelihood, gender inequality, gender power relations, Diare.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research Topic

1.1 Background of the Study

This study sets out to understand the gendered implications of land grabbing in northern Ghana. Over the last few years, a sizable body of literature has shown that local communities have been affected by land grabbing in various ways across Ghana and in many parts of Africa (Antwi-Bediako, 2018; Nyantakyi-Frimpong and Kerr 2017; Lanz et al. 2018; Tsikata and Yaro 2014; Verma 2014; Boamah and Overa 2015; Yengoh et al. 2015; Hamenoo et al. 2018; Mariwah et al. 2019; Porsani et al. 2019; Behrman et al. 2012). However, the implications of land grabbing for the livelihoods of socially differentiated local communities may have been far more complex than often assumed. In this study, I argue that while there are ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ among and within affected local communities in the process of land grabbing, rural women’s lives and livelihoods are particularly being affected and transformed in profound ways. By intersecting with existing patriarchal gender relations, land grabbing may have been intensifying the exclusion and marginalization of women regarding access, control and transfer of land and other natural resources. Although most recent studies used the term ‘land grab’ to describe ‘large-scale corporate capture of land resources’ by foreign and domestic investors, in this study, the term land grab is used to describe land contestations and dispossessions at a local level which involves local elite and male capture of land and gendered contestations over access, control, and ownership of land.

Since land grabs occur within the context of social-cultural and gendered power relations, in the processes of land grabbing, certain actors’ stand to benefit (e.g., local elites, village chiefs usually men) while others, such as women, often tend to lose out as the result of skewed power and property relations (Verma 2014). Relations of power shape who gains and losses in the negotiations and contestations over land resources. In this regard, it should be noted that land grabs are negotiated and questioned in a dynamic situation of legal pluralism, consisting of conflicting legislative and customary rules, norms, and structures, varying in size and scope, as well as spatially and temporally (Verma 2014). For instance, case studies in Kenya and Mozambique show that regardless of the presence of strong policies and laws in these countries, land grabs have occurred as land laws and procedures have been manipulated by local elite actors resulting in the dispossession

of land, loss of access to critical natural resources and livelihoods of women and men (Verma 2014). A similar study (Porsani et al., 2019) in Mozambique adds that while men prevail in off-farm occupations, women prevail in farm activities and remain directly dependent on it for their livelihood. This partly accounts for the differing implications of land grabs as gender roles and division of labour are still important in rural settings. As such, Porsani et al. (2019) show that land grabbing has various dire consequences, particularly for women, which, in turn, aggravate 'the feminization of poverty'. Also, Behrman et al., (2012) report that the gendered benefits and implications of land grabbing are partly dependent on the responsibilities of men and women prior to the land deals and in part, on the legal frameworks of property ownership, which usually are to the detriment of women. Another empirical research in Sierra Leone shows that although the incomes of both men and women are affected by land grabbing, a reduction in women's income is directly and profoundly consequential to the well-being of their households than men (Yengoh et al. 2015). This is mainly due to existing social and cultural norms.

By emphasizing the role of power relations in land grabbing, Lanz et al. (2018) show that in the Volta region of Ghana, chiefs are continuously redefining and adapting traditional land tenure schemes to the interests of elite actors seeking land. As a result, those rural landholders whose land rights are under customary tenure face threats of land grabbing, while those with close links with local customary authorities may benefit from land grabs. The study by Antwi-Bediako (2018), however, suggests that chiefs are not to blame for the persistent land grabbing as several other actors are also included in the process, and also the role of major challenges such as the insecure nature of land ownership cannot be overlooked. Nyantakyi-Frimpong and Kerr (2017), focusing on land grabs amongst subsistence farmers in northern Ghana, established that conjugal contracts facilitate gendered property rights where men have a monopoly over land resources, resulting in insecure rights for women to use land as mothers, daughter and wives, with their vegetable plots reconsidered as male-controlled household fields. Such dynamics not only undermines women's ability to provide food for their families but also their autonomy in relation to their husbands. This is confirmed by Tsikata and Yaro (2014), who showed that land grabs in northern Ghana have impacted the livelihoods of women and exacerbated existing gender inequality regarding access to land and resource occupancies (See also Boamah and Overa 2015). These and other case studies in Ghana and across sub-Saharan Africa shows that women are usually subjected to adverse impacts of land grabbing.

It should be noted that in Ghana and sub-Saharan Africa, land remains a critical resource as most rural people continue to subsist largely on farming (Reda, 2014, Kanianska, 2016, Nilsson, 2018, Rondhi et al., 2018). In Ghana, women are predominant in farming activities vis-à-vis men, but their access to and control of land resources is precarious and often constrained by patriarchal and gendered relations. As Behrman et al. (2014) indicated, rural women, even before the onset of the recent widespread land grabs, have been disadvantaged in terms of access and ownership of land within customary tenure and formal titled systems. As a result, women have to constantly engage in material and symbolic struggles to secure and protect their land rights (Verma, 2001). These struggles by women are associated with class oppression and gender discrimination inherent in patriarchal societies since precedence is given to men's claims as household heads both customarily and statutorily, particularly regarding land distribution, access and ownership. This explains why women in rural areas are usually socio-economically and politically disadvantaged (Agarwal, 1994 cited in Park, 2019, Tsikata, 2016). Building on and further deepening existing empirical research on gender and land, this study contends that land grabbing further marginalizes women regarding access to land and critical natural resources, hence undermining their food security and livelihoods. In doing so, the study analyzes localized experiences and implications of land grabbing in northern Ghana from gendered perspectives. The study particularly focuses on the Daire-Savelungu Nanton district in the northern region of Ghana.

1.2 Research Problem Statement

Given the centrality of land to agrarian societies, especially for women peasants, the appropriation of land by powerful and elite actors is most likely to pose serious threats to their livelihoods and the well-being of their families (Reda, 2014). It is significant to focus on land grabbing because smallholder farmers, who are mainly women, suffer the most from this phenomenon since it threatens their livelihood. This is the case in Ghana, where majority of rural women are smallholder farmers, especially in Northern Ghana. Evidence reveals these rural women face dispossession of their lands, livelihoods, and access to communal natural resources because of the patriarchal nature of land ownership in Ghana, which favours men (Nyantakyi-Frimpong and Kerr 2017, Tsikata and Yaro 2014).

Globally, women constitute approximately 70% and 80% of agricultural workers and food producers, respectively (Gandahi, 2016). The situation in Ghana is not different, as Ghanaian women have been found to engage in food crop production and livestock raising (Bolang and Osumanu, 2019). These facts suggest that land is critical and central to the farming activities of women. This is because without farmland, obviously there will not be food crop farming and livestock production. Yet, recent studies on the implications of land grabbing in Ghana have focused mainly on smallholder farmers broadly and do not specifically investigate its implications for women who play a critical role in agriculture. Additionally, farming takes place on lands predominantly owned by men while women can access these lands through kinship relations guided by socio-cultural norms regarding marriage, inheritance, and community allocation (Bogweh, 2017). These could result in possible differences in terms of the implications of land grabbing for rural men and women as kinship systems in Ghana are clearly distinguished based on paternal and maternal relations. Nonetheless, there exist no known study on how socio-cultural systems in Ghana contribute to land grabbing issues faced by women.

There exist numerous studies on land grabbing in different countries (Benjaminsen and Bryceson, 2012; Borras and Franco, 2013; Dieng, 2017; Stein and Cunningham, 2017); in Ghana, however, such empirical studies are still limited. Some of the limited available studies focused on the impact of land grabbing on livelihoods (Acheampong and Betey, 2013; Kuusaana, 2017; Alhassan, Shaibu and Kuwornu, 2018; Agbley, 2019; Gyapong, 2019). While studies (such as Agbley 2019; Nyantakyi-Frimpong and Kerr, 2017; Kuusaana 2017; Tsikata and Yaro, 2014) in addition to men focused on the impact of land grabbing on women. Evidence from these studies argues that while rural men and women peasants are both affected by land grabbing, the welfare and livelihood of women and their households are adversely impacted through a reduction in their income. The study by Lanz et al. (2018) points to the significant role of power relations in shaping these gendered implications of land grabbing. These studies guided the selection of the Diare community for this case study. First, these studies point to the incidences of land grabbing in northern Ghana. Secondly, the northern Ghana region, particularly the Diare community, was selected due to the pervasiveness of the practice of patriarchal and gendered relations of power (Lanz et al., 2018), which is more likely to shape women's inclusion/exclusion in negotiations regarding land deals and, in turn, influence the how land grabbing may impact on the men and women's livelihoods in the community differently. The Daire community is a good example of places in northern Ghana where women

have traditionally had difficult challenges accessing and controlling land (Lanz et al., 2018). Given the fact that land rights in Diare are closely linked to gender relations (which, in turn, are shaped by customary tenure systems that often discriminate against women), it is most likely that women are particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged because of land grabbing (land, water, and forests) by powerful local elites. This, therefore, makes it more critical to empirically examine the gender dimensions of the impacts of land grabbing on rural communities.

Also, land grabs associated with small portions of lands used by women remain unexplored, as most of the studies reviewed earlier focus mainly on large-scale land grabs. This clearly shows that there exists a paucity of research on land grabbing in Ghana, specifically studies that examine the nature of land grabbing, the involvement of women in land grabbing deals, how land grabbing affects women's livelihood and coping strategies adopted by these women. Particularly, how patriarchal structures and institutions shape and determine women's land rights and how this, in turn, makes women vulnerable and put them at the losing end of contemporary land grabbing is an important empirical question which this study aims to shed light on.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research examines the gendered impacts of land grabbing on rural women in northern Ghana, focusing on the Diare community in Savelungu Nanton district. It particularly looks at how gendered access and control to land is and how this, in turn, makes women particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged because of land grabbing. The research explores and unpacks how women of different marital status, age and class are involved in the negotiation of land grabbing deals in Diare - Savelungu Nanton district.

1.4 Main Research Question

How and to what extent have rural women's lives and livelihoods been transformed because of land grabbing in Diare -Savelungu Nanton district of the Northern Region of Ghana?

Sub Questions:

- i. How and to what extent do women access, use and control land and other natural resources in Diare-Savelungu Nanton district?
- ii. To what extent are women aware and involved in the negotiation of land deals in their communities?
- iii. What are the gendered impacts of land grabbing on access, use and control of land and other natural resources?
- iv. What are the underlying power relations shaping women's exposure to the adverse impacts of land grabbing?
- v. What are the reactions and coping strategies of different categories of women affected by land grabbing in Diare -Savelungu Nanton district?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the prevailing studies on the impact of land grabbing on rural women in Ghana by exploring the gender power relations, responses and coping strategies of different women (according to marital status, age and class) in Diare community of the Savelungu Nanton district in Northern Ghana. It provides answers as to whether and how women of different marital status, age and class are involved in land grabbing, negotiations, and implementations. The impact land grabbing has on the livelihood of these rural women. The findings add to the literature on gender and land grabbing with a focused study on the small-scale land grabs in Diare -Savelungu Nanton district Northern Ghana.

These findings could inform policies by the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources and the Government on the regulation of lands and land grabs in Ghana through the development of a Policy Brief at the end of the research. It will also serve as a future reference on studies of gender and livelihoods in rural Ghana.

1.6 Organization of the Study

Five chapters were used in presenting this study. The research topic, including the research problem statement informing this study, research objectives and questions, the importance of this study is presented in chapter one. Chapter two presents a short review of relevant literature on Ghana's land tenure systems, including the gendered nature of land ownership and the theoretical framework. Chapter three presents the research methodology adopted in collecting data needed to answer the research questions asked in the study. This included information on the research approach and design, the study area, sampling technique and procedure, method of data collection and analysis, field problems and ethical adherence. Chapter four presents an analysis of data collected through the interviews conducted with study participants. Lastly, chapter five provides the conclusions for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of relevant literature on land tenure systems which gives an overview of Ghana's land tenure system to provide an understanding of the formal and informal institution and practices that guide land administration and tenurial relations across the country ,the gendered nature of land ownership rights in Ghana and the theoretical framework.

2.1 Overview of Land Tenure and Administration Systems in Ghana

In Ghana, land issues are mainly governed by state-enacted legislation and local customary practices that guide land administration and tenurial relations across the country. As a result, there is coexistence and interaction between statutory laws and customary practices within Ghana's national land administration system. Two main types of ownership with regards to land exist in Ghana, which include private lands and state/public lands or customary and statutory land. While the land public or state-owned land include those that are acquired compulsorily by invoking the necessary legislation, vested in the President and held in faith for the people of Ghana, private lands are those communally owned in most parts of Ghana and held in trust for a specific group of persons or community by a family or by a skin or stool as a sign of customary authority.

In most traditional groups in northern Ghana and Akan traditional groups in southern Ghana, skin or stool lands are considered a feature of land ownership. Yet, there exist the vested lands which are owned partly by the traditional owners and the state (National Land Policy, 1999). Concretely speaking, 'stool' lands (particularly in the south) or 'skin' lands (in the north) are customary lands that are vested in the trust of the people by a local authority or traditional head of a group. The community leaders, who typically constitute the chief and his elders' council, have the mandate to govern land issues such as local land access, control, and use, in the trust of the people (Ampadu 2013).

There are some traditional groups that refuses to recognize a skin or stool as a symbol of possessing private communal lands. As a result, the traditional arrangement is used where ownership

of lands is vested in the individuals, families, or clans. This type of land ownership pattern is more prevalent in traditional areas in the Eastern, Central, Greater Accra, and the three northern regions (North, Upper West, and Upper East) of Ghana. These stool lands and public lands make up about 80 and 20 percent of all lands in the country (Kasanga & Kotey, 2001). Basically, the ownership of lands is absolutely based on permanent or ‘allodial’ title out of which every other interest in, lesser titles to or rights over lands are derived. Usually, a skin, stool, family, clan and in some instances, individuals possess the ‘allodial’ title. The traditional agreement to make land available for use in Ghana mainly includes the exercise of rights under the “allodial” title and the usufruct’s rights as limited by the “allodial” title (National Land Policy, 1999).

Based on these customary practices, a formal administrative framework has accordingly been designed by the state which comprises numerous land sector agencies, under the supervision of the Ministry of Lands and Forestry, to ensure a fairly orderly and rational land administration of lands. Backed by legislation, these agencies performed various functions including public land, stool land and vested land administration; settlement of boundaries of stool lands; protection of interests in land and registration of titles throughout Ghana; rateable values, and compensation for public land acquisitions, coordinating activities relating to land development, formulating standards relating to land development; and approving settlement development plans, amongst others (National Land Policy, 1999). Despite various statutory land agencies in Ghana, most individuals obtain their access to lands through customary institutions of kinship, lineage, and chieftaincy which differ in the various regions (Kasanga & Kotey, 2001).

The policy framework in ensuring equity in the allocation of land, maintaining and holding a stable environment for a stable atmosphere for social and economic improvement that is sustainable, aims to: ensure that all socio-economic practices are compatible with sound land use through sustainable land use planning in the long-term national interest; protect the interests of landowners and their descendants from becoming landless or tenants on their own land; ensure that fair and sufficient compensation is paid within a reasonable period of time; to restrain the incidence of land invasions, unapproved development schemes, multiple or illegal land sales, land speculation and other forms of land racketeering, among others, and to bring order and discipline into the land market (National Land Policy, 1999).

In 2003, the Land Administration Project (LAP) which is currently in use was implemented by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, to create a process of long-term land administration

reform for a period of 15 to 25 years. This was part of strategies to enhance investment by foreigners while at the same time ensuring small-scale farmers are protected and secured (Ubink & Amanor, 2009). Within this land administration framework, registration of, management of land and settlement of land disputes is vested in the Customary Land Secretariats, which is regulated by various customary authorities. The establishment of these secretariats has to some extent ensured a formalization of customary lands, which necessitates that individual land rights and boundaries of lands in these traditional areas are charted and registered at the Regional Lands Commission (RLC) so as to improve tenure security for local land users. As well, any form of land transaction prior to registration at the RLC, require validation by respective customary land secretariats (Ubink & Amanor, 2009). Yet, vesting lands in traditional authorities based on customary realities, ignores power structures at the local level and endorses the chiefs' position as land administrators, as if it were a lasting concept. Thus, in their personal interest, the authority of chiefs form customary institutions at the expense of local small land holders since in these traditional areas, chiefs are predominantly in control over the allocation of lands (Ubink & Quan, 2008; Whitehead & Tsikata, 2003).

2.2 Gendered Nature of Land Ownership in Ghana

While there exist a policy framework guiding the administration of lands which stresses on equitable access and use of land, aimed at ensuring individuals, family or clan are provided with compensation when their lands are compulsorily taken from them, and protecting the interests of landowners and their descendants from landlessness or tenants on their own land, this policy does not make reference to gendered ownership of lands (see National Land Policy, 1999). Thus, how land administration, ownership, and distribution in terms of gender (women and men) in traditional areas are not emphasized.

This further contributes to the deepened gendered land grabs and its implications in societies, especially those in Northern Ghana. This is because the land policies give precedence to customary practices within which patriarchal norms which leads to women's rights dispossession are strengthened (Whitehead & Tsikata, 2003). In most instances, lands are vested in the heads of families and clans, usually male heads with tradition and ancestry continuously assigning primordial rights to a group of persons. Specifically, family heads and chiefs possess allodial rights over lands while others who do not occupy such positions enjoy usufruct rights (Kasanga & Kotey, 2001).

Some actors have greater power compared to others since the customary system embodies enormous power disparities based on gender (Boamah, 2014; Ubink & Quan, 2008; Whitehead & Tsikata, 2003).

The structure regulating land ownership and land protection differs widely across regions, but the exclusive property right to land excluding women is usually assigned to men. Women have access to land primarily through male family members; they may be allocated plots or cultivate the fields of their husbands (IFAD, 2008). Despite the statutory laws of Ghana being gender equal in theory, there however exist no alignment with fundamental customary laws regarding land rights that are still in regular practice, and inheritance to, access to and land ownership is scarcely gender equal (Kutsoati & Morck, 2014).

Individuals are assigned a piece of land according to customary practices that they can use either temporarily or permanently, but whether the individual has the right to sell, rent, share, borrow or leave the land rests on the community and the particular circumstance (Lambrecht & Asare, 2016). Land can still be accessed in others, usually more remote societies, only by non-market transactions such as borrowing, conventional land allocation, gifts or inheritance, and farmers are seen as buyers rather than landowners (Doss & Quisumbing, 2020; Lambrecht & Asare, 2016; Yokying & Lambrecht, 2019). Men and women in the same household cultivate different plots, like other countries in West Africa, and joint ownership or land ownership is rare in Ghana. Social norms and customary practices have a major effect on access to land for women and men because they determine who is and who is not part of the family or society and what is appropriate in the society (Lambrecht & Asare, 2016). Customary land access is usually organized according to maternal or paternal bloodlines by family or relations, known as matrilineal or patrilineal systems, respectively.

The Akan ethnicity is Ghana's matrilineal ethnic group, while the country has many other patrilineal ethnic groups (Ickowitz & Mohanty, 2015). Most women, particularly those belonging to patrilineal classes, do not inherit the land of their fathers because their families do not want the land to be transferred after marriage to another family (Abena Oduro, 2011). However, because men have historically been given primary responsibility for supplying households with the main necessities, land rights of women are considered secondary and are based on their male relatives' primary rights in both matrilineal and patrilineal cultures (Lambrecht & Asare, 2016). Consequently, all or most of the farmlands and therefore, agricultural earnings are under the control of the

husband in rural farm households in Ghana. However, in contrast to women in patrilineal ethnic groups, Akan women are stated to have greater decision-making capacity (Oduro et al., 2012). The incremental change in traditional tenure towards greater individualization of land rights and the rise of land markets poses new opportunities and challenges for men and women to access land, potentially affecting gender relations between households and communities (Doss & Quisumbing, 2020).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is informed by and uses some relevant concepts of agrarian political economy, gender power relations and sustainable rural livelihood approach in relation to access and control over lands and other critical natural resources and livelihoods. Gender relations are central to this study, and they involve contestations and struggles between and within local communities.

2.3.1 Agrarian Political Economy

The agrarian political economy (APE) approach focuses on social relationships and dynamics of production, land access and ownership and power relations (Bernstein 2010). It helps to critically explore the following agrarian questions relating to land: who owns the land (social relations of property in different land tenure systems), who works on the land (social relations of labour), when the land is leased what do the owners of the land benefit from their land (who benefits from the land and who does not get to benefit i.e., distribution of income), what do they do with the income generated, and what is the land used for. And the purpose for which the land is used and controlled shapes and reflects power distribution, privileges, property, and the capacity of capital to address these restrictions (Akram-Lodhi, 2007; Levien et al., 2018). How and who gets to access and use land and other critical natural resources within and between local communities is determined by the underlying power relations along class, age, marital status, and gender.

2.3.2 Gender Power Relations

The study is further informed by a Foucauldian notion of power. According to this notion, power implies the capacity of agents to impose their will over the will of the ‘powerless’ (e.g., women), or

the ability to force them to engage in things they do not wish to do (Minson, 1980; Widder, 2004). The current study argues that power is not personally owned by any person but is acted and manifested through land grabs, a strategy used to carry out land grabs. However, power is used and exercised through a network of relations and interactions with individuals acting as vehicles of wielding power. Thus, in relation to land grabs, power is considered as a system with network of relations including the whole society in which women find themselves other than just the relationship between women and their oppressors or land grabbers. Also, individuals in a society where women own or use lands serve as not just the objects of power, but the locus where power and resistance to power is exerted to make land grabs successful (Balan, 2010). Power manifests and is constituted in everyday social interaction in which some actors wield influence and can manipulate institutions in order to promote their own interests and to gain an advantage over others considered 'powerless' relative to land resources access and control. In short, power emerges out of and draws on processes of social interaction and negotiations at different levels.

In Ghana, for instance, the gendered power that men enjoy over women emanates from diverse customary practices. One major source of this power is the gender atypical occupation (that is, trade) assigned to women, which overly regards trading as a female occupation. While other decent jobs are largely regarded as a male occupation (Overå, 2007). In Northern Ghana especially the Kusasis and the Dagombas, responsibilities and work are allocated along gender lines. Women are responsible for the preparation of meals and feeding their families, including men. This implies that women spend most of their income on ingredients such as salt, fish, and fat for soup (Padmanabhan, 2007). Marriage serve as another source of gendered power relations. Dery (2015), in their qualitative study, argues that despite the bride price paid by men to the family of their wives which is backed by culture, as a form of acknowledgment, protection and respect of women in marriages, the role of women in marriages rather become prescribed and women further become subordinates to men (Dery, 2015).

Also, the practices of polygyny as clearly practiced in Northern Ghana, are another manifestation of men's dominance over women. With this practice, women tend to have an abysmal status, virtually making them prisoners while the men monopolize all the freedom and power (Bergmann, 1995 cited in Ickowitz & Mohanty, 2015). Due to these power relations between men and women in Ghana, women can use land but cannot own or control the land. Women's rights in the customary land regimes remain weaker than that of men since women traditionally acquire

usufruct right to family lands but not inheritance rights (Quisumbing et al., 2001). Hence, power relations influence land grabbing and land negotiations. This shows that there exist actors who are powerful and determines the ‘commodity’ status of lands. The powerful actors argue for the acquisition, redistribution, and investment in lands. Additionally, the rights of men and women who depend mainly on lands for their well-being and survival, whether redistribution is in line with laws and ethics are considered less important when it comes to the distribution of lands. This has resulted in land being instituted by individuals who have exclusive control, vesting the rights relating to the use, abuse, and its nature to such persons. Such powers are usually invested in legislative institutions (Verma, 2014). In other words, these power relations between individuals shape the distribution and benefits of land negotiations and land grabs (Nygren & Rikoon, 2008).

2.3.3 Sustainable Rural Livelihood Approach(SRLA)

In this study, SRLA is used to analyze the livelihoods and coping strategies of women. Livelihoods include capabilities, activities and assets that are needed for an individual to make a living. It is considered to be sustainable when a person’s livelihood could survive with and recover from shocks and pressures and enhance its assets, activities and capabilities both currently and in the future without damaging the natural resource base (Serrat, 2017). Sustainable rural livelihood focuses on the link between rural indigenes (here, women) and the complete empowering environment that impacts the outcomes of livelihood strategies adopted by women such as access to financial and physical resources (especially land) (Serrat, 2017). The SRLA approach helps to understand how rural women try to build their livelihoods and develop coping strategies even under constraining conditions and challenges, such as land grabbing (Mumuni & Oladele, 2016).

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3. Introduction

This chapter presents and explains the methods and procedures adopted in carrying out this study. The information discussed in this chapter includes the research approach and design, description of the study area, sampling technique and procedure, methods of data collection, data analysis techniques, and description of challenges encountered, and ethical issues considered.

3.1 Research Approach and Design

The study adopts a qualitative research approach to collect relevant data needed for understanding the implications of land grabbing for rural women in Diare-Savelugu Nanton district in Northern Ghana. This approach is used together with the case study design. The case study design allows for in-depth analysis and understanding of the implications of land grabbing for rural women differentiated by class, age, and marital status and facilitates the use of numerous sources of data and data collection methods (Putney, 2012; Bloomberg, 2018).

3.2 Study Area

The study was carried out in the Diare Community, which is in the Savelugu-Nanton District in Northern Ghana. The Diare community was selected because of the prevalence of the problems of land dispossessions and loss of livelihoods in the community. Given the fact that access to and control of lands is gendered, as is the case in northern Ghana (Kuusaana, 2017; Agbley, 2019), the Diare community offered a great opportunity to closely examine whether such land dispossessions have, in fact, gendered dimensions. In short, the Diare community provided a good case to investigate the gendered effects of land dispossessions or land grabs for land rights and livelihoods and the responses to these challenges.

The Savelugu-Nanton district was created out of the Western Dagomba District Council using the Legislative Instrument (LI) I 1450 of Act 462 of the Local Government Act 1993, which replaced the PNDC Law 207 of 1998. The district in 2012 under the Legislative Instrument (LI) 2071, gained a Municipal status. The district occupies a total land size of 2022.6 sq km and shares boundaries with Tamale Metropolitan Assembly, Karaga, West Mamprusi, and Tolon/Kumbungu. Districts

(Composite Budgett-Savelugu Municipal, 2020; Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The District is predominantly rural, with a population of 84,031 persons living in rural settlements. In terms of gender, the district has a population of 71,752 (51.5%) and 67,531 (48.5%) females and males respectively, out of a total population of 139,283. This suggest that the male population dominates within the district (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Yet, the district has more male household heads (10.6%) and male children (51.1%) than female household heads (2.2%) and female children (35.8%). This clearly depicts a greater difference of male dominance where the female is more likely to perform a supportive role, with children constituting the largest percentage of the household structure, 43.2 percent (GSS, 2014). With regards to family arrangements, the nuclear family constitutes only 13% whilst the extended family forms 87% of the households. Specifically, households that include the extended household form comprising the head, spouse(s), children, and relatives of the head constituting a proportion of 69.5%, while the head and spouse have at least a proportion of 0.2 percent. This means that there is the prevalence of the extended family arrangements (GSS, 2014). The highest percentage is 69.5 percent for the extended household form (head spouse(s) child head is relative); whereas households made up of the head and a spouse have only the lowest percentage of 0.2 percent.

This household composition pattern supports the view that an important characteristic among the people in the District remains the extended family household structure. Religiously, the district is dominated by Muslims, which suggest that the patriarchal system is highly revered since Islam beliefs and teaching emphasize on the superiority of men over women and determines the roles of women in these societies.

Available statistics on the district shows that approximately 74.1% of economically active persons are involved in agriculture, which is the major economic activity in the district. Most of these individuals operate at the subsistence level where smallholder farmers constitute major users of existing agricultural lands. Out of the population of 114,586 residents of the district involved in agriculture, 34,376 females compared to 80,210 males are involved in agriculture. This could be due to female and male division of labour, the differential ownership of land, or women having other reproductive roles and other productive roles. Maize, cowpea, cotton, cashew, groundnuts, rice, and soya bean are major crops while major tree crops include Dawadawa, Sheanuts and small plantations of cashew (GSS, 2014). About ninety-three percent of rural households compared to 83.3% of urban

households are involved in agriculture, with as high as 97.0 percent involved in crop farming (GSS, 2014).

3.3 Sampling Technique and Procedure

A purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting study participants from the Diare Community in the Savelugu-Nanton District. The purposive selection of research participants enhanced representativeness, helped capture varied perspectives and understanding of land grabbing in the district (Guest, Namey and Mitchell, 2017). For in-depth interviews, I purposely selected 10 women farmers, one traditional local leader/chief, and one government official. The women selected for individual interviews lived in the study area and are engaged in farming and hence, provided me with first-hand, personalized accounts and experiences regarding land grabbing. The local traditional chief and the local government representative were selected because of their positions in relation to the administration of land resources within the district. The purposive selection of women farmers and land administrators (the traditional local leader/chief and government official) helped to capture differing understanding and perspectives in relation to the land grabs in the community as well as provided detailed and rich information to this study (Patton, 2002 cited in Teddlie et al., 2007). The purposive selection of participants was aided by predefined criteria that resulted in the inclusion and exclusion of different individuals (Velasco, 2012b, 2012a). These criteria included:

- a. Participants should either be a woman involved in crop farming or an administrator of lands in the district.
- b. Participants should have resided in the district for at least one year to prevent the likelihood of including individuals who had inadequate experience regarding land grabs in the district.

3.4 Sources of Data

The study relied mainly on primary qualitative data. This primary qualitative data comprises first-hand or original information provided by sampled participants, which, in turn, provided access to raw data for the study to achieve the research objectives (Finnegan, 2011). The primary data were provided by sampled participants during the face-to-face interviews. Primary data mainly comprised interview data relating to the gendered impacts of land grabbing on rural women farmers and how women are involved in the negotiation and implementation of land deals. Because of the COVID-19

related travel restrictions, I could not travel to the study sites in person to collect data. As a result, during the data collection, I was assisted by a research assistant in the study area who had good knowledge of the topic investigated in this research. The role of the research assistant ranged from directly conducting interviews on my behalf to arranging interview sessions for me with the selected research participants via skype calls.

In addition to the primary data, relevant secondary data was collected from different sources. These secondary data sources include documents and reports such as the 2010 District Analytical Report by the Ghana Statistical Service, and reports from the Diare District Assembly. The secondary data complemented the primary data collected from the research participants. Data from journal articles on the implications of land grabs on women were as well adopted as secondary data sources. These data were collected before, during and after primary data were collected (DeCuir-Gunby, & Schutz, 2018), which allowed me to frame research questions and conduct analysis, as well as enhance the quality of data used in this study (Boslaugh, 2012).

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

According to Persaud (2012), administered surveys, experiments, field observation, and interviews are the main research methods commonly used to obtain primary data. In line with this assertion, the interview method was employed in collecting primary data for this study. Specifically, research assistants engaged study participants in semi-structured face-to-face interviews, as indicated earlier. This is because it is fluid and flexible in nature, ensuring flexibility regarding how questions were asked and the sequence with which questions were asked, and particular areas or emerging questions to ask subsequent respondents (Mason, 2011). The use of semi-structured interviews allowed the interview process to be shaped by my interest, the understanding of respondents and unanticipated ideas that emerged during the interviews. This allowed the research assistant to probe and ask follow-up questions to elicit elaborated answers or emerging ideas that were not clearly understood by researcher (myself) and research assistant, leading to an in-depth understanding of the implications of land grabbing on rural women peasants (Cramer, 2018; Roulston & Choi, 2018). Thus, interviews were conducted by the research assistant.

Before the commencement of interviews, the purpose of this research was verbally explained to study participants, and their consent to participate in this research was sought. Also, a letter of informed consent was sent to officials of the Savelugu-Nanton District Assembly seeking their consent and approval of the data collection in the selected community, which were subsequently

approved. In selecting the district, the research assistant was consulted. Due to his experience in fieldwork as the former director of the Veterinary Services in Ghana and current consultant at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as well as due to his close working relationships with women, especially in northern Ghana, he had adequate knowledge of the district and the experiences of women farmers regarding land grabs. Participants were assured that any information they provided in the progress of the interview would be treated anonymously and confidentially and assured of their right to refuse to answer any question they were uncomfortable with (Persaud, 2012). However, neither myself nor the research assistant had prior close contacts and any form of interaction with the selected research participants before this study. While the research assistant conducted interviews with a District Assembly official and a local traditional leader at their respective workplace and residence, respectively, interviews with women farmers were conducted at an arranged location of their choice. This was to ensure that participants were at ease and comfortable while being interviewed.

Throughout the interviews conducted with participants, open-ended questions were asked. And the responses provided by participants were clarified using a combination of the non-directive probes (such as can you tell me more?) and echo probes (repeating the responses of participants to be sure before further questioning). This ensured that the researcher(myself) and research assistant did not influence participants' responses while encouraging them to clarify the information they provided (Johnson, 2011; Persaud, 2012). The interviews with women farmers were conducted in their local language (which is Dagbani) since their formal education level was low. The semi-structured face-to-face interviews conducted with the participants lasted for an average time of 19 minutes and were audio-recorded to enhance the accuracy of data captured.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

The interviews were translated from the local language, which is Dagbani, to English and transcribed onto paper by the researcher (myself). The transcribed interviews were then reorganized under specific research questions informing the study, which served as major thematic areas/lines. Narrative descriptions were used in analyzing and synthesizing the data organized along thematic lines. In doing so, I thoroughly read through interview transcripts to highlight major ideas emerging. After this, I adopted the content analysis technique by breaking down transcripts into

words, word sense, sentences, or phrases (Farquhar, 2013; Schreier, 2013). I then assigned codes to the emerging ideas and were described and supported using phrases from the transcripts, including verbatim. The interpretation and analysis of qualitative data were further supported by relevant theoretical concepts that helped make sense of the data and to provide answers to the research questions of the study (Farquhar, 2013). In this regard, the data analysis was conducted using concepts of the agrarian political economy, gender power relations, and the sustainable rural livelihood approach.

3.7 Challenges

Confidentiality and ensuring that all the participants approved to be interviewed and the need to be recorded during data collection. Several challenges were encountered during data collection. First, despite participants being willing to participate in the interviews, some could not show up on the scheduled date due to personal reasons. For example, the traditional local leader was not present on the date scheduled for the interview due to the death of his younger brother. To address this issue, another date was scheduled with him for the interview to be conducted at his premises. Also, the Covid-19 pandemic posed a major challenge to the success of this research. Nevertheless, the research assistant and I ensured that existing protocols and measures such as social distancing were observed. Also, face masks and alcohol-based hand sanitizers were distributed to the research participants. The cost of conducting this research was high because of some unforeseen costs which incurred, including covering the costs involved in transporting the research participants, especially women from and to their homes, before and after the interviews. This was to ensure the participant's safety. As the research did not get financial support for the fieldwork, I had to use my savings to finance this research.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

As DeRoche and DeRoche (2012) suggested, there was a need for ethical issues to be adhered to in conducting the study since humans were used as subjects. This research was conducted with strict adherence to research ethical guidelines at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS). Through a formal letter sent to the Director of the District Assembly, detailing the purpose and the duration of the study, I obtained permission for the study to be carried out in the district. Before

primary data was collected, the purpose of the research and the estimated duration for the interviews were verbally explained to participants, which ensured that participants were provided with a clear understanding of what they are getting into, as well as ensured that participants were free whether or not to participate in this research, without any form of coercion. They were also made aware of their rights to withdraw from this research without any form of threat (DeRoche & DeRoche, 2012). Participants were also encouraged and given the opportunity to ask questions in order to clarify any doubts they had concerning this research (Thomas & Hodges, 2013). Before face-to-face interviews were conducted, permissions were sought from participants for interview sessions to be audio recorded, with reasons why it was necessary for the researcher(myself) to record interviews explained to them. Additionally, I made ensure that pseudonyms were used in reporting the findings of this research, thereby ensuring that personal and identifying information of respondents were kept anonymous and confidential, which in turn prevented possible harm, repercussions, and embarrassments (Chapman, 2018; Coffelt, 2018). These all together ensured that this research conformed to ethical standards of social research.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Discussion

4. Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzes data on how and to what extent the lives and livelihoods of rural women are being transformed because of incidences of land grabs, to understand the implications of land grabbing for rural women. Data analyzed here specifically reflects the views of informants, including women farmers, traditional local leader/chief and a government official in charge of land administration in the Diare community in the Savelugu Nanton District in the Northern region of Ghana. The chapter is presented in four main sections. Section one presents and analyzes the social and demographic characteristics of study participants. Women's involvement in negotiations and implementation of land deals are analyzed and discussed in section two. Section three focuses on the gendered impacts of land grabbing on access, use and control of land and natural resources in the community. Again, the underlying power relations that shape women's exposure to adverse impacts of land grabbing. While various reactions and coping strategies used by different categories of women affected by land grabbing are explored in the final section of this chapter.

4.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics

Characteristics of sampled respondents are discussed in this section, as shown in Table 4.1. While the codes WF is used to represent women farmers, who were included in this study, others such as the traditional local chief and, the Government Official are represented with the codes C1 and, GO1, respectively. The variables considered include sex, age, religion, level of education, marital status, number of children, religion, type of farming activity, years in farming, type of land ownership, and acres of land. A widow within the context of this study, is considered as a woman whose husband is dead, and who is mostly taken care of or not by the family of her husband in terms of decision-making concerning the children, finance and access to resources.

Table 4.1: Characteristics of Women farmers who participated in the Study

Participants	Age	Level of education	Marital status	Number of children	Religion	Years in farming	Type of farming activity	Type of ownership	Land size
WF1	65 years	No formal education	Widowed	8	Islam	38 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Family land/ Husband's land	15 acres
WF2	35 years	No formal education	Married	4	Islam	12 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Family land	15 acres
WF3	65 years	No formal education	Married	7	Islam	35 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Husband's land	10 acres
WF4	40 years	No formal education	Married	6	Islam	20 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Family land/ Husband's land	10 acres
WF5	60 years	No formal education	Widowed	5	Islam	18 years	Cash crop farming	Community chief	2 acres
WF6	27 years	SHS	Single	1	Islam	9 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	father's land	35 acres
WF7	45 years	No formal education	Widowed	3	Christian	11 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Personal land	8 acres
WF8	50 years	No formal education	Married	5	Christian	18 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Personal land	7 acres
WF9	43 years	No formal education	Widowed	4	Christian	12 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Personal land	3 acres
WF10	54 years	No formal education	Married	6	Islam	40 years	Subsistence/cash crop farming	Chief's land	25 acres

Source: Field Data, 2020

From Table 4.1, it was found that all the participants who took part in this study were mature, with the youngest being 27 years whilst the oldest was 65 years old.. This could suggest that these women are likely to have adequate understanding and experiences in relation to land grabbing in the community. These age differences play central role in shaping the power a woman wields in the household or community. This is because in patriarchal societies such as Diare, individuals who are young in terms of age are expected to greatly respect and honor those older without questioning or hesitation, and to submit to authority. With relations between men and women, when a woman is married to a husband who is relatively older than her, she is bound to obey, honour and submit to the authority of the older partner according to tradition. Thus, accounting for the differences in power (Langen, 2005).

Almost all the study participants according to the findings of the study had no formal education. Only one of the participants indicated that she had attained a senior high school education. Thus, the level of literacy amongst the women sampled for this study was very low. The lack of literacy amongst these women farmers within the community could have a negative impact on their understanding of laws on land ownership in Ghana. As a result, the effective documentation of their land ownership rights will be affected, making it easy for them to fall victims to land grabs since they might not have legal ownership or rights to the lands they work on. Also, the marital status of the sampled participants was diverse. This is because while most of the participants were married, few of them indicated that they were widowed with the least affirming to be single.

This clearly suggest that most of the women farmers who participated in this study are married women. This could mean that these category of women compared to their counterparts who are single and widowed, will have some form of assistance and support from their partners which might in turn reduce the impact of land grabs on their livelihood. Women in Diare community, as those other patriarchal societies in northern Ghana, gain access to resources such as land, through their husbands when they marry. The source of power for women to control resources are obtained from their husbands when they marry. Thus, the dominance of married women in this study means that such women are likely to have access to more power to control resources than their counterparts who are not married or widowed. However, this could as well imply that within the household, these married women must subordinate to the authority of their husbands, which in turn reduces their power.

The number of children of participants was ascertained. The findings indicate that the least number of children born to the participants was one (1) with the highest number of children being 8. It

could be deduced from the findings that the number of children born to women farmers in the community is very high. This could be attributed to the fact that their culture emphasizes children as both social (prestige) and economic (labour) assets, with the female children providing income to their parents through bride price and wealth. Yet, male children are more valued in the community compared to females due to the fact that in culture of the people of northern Ghana, patriarchal practices place much importance on male children since they will continue the lineage whilst females marry out (Adaawen and Owusu, 2013)..

The implication of this higher household dependence is that since these greater number of children depend on the farming activities of their mothers, facing land grabs could have dire consequences on the wellbeing of the family especially that of the children since their ability to access good education, health and feeding will be reduced drastically. The number of children born to these women and their husbands partly explains power differentials between them. For instance, women with more children as well as more male children have more power to participate in decision-making (through their male children) compared to their counterparts with no or less number of children.

According to existing studies, religion remains central to patriarchal practices (Lummis, 1992; Perales & Bouma, 2019; Preston, 2002). In describing religion as a structure facilitating patriarchy, Preston (2002) for instance posits that religion is reinforced using the superiority of males, with the walls and columns strengthened and thickened with male hegemony as well as male dominion and control used as a roofing structure. In Ghana, religion and religious ideologies reinforces cultural beliefs concerning the subservience of women, which contributes to the construction of patriarchal interpretations or beliefs that results in the marginalization of women (Bawa, 2019). Within the frame of gender power relations, religion contributes to the maintenance of a status quo which focuses on the patriarchal gender roles of women and men in society, this contributes to gender inequality and the oppression of females where women are expected to submit to men (Perales & Bouma, 2019). As a result, men are given more power than women in society. In affirming this, findings from this study showed that most of the women in this study were those with an Islamic background compared to the few, who are Christians. The higher experience of land grabbing experience by these women is due to the fact that the Islam is the dominant religion in Diare community in which patriarchy permeates religion by skewing the interpretation of religious texts such as the Quran and Hadith, in behaviours and customs that advances the entrenchment of male control and dominance over women and in turn helps in furthering and maintaining their exploitation through land grabs within their community.

The findings brought to light that the level of experience in farming amongst study participants is considerable. The participants have been involved in farming for a period of at least 9 years. This could mean that these women farmers will possess greater experiences from land grabs in their community, and greatly affected by the impact it has on their livelihood since their lands through their farming activities served as a major and reliable source of income to them and their households.

Almost all the participants who were interviewed explained that they are involved in both subsistence and commercial farming activities which specifically involved the planting and harvesting of cash crops such as sorghum, maize, rice, millet, shea nuts, and shea butter but only one of these participants revealed that she is into only cash crop farming. This explains that while the women farmers in the community work on their land to feed themselves and their families, they further engage in commercial farming to earn extra income. This could be attributed to increasing pressures on their limited income owing to the larger family size, which creates the need for additional income to be generated through commercial farming activities.

Findings from this study also revealed that most of the women who were included and interviewed in this study were not owners of the land they were farming on. Rather, they were farming mainly on the lands of their family, husbands, and that of chiefs in the community. Whilst only few owned the lands they were farming on. This reinforces the notion that as a matter of cultural tradition, women in farming communities where the basic property is land, do not own lands due to the patriarchal system (Akinola, 2018; Daley & Englert, 2010; Yokying & Lambrecht, 2019).

The size of land used by study participants for their farming activities was established. This was based on the notion that size of land lost could also determine the extent of the impact land grabs might have on these women. Findings show that the least size of land the women used for farming was 3 acres with the greatest size of land estimated to be 15 acres of land. These establishes that women farmers were making their earnings and livelihood from tracts of lands, which could earn them greater income seasonally. In this sense, when these tracts of lands are grabbed from them, it would mean that they would lose chunk of income which they could have used to make their livelihood and standard of living and that of their household better.

4.2 Incidences of Land Grabs amongst Women Farmers in the Daire Community.

The study explored participants' knowledge of land grabs. This is followed with experience of land grabs by women farmers while emphasizing on those who grabbed the land, notice evacuation and

eviction from the land, what happens to the farm produce, and whether the process was characterized by violence.

According to study participants, land grabbing could be considered as forcefully or persuasively taking lands of others away from the original owners of the lands. That is how all the participants explained land grabs with emphasis on forceful withdrawal of owners and workers on the land. WF7, a 45-year-old Christian widow woman with 11 years of experience in subsistence/cash crop farming in the community shared her understanding of land grab saying,

“It is when you are working on a land that is yours or given to you by your parents when they got old or before they died for you to work on and eat from it. But someone from nowhere comes to you and tell you that the land is his or hers and no matter what, he or she will take the land from you. That is what I know about it.” (WF7, Interview, August 2020)

Emphasizing on force, another woman who is a 65-year-old Muslim with 35 years of experience in farming explains land grabbing saying,

“ehhh. yes. It is when the land you are farming on is taking away from you by another person who says that land is his personal property or a property of his family. So, he makes sure that you stop working on the land so that he can use it for his own purpose.” (WF3, Interview August 2020)

A woman with 12 years of experience in farming on her personal land added her view on what land grab is. She said, “Yes I have heard of it before. In the news we always hear of people, land guards taking the lands of others especially those who are using it for building and other things...” (WF9, interview, August 2020). An official of the government who worked for one of the agencies in charge of land administration in the district conceptualized land grab while emphasizing on size and the purpose. According to him, land grabs are done mainly for development purposes. This was his argument,

“Okay, I consider land grabs as where you enter communities to take over lands for various development purposes. That is my understanding of what land grabs is. Okay, alright. So, well I would describe it as a practice where mostly the allodia owners or those who own the lands will give maybe tracts to estate developers or maybe to some other companies for various development.” (GO1, Interview, August 2020)

Reiterating on the purposes of land grabs, a traditional ruler in the district further stated that, “Yes I have heard of land grab in the district but basically most of the land acquisition was for farming rice, maize or maybe were planting particularly mango trees. He however argued that he personally does not consider taking other people’s lands as land grabbing. Especially when the person can identify the owner of the land and offer something in return for the land. He added saying,

“By the way, I will not call it land grabs in the sense that if you want a parcel of land, you just identify the owner of the land, if it is the sub-chief or if it is the paramount chief, you have to go with cola and tell them your intention, what you want to do with the land, if you want to farm and it is a virgin land. What you do is you have to go and see the owner, they would take you to place and you will tell them the area you need...” (C1, August 2020)

Similar to the ideas of Borras and Franco (2013), evidence from the findings above suggest land grabs involves the process of taking possession of a land from others by evicting them from the land, with others using the lands they grab for various purposes, which shares semblance with the findings that land grabbed are not left idle but used for biofuel production and food for export (Borras et al., 2011; Zoomers, 2010).

The occurrence and experience of land grabs by women involved in farming activities within the Diare Community in the district was also investigated in this study. Most of the women participants who were interviewed in this study revealed that they had been victims of land grabs. This according to participants involved lands that were personally theirs and those given to them by their forbearers. WF7, “...I engaged in farming with my husband in foods such as plantain, cassava, cocoyam and others. It got to a time, the farmland was taken from me and it was very sad...” (WF7 Interview, August 2020). In describing how it happened, she added that her land was forcefully taken from her saying, “...This is because your ‘hands have been held, squeezed’ to take the land you have been farming on and feeding from you...” (WF7 Interview, August 2020).

Another woman who had been involved in farming for 18 years narrated her ordeal with how her land was taken from her by land guards saying,

“Okay, we had a land full of sorghum, some years ago land guards came to our land to claim ownership of the land. They claim it is for someone and we are working on it. We had to leave the land for them because they kept on visiting the land.” (WF8, interview August 2020)

Her ordeal suggests that land guards are used in land grabs in Ghana. When this happens, the process of claiming the land is sometimes characterized by violence which is in the form of forceful ejection and eviction by intimidating the current occupants of the land.

This is what another participant, a widow who worked on a 3-acre land inherited from her father for 12 years,

“...For instance, my land has been grabbed before because I was a stepchild of my father. The family were saying that my dad is not my real father, and the family took the land. They said I can’t farm on it, so they took that land from us, from my husband and I.” (WF9, Interview, August 2020).

According to the interview data above, family members play key roles in land grabbing. As such, various reasons are used by members of the family of these women farmers to dispossess them of the land they are farming on. Also, 40-year-old married women reechoed the key role family members played in land grabs. She explained saying that the family members of her husband disposed her of the land she was working on with the explanation that she is not a direct relative to benefit from the family. This is what she had to say,

“Hmmm...the family of my husband one day came to me while I was working on his farmland and told me I am not a family member, so I have no right to work on it. So, from that time onwards I haven’t been able to use the land for my farming activities again.” (WF4, interview August 2020)

According to the findings of this study, land grab is characterized by a women farmer’s being ejected from their lands. Yet, in line with the assertion of Borras and Franco (2013), these land grabs are however not predominantly characterized by violence. The argument that women face numerous oppressions (Agarwal, 1994 cited in Park, 2019) was further support in this study. This is because it was identified from the findings that women farmers in the Diare community face various intimidations and harassments from land guards and family members of their husbands.

During these land grabs, it was further established that most of the participants, that is, women involved in various farming activities are given prior notice of eviction from the lands they are farming on. However, notice given them are for short periods which makes it impossible for them to move out of those lands. When this happens, they are usually not able to benefit from the crops they grow and expecting to harvest. A government official in the district explained this. He said,

“Where the developer once he is completed with the agreement with the allodial owner or the stool or the family head, he has a right to the land and therefore would employ some form of workers to build a wall or do some form of fencing. I do not think the notice is often for long periods usually, it is for short periods. Once they have the money to start developing, they start taking possession of the land and protects it.” (GO1, Interview, August 2020)

Other participants who were interviewed affirmed that they were given a short notice to evacuate the land. They shared their experiences saying,

“When they came my children, and I were working on the farm. And they said that the land is for them and that it was sold to them several years ago by a family member of ours, so we have no right to be working on it. All they said was we have just one week to evacuate from the land and left.” She further explained that they were threatened that if they do not take their crops out of the soil it will be destroyed. This is what she said, “...because we have planted crops on the land, we were trying to beg them to allow us stay on the land and harvest it. But at the end of the week, we came to meet the crops on the land destroyed.” (WF2, Interview, August 2020)

It could be deduced from the findings that while the women are being evacuated from the lands after it has been grabbed from them, they are usually provided shorter duration of time to do so regardless of the status of their crops or farming activities. Mainly, these crops end up being destroyed by those who grab the lands. This implies that the women had lost their inputs and the likely income that could have been generated from the crops they were farming.

4.3 Negotiations and Implementation of Land Deals, and Women Involvement

In line with the evidence that land grabbing deals and implementations are surrounded by negotiations (Behrman et al., 2012) and the absence of women's involvement in deals leading to the acquisition of their lands (Agbley, 2019), I ascertained women's involvement in such negotiations and implementation of land deals within the community of Diare in the Savalungu-Nanton district of northern Ghana. Upon asking participants whether there were negotiations before the lands were taken from them, most of the participants stated that there was no form of negotiations between themselves and the parties that were grabbing the lands, even though they were willing to engage in some form of negotiations. The major reason for the lack of women's involvement in land acquisition deals and implementation is that, in a typical northern patriarchal society such as Diare, women do not have exclusive rights regarding ownership and access to lands compared to men. As a result, they work on land culturally assigned to their male siblings and husbands. Hence, during negotiations, these women do not have a say regarding the sale of lands. While men's access to and ownership of land is based on his lineage membership, that of women is largely determined by their marital status.

During decision making in patriarchal societies in northern Ghana, of which Diare community is no exception, women are not actively involved in decision-making since they are expected to subordinate to males. This is what a participant, who is a single mother and a Muslim with 9 years of experience in farming had to say,

“They didn't go into any agreement with us. They come anytime they feel like disturbing and intimidating us and so we also had to leave and find an alternative so that we don't lose our lives because of the land.” (WF6, Interview, August 2020)

Another participant also explained emphasizing on being hopeful for a negotiation to take place,

“I was willing to negotiate with them so that they give me a portion of the land to farm on because I had nowhere going. Even if they will take money from me for me to pay in bits, I was willing to. But they never did. All they did was to tell me to leave the land and not farm on it again.” (WF9, interview, August 2020)

On the contrary, some of the participants who were interviewed confirmed that the parties grabbing the lands they were working on engaged them in some form of negotiations. These are what they said,

“we sat to talk. Because the land was not for them, But the old lady who gave me the land is no more [dead] so we had to sit and talk but to no avail. In the end, I told them that if he says the land is for him, then he should take it.” (WF7, Interview, August 2020)

“No, there were no negotiations between us.” Despite indicating that there were no negotiations between them, her words further suggested that the grabbers of the land allowed her to harvest her crops and sell before leaving the land, which is some form of negotiation. She added that, “The only thing they said was when your things are ready. My things were almost ready then so when you uproot your cassava and sell your cassava, you sell your plantain, the maize and everything, leave the land and do not farm on it again. That was the negotiation nothing else” (WF2, Interview, August 2020)

The above findings provide strong empirical evidence that peasant women are not involved in negotiations regarding land grabbing deals and implementation. This is partly due to the fact that Diare community is a patriarchal society which focuses on custodian rights which favored men than women, who only have user rights and not ownership rights over such lands (Boamah, 2014). These findings are consistent with the results of Agbley (2019) that women are not involved in negotiations which leads to the acquisition of their lands regardless of they being exposed to most of the impact of such dispossessions of lands.

Regardless of the findings pointing to the lack of involvement of women peasants in land grabbing deals in the Diare community, the study additionally reveals that class and status partly shape the involvement of these women during land negotiations and implementations. It was shown that husbands of these women as well as Queen mothers in the community represent these women in decision-making process regarding land negotiations.

Another participant explained further,

“well, if women are involved and they are involved from the. errhhh [thinking through] the larger unit. If I say the larger unit, if say a queen mother was part of a land allocation committee or some form of committee, they might be involved at that level. Erhhh...or the other places if the family head was instituted and a lady was part of the decision-making body. That is how they are involved. If they will be involved, they will be involved from the beginning where the negotiation starts. In some cases, they are not involved at the beginning but if the decision is going to affect them in anyway, they involved sometimes to find replacement plots for them or to let them understand that they are going to lose the land one way or the other

so they should start making alternatives arrangements.” (GO1, Interview, August 2020)

Evidentially, this means that in the absence of these representatives, with the culturally and patriarchal class and status, women are marginalized in land negotiations and deals. Hence, peasant widows, unmarried women, women with no male children and women who are not occupying any key traditional position, are more likely to be excluded from these negotiations since they do not have husbands, nor male children and do not occupy any key traditional position as required by culture.

Moreover, all the respondents sampled from the study stated that when they were ejected from the lands they were farming on, no compensations were provided to them. Even when their crops were destroyed. To prove this, one of the participants explained

“We were not compensated even when our crops and items on the land were destroyed by them.” (WF7, Interview, August 2020).

This is in line with the assertion that there is limited application of the human rights approach in land deals (Wisborg, 2013).

In attempts to understand why women are not involved in decision-making during land grab deals, it was noted that the domestic roles of women culturally defined for them by society, according to a traditional ruler, made it impossible for them to be involved. This is what he had to say,

“...the reason women are not involved in land deals is that women are supposed to take care of their home and not on the farm. It is just recent that some organizations are trying to bring women into land negotiations.” (C1, Interview, August 2020)

Also, the documentation of lands owned by these women are not done. When this happens, the women have no right to claim the land because they legally and customarily do not have land rights. This according to the government official, is a major reason why women are not involved in decisions and negotiations regarding their lands.

The above findings affirm that ideological and ethnic factors determine gender roles which shape the distribution of resources and responsibilities between men and women. While men are allowed to assume custodian roles over lands for farming purposes, women farmers on the other hand are predominantly excluded from any form of contracts since these women have no tenure security (Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO, 2011 cited in Akinola, 2018). There is the absence of participation and empowerment, i.e., the freedom to decide on matters affecting their lives and the right to influence socio-economic developments in their community (Alkire, 2002).

4.5 Underlying Power Relations that Shape Women's Exposure to Adverse Impacts of Land Grabbing

In Ghanaian societies which are predominantly patriarchal, the roles of women do not extend beyond marriage, bearing of children, nurturing children, keeping the home, and being sexually available for their husbands. This cultural system shapes the existence of gender inequality and associated social values, unequal power, roles and entitlements (Adusei-Asante et al., 2015; Sikweyiya et al., 2020). The patriarchal root of gender power relations was established in this study. Men and traditional leaders who wield cultural powers and are assigned key statuses in the community as prescribed by tradition, were found to spearhead land grabbing. These predominant gender power relations mainly result in men having exclusive ownership and rights over such lands and associated resources, which makes them determine the commodity status of lands, how women get to use lands, and how these peasant women are to use such lands. In line with this argument, C1, a local traditional ruler in the district provides an explanation of the existing gender relations. He said,

“The relationship is that women are brought to a home by a man so that man oversees the women. So, if there is land ownership, it is the men who talk about it. And even there are times where you that woman have to say something, but you cannot say it until you are alone with your husband. As a woman you feel you have to say something, but you are told to go into your room and you are not allowed to take part in the discussion.” In describing how this affects women’s ownership and control of land, he added and emphasized on the dominance of men saying, “the thing is that even if you are the first born of your father and you are a woman, you cannot have access to your own land. It is their junior brothers who can own those lands and discuss about land issues whilst you cannot. If they want lands, it is through their husbands they can get lands to farm on but cannot own lands.” (C1, Interview, August 2020)

The dominance of men over their female counterparts in the district when it comes to access to and control over lands was re-echoed by another participant who narrated,

“The thing is that in Ghana generally, there are no laws or rules that sort of stops women from ownership. It is just because of the patriarchal society that we have so usually it is the men who will go ahead and own property and for the women feed of it. So that is how the structure is and therefore women on their own usually are not industrious enough to go and enter transactions on their own without their husband’s involvement or lead. So that is how they are involved in forms of land ownership. Rarely, do you see women as the lead actors when it comes to land ownership and acquisition.” (GO1, Interview, August 2020)

This is what another woman said,

“Here, it is not like that. Our culture is different. You cannot own any property especially land even if it is for your father or you are the first born. Only the males can. I can only use the lands of my husband but cannot claim ownership” (WF1, interview August 2020)

Evidenced from the above findings is the fact that the patriarchal system limits the roles of women to the domestic domain, while that of men are extended to the economic domains of life. With this system especially in the Northern parts of Ghana (Kent, 2018) where this study was conducted, specifically Diare community, men draw on this patriarchal privileges to dominate and control resources as well as the women which contributes to the inability of women to own lands particularly for framing activities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2016; Sikweyiya et al., 2020). Thus, gender relations in the community occupies a central role in the daily activities of indigenes.

Regarding the influence of these gender relations on peasant women’s experiences of land grabs in the Diare community, available data from this study explains that because men are considered major owners and controllers of lands in the district, women have no say when decisions are made by the men to sell the lands. Thus, these women are guided by and tied to decisions made by their husbands, making them highly susceptible to land grabs,

“maybe because the men are the ones who virtually own the farm, so the women are just sources of appendages and assisting their husbands. If their husbands decide to go and sell the land and move off, the women naturally have to follow them and they themselves don’t have peculiar ownership. Have not gone for their ownership where they will determine if they want to continue the farming or not. Usually they are tied to their husbands. The decisions that he makes is what they will follow.” (GO1, interview, August 2020)

As this study brings to bear the role of gender power relations in land grabbing within the community, it is also worthy to note that men and traditional rulers, specifically chiefs, serve as the major source decision-makers who through their sole actions and authority, expose peasant women to land grabbing. In effect, this leads to women experiencing land grabbing more than peasant men.

These findings are consistent with the arguments of Lastarria-Cornhiel (1997) cited in Behrman et al. (2012) that privatizing lands results in lands being concentrated in the hands of persons who successfully can assume ownership including male heads of households and community leaders such as chiefs, usually to the disadvantage of poor rural women’s access and use rights. This is further in line with the power relations theory which informs this study and posits that men in the Diare community are agents who possess the capacity to impose their will on the powerless, i.e. women farmers. These men or husbands of these women farmers have the power to determine the ‘commodity’ status of land, resulting in lands the women farm on. These men have exclusive control and rights regarding its usage and redistributing when the need arises (McLuskie, 2009;

Verma, 2014). This results further shares semblance with that of Boamah (2014) that men especially chiefs, are customarily regarded as custodians of lands and within this cultural framework, actively serve as key actors in the making of land deals.

4.6 Gendered Impacts of Land Grabbing on Access, Use and Control of Land and Natural Resources in Diare Community

I investigated the gendered impact of land grabbing on the access, use and control of land and natural resources in the Diare community. This objective was achieved while highlighting differences according to marital status, number of children and age.

Differences in terms of the impact of land grabbing was identified amongst the women. Findings from this study explains that while the impact was generally negative for these women, food insecurity, inability to satisfy basic needs and economic insecurity were identified to be major impacts of land grabbing amongst single and widowed peasant women. However, married women emphasized greatly on economic security being the major impact of land grabbing on them. These differences were based on the fact that while married women had the support of their husbands in terms of the provision of basic amenities, the case of single and widowed women was different. They on the other hand lacked any form of assistance. Thereby resulting in a greater impact of land grabbing on them. Emphasizing on the impact land grabbing has on her livelihood and economic security, an interviewee, who had lost her husband indicated,

“my family and I depended on the land to make a living and it has been taken from us. My husband who could have supported me is also dead. So, I am not able to sustain my family financially.”

A single mother explained how land grabbing impacted on her ability to make a livelihood. She narrated,

“...it has affected me and my child a lot. Because when the land I worked on was taken from me, I could not farm to earn income on the produce I sell. And the child’s father who could have helped to provide us with money denied the pregnancy So, my family and I are struggling to make a living.”

Another widow explained how losing her husband and the land she farms on affected her. She recounted how having her land could have mediated the impact land grabbing has on her food security while stressing on the economic losses she incurred due to her investment in the room materials she bought for her farm,

“it affected me a lot because at that time, my husband was dead, and my land too has been taken away from me. Where will I go to and it resulted in me enraged. Because if you still had access to your land and you had a farm even when your

husband is dead, you could work and bring home food to feed your children. Which means you have received 'two slaps' unaware so you are angry...If your land is taken from you, before God, it is not easy at all. It has been taken from you, you were not given any money and the husband you live with is also dead, it is very disturbing. How it affected me was that I was having a farmland." She further explained how she is economically affected by her lands taken from her, "For example, you have invested your money into the farming, you have bought seeds, cassava sticks/stalks and you have bought all the needed materials and equipment to plant them. Knowing perfectly well that this land is mine, so I am working on it to feed my family. Then suddenly someone forcefully takes the land from you that it is for him or her. When you were about beginning the farming the person never said that land is his but after working on it and growing all the crops then the person comes claiming ownership of the land. When this happens, it is frustrating, and disturbing."

On the other hand, some of the married women argued that because her land was taken from her, their economic security was affected.

"I am engaged in farming, but the income isn't coming as it should be, so I am not able to financially support my husband."

Further emphasizing on economic insecurity due to land grabbing, a woman further re-echoed,

"...even though we had other places, it reduced our income annually because the land that was taken the money that was from there..." she added by explaining how she and her husband's ongoing accommodation/building under construction is affected by the land taken from her, "my husband and I were building a house but we couldn't get enough money to continue. It had to be on hold for some time before we were able to continue the house."

Also, the number of children accounted for differences in the impact land grabbing has on these women. While those with more children found it difficult to mitigate hunger in their household, the situation was different for those with fewer children. This is because having more children increases the household dependence amongst these women, making it difficult for them to be catered for. A woman with 5 children indicated,

"I am finding it difficult catering for the needs of my family. It is because I am not currently earning any income after my land was taken."

An interviewee who is a mother to 6 children also said,

"it is not easy at all for me. I have all these children; I am not able to take care of them since there is no money."

Yet, it was noted that women with fewer children had little problem taking care of their children as suggested by their responses. A woman with 3 children explained,

"it has not been easy after my land was taken from me by the people. But I am able to manage to take care of my children through the few monies i gain. So, by God's grace I can take care of my children. they are my priority."

Another interviewee with 4 children also stated,

“when we were on the previous land, we were able to feed and pay our children’s school fees. But due to the land grab I was not able to perform such duties. I had a dream to do something but because of the land grab I couldn’t fulfill that dream.”

In terms of age, the results suggest that older women suffered more compared to relatively younger women in the community due to land grabbing.

According to another who is 60 years,

“I am not able to feed my family. I cannot go and find another job because I am growing old. As a result, my family and I are really struggling now to eat.”

Relatively younger women who participated in this study however shared a contradicting experience from land grabbing. While the older women could not provide for their family, probably because of their deteriorating strength which prevents them from getting other jobs, the younger women were able to cater for themselves and their family. They said,

“I was affected when the land I was farming on was taken from me. But currently I am able to find a job that provides me with a sizeable income.” (35 years old); “I am into some small trade so despite the impact on my livelihood, the effect isn’t too much for me. I am managing to take care of my family.” (40 years old).

These differences in terms of the impact land grabbing has on women peasants in the Diare community depicts a situation where even though women suffered from land grabbing the most, the impact was not homogenous across the diverse categories of women. This is because while some women (married women) had husbands, who are culturally regarded as custodians of lands and associated natural resources available to provide support to them, other women without husbands are materially disadvantaged from having access to similar support, following the absence or demise of their husbands.

This suggest that once the husband who provide kinship ties to these women die, the connection to the husband’s family is broken and these women are left to survive on their own without assistance of any form provided to them. The number of children born to these women further exacerbated the impact land grabbing has on them. This is because women with more children were found to suffer greatly due to the high dependence and the absence of a partner to provide support compared to their counter parts with relatively fewer children. Age differences amongst these women further accounted for diversity in how land grabbing impacted on the women. Thus, compared to relatively younger women, older women had difficulty in accessing other forms of

occupation due to their age. This resulted in the impact deepening for these age categories of women.

It is essential to note that the marital status, number of children and age of these women do not work in isolation but interacts to shape the impact of land grabbing on the women. Thus, the socio-economic status of these women shape their experiences regarding the impact of land grabbing (Daley & Pallas, 2014).

Scholars such as Behrman et al. (2012) argues that there could be positive transformation from land deals that provides women with new prospects, yet, women and their families regardless of incomes gains to men, are affected when resources are taken from them by resulting in a reduction in their welfare. The diverse positive and negative effects of land grabs on the welfare of women farmers is corroborated by a participant who is a public official of the government in charge of land administration adds,

“the negative seems to be more pronounced than the positives. One, if they do farm on the lands and the land goes, they have lost a livelihood. They have to now retool to other forms of maybe less sustainable forms of livelihood like table-top businesses because they don’t have the capital. Even for the positives where they sell it and they get compensation for it, how much errhhh...how experienced are they or how much knowledge do they have to be able to enter into other forms of more productive forms of businesses so that they could sustain their livelihoods. Usually when they get these compensations, not a longer time, the money is gone, or they are not able to do any other form of sustainable business to sustain them.”

While the impact on women’s access to, and control of land and natural resources have largely been confirmed to be negative, it was further established that men, especially husbands and relatives of these women are not greatly affected by lands taken from the women. This is because they form part of the negotiation process that results in women’s dispossession of land rights since they stand to gain some income. This is what a participant, a traditional leader in the district has to say:

“when the lands are taken from the women who farm on them to earn a living, they suffer the most because their children normally depend on them for survival and not their husbands or male relatives who have exclusive access and control over these lands. But the picture is clear that these women suffer more than their husbands. You don’t expect them to suffer the same as women when they are mostly part of the negotiations that see to it that women’s access to the lands are taken away without adequate compensations.”

These findings suggest the impacts of land grabs are experienced differently by men and women. That is, there are gendered implications of land grabs within the district of Savelugu-Nanton and Diare community to be specific. According to the findings, the absence of capital makes it difficult for them to retool themselves in the search for alternative livelihood. As a result, the sustainability of alternative means of livelihood becomes questionable since these women either lack or have

insufficient compensations to help them adjust to their new trades. The inability of these women aside monetary or capital constraints was also found to be curtailed by their inexperienced skill or knowledge in other productive forms of businesses. This results in unsustainable livelihoods. The dominance of males over these women as well results in a gendered implication of land grabbing on these women peasants since the men assume active roles in negotiation for the sale of the lands that leaves the women landless. The men who claim to stand for their interest tend to advance their personal interest and gains in the process, making it difficult for the women to satisfy the needs and livelihood of their highly dependent households. This increases the effects the women experience from land grabbing in the community (Yengoh et al., 2015).

4.7 Reactions and Coping Strategies Used by Different Categories of Women Affected by Land Grabbing

This study provides an understanding of how these women farmers react and cope after their lands have been taken from them, and with the associated impacts on livelihood of their household.

Women farmers were identified as using numerous coping strategies. For example, most of these women were found to rely on members of their social network to access help. As a result, friends of these women provided assistance and social support to them which include financial assistance and facilitated access to information regarding the location of land while some provided lands for the women to work on in order to gain income and feed their families. Recounting how friends provided various social and economic supports to the participant, she said,

“After we were asked to leave the land, a friend who attends the same church with me and who has her land not taken from her by then, asked me to come and help her on her farmland so that I could also earn some income to feed my children and take care of them.”

Another peasant woman reechoed,

“I was idle for some months while a friend was helping me search for another land. So after he had seen a land, he even helped me in partly paying for the land with some support from my church, so that I can work on it and earn some income to cater for myself and my family.”

This was affirmed by a Muslim woman who's relative helped her seeking alternative means of livelihood,

“when it happened, my senior sister was supporting me financially and later helped me get another business.”

These findings throw light on the usefulness of informal social ties and networks (friends, relatives, religious groups) of these women. These networks and ties facilitate these women's access to various alternative sources of livelihood to help them cope with the impact land grabbing has on their livelihood and the negative experiences due to land grabbing. While those women who are Christians were observed to have obtained support from their friends and church members, their Muslim counterparts on the other hand received support from their relatives. These informal ties and networks according to this study, served as a source of having access to both natural resource (land) and financial resource which eased their adjustments to life after their lands were taken from them, and to help earn a livelihood. While, Boamah and Overå (2016) argues that social network plays a central role in land access and negotiation even not for all farmers, the current study however suggested that social networks of these women did not only facilitate their access to alternative but also served as a source of capital and financial support for the women to engage in alternative forms of livelihood.

Findings from this study also brought to light that some women had to actively search alternative lands and purchased them so that they could farm on to earn an income. One of them said,

“we had to hire a place to farm and by the grace of God, things are getting better for us.” Another also added, “...we had other places that we were farming that help us. Seriously that helped us if not we wouldn’t have known how to go about it...”

Another participant explained how she coped from reengaging in farming while simultaneously involved in another trade to cope with her situation,

“...When it happened, I had to look elsewhere for another land to work on and sell some items in bit by bit so that my children and I will be able to feed. Because even with the land when you plant the crops it does not grow into food immediately, it takes time before you are able to earn from that. So, it meant I had to find another work to do till the land and farm I have started working on at fresh begins to harvest.”

The findings above find a strong support for the assertion of the sustainable rural livelihood approach used in this study as a theoretical framework to understand the coping strategies of women farmers in the Diare community in the Savelugu-Nanton District of Northern Ghana. In line with the SRLA, the livelihood of women farmers could be concluded to be sustainable since they were able to access physical resources, especially land and financial resources which enable them to recover from shocks emanating from their lands taken from them (Serrat, 2017). This further corroborates that of Hamenoo et al. (2018) who found that reductions in the size of farmlands due to land grabs resulted in the use of varied coping mechanism such as application of

fertilizers, all year round cropping, and petty trading to support the income of the household and to ensure that sustainable wellbeing and livelihood.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

This Research paper examined the gendered impacts of land grabbing for rural women in the Diare community of the Savelugu-Nanton District in the Northern region of Ghana. The study has also explored and unpacked how different categories of women differentiated by class, age, sex, marital status is involved in the negotiation and implementation of land deals in the Diare community. The study sought to provide contextual answers to questions relating to how women have been involved in the negotiation of land deals in the Diare community, what are gendered impacts of land grabbing on access, use and control of land and other natural resources, what underlying gender power relations shape women's exposure to the adverse impacts of land grabbing and, what are the reactions and coping strategies of different women affected by land grabbing.

In the study, I define land grabbing as land contestations and dispossessions at a local level, which involves local elite and male capture of land resource and gendered contestation over access, control, and ownership of Land. As shown in this study, Land grabbing has been widespread in the Daire community, and women have particularly been differentially affected by the land grabbing, at times taking place in the name of 'development'. Women peasants who are the focus of this study were found to have been victims of land grabbing where lands they owned and those given to them by their forefathers were taken from them by various actors, mainly perpetuated by family members or relatives ,and outsiders who are usually land guards by intimidating and forcefully dispossessing the women.

As these findings indicate prior to the land of women being taken from them, there are usually absence of consultation and involvement of women in such deal's rests on patriarchal norms within the Diare community. Due to this, men are the ones negotiating on behalf of women in situations involving land issues.

The findings further show that the involvement in and consultation about land deals were largely determined by class and status. Traditionally, community leaders such as queen mothers and husbands of women are made to represent the women in the decision-making process and negotiation regarding land deals. Women who are widows and have sons are represented by their sons during such negotiation in land deals. Thus, women who come from less privileged or disadvantaged social groups, including those without sons and widows, are more likely not to be consulted and have any form of inclusion in land-related negotiations within the Diare community.

Again, the study's findings brought to light women are not compensated for the lands taken from them. The underlying power relations that shape women's exposure to adverse impact of land grabbing within the Diare community were found to be rooted in patriarchy. Accordingly, land grabbing is found to be spearheaded by traditional leaders such as chiefs. The study also reveals that the traditional gender power relations in Diare tend to subject women to subordinate roles while providing men exclusive rights over access and control of lands.

In this sense, men, and most importantly local chiefs, are sole decision-makers whose actions and authority facilitate land grabbing. Thus, the will of men and traditional rulers are imposed on the women when it comes to land deals.

Moreover, the study investigated how gendered the impact of land grabbing on access, use and control of land and natural resource in the community is. This intended to highlight the difference that exist in terms of women's marital, status, number of children, and age. Evidence shows that while all the women suffered negatively from land grabbing, widowed and single women peasants were identified to have their ability to meet their basic needs, economic security (finances), and food security impacted on negatively. On the other hand, married women had their economic security (finances) negatively affected. This concludes that women who are widows and single without support from a male, especially husbands, suffered more from land grabbing compared to their married counterparts. Also, women with more children were found to have experienced profound impacts compared to those with fewer number of children. This is because of the higher dependence of the children on the women. And the wellbeing, educational aspirations and needs of these children are thwarted by land grabbing. As well, the ages of the women accounted for the diverse experiences in the impact of land grabbing on the women. While older women face difficulties in finding alternative source of livelihoods due to their age, which deepens the impact land grabbing has on them and their household, younger women were found to have the opportunity to access other alternative livelihoods. Yet, these characteristics (marital status, number of children, age) are concluded to be intertwined in shaping the impact of land grabbing on the women. Men by virtue of their dominant position in society due to patriarchy puts them in an advantaged position over women since they assume active role in land related negotiations and deals and thus, are less or not affected by land grabbing compared to women in Diare community.

Furthermore, the study explored how different women who are affected by land grabbing react and cope. Most of the women were found to have gained support from their networks (relative, friends and religious groups) which include financial assistance, facilitated access to information concerning location of lands or provision of lands to the women to work on. While the Christian women had support mainly from their friends and religious groups, their Muslim counterparts on

the other hand mainly received support for their relatives to cope with the impact of the land grabbing. Also, the women actively searched for alternative forms of livelihood like the table-top business to earn income to support their livelihood.

Overall, the implication of land grabbing for the livelihood of socially differentiated Diare community appear to be far more complex, in which women are differentially affected as their lives and livelihoods are particularly affected and transformed in profound ways. Intersecting with existing patriarchal gender relations, land grabbing in the community appears to further exclude and marginalize women from access, control and transfer of lands and other natural resource.

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Appendix 1: Data Collection Instruments

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WOMEN

This interview is part of an MA. Research in Development Studies majoring in Agrarian Food and Environmental studies in the International Institute of Social Studies, which explores how rural women, their lives and livelihoods have been affected and transformed due to land grabs in this district. Thank you for accepting to participate in this research. I want to assure you that any discussion that we have is not focused on proving or disproving right or wrong answers because I believe that you are the expert in your field of trade and you know much about how land grabs has transformed your life. Therefore, I would like to hear them all. All the interviews will be audio recorded and brief notes will be taken on the discussion with you for the purpose of clarity and later review to get the ideas and opinions you conveyed clearly as I follow the discussions. I would like to assure you at this point that information you provide during this interview will be treated as confidential. However, should you, at any point during this interview feel the need or desire not to carry on; you have the right to do so without any consequences to you, occupation, or reputation. Please are there any objections, questions, or information for me before this interview begins?

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Women Farmers

1. Can you please tell me about yourself? (Probe for: Age, level of education, marital status, number of children, type of farming activity, duration/years of involvement in farming, income earned, land ownership status)

Incidence of Land Grabs amongst Women Farmers

2. Have you ever heard of land acquisition? If yes, in your own view, what is land acquisition?
3. Has the land you use in farming ever been taken from you by any persons, group, or company? If yes, can you please describe to me how it all happened as well as your experiences with land grabs? (Probe to know: those who grabbed their lands from them, type of land acquisition, whether they were given notice of evacuation and eviction, what happened to their farm produce and items, their reactions, was the process characterised by violence or not and the type of violence)

Women Farmer's Involvement in the Negotiation and Implementation of Land Deals

4. As a landowner or user for farming activities, were there any negotiations before the land was taken from you? If yes, who were those who negotiated the whole process before the land was taken from you?

5. Were you involved in the negotiation processes that resulted in your land taken from you? If yes, how were you in the process (in person or through a representative)? At what stage of the negotiation process were you involved?

6. If yes, how long did you negotiate with the parties involved in the negotiation process before the land was finally taken from you? What were the conditions or terms of agreements in the negotiation process?

7. If you were not involved in the negotiation process, why do you think you were not involved in the negotiation processes? (Probe for all the reasons)

Underlying Power Relations that Shape Women's Exposure to Land Grabs

8. In your own view, how would you describe the relationship between men and women in your community (gender relations)? Is land ownership in your community affected by these gendered relations? If yes, how does it shape women's access to and ownership of lands, especially farmlands?

9. How do these relationships between men and women in your community contribute to the lands of women farmers being taken from them?

10. Who are the other powerful actors who contribute to decisions on land acquisition in your community? (Probe for the various powerful actors and their various roles in land Acquisition faced by women farmers).

Contribution of Land Grabs to Conflicts Within Households of Women Farmers

11. Have there been instances where conflicts have resulted from decisions regarding land grabs and, land grabs in your household? If yes, how did it result in conflict and, who were the conflicting parties?

Effect of Land Grabs on the Livelihood of Women Farmers

12. Were you compensated after your land(s) were taken from you? If yes, how were you compensated and, by who? (Probe for various compensations provided to the women if any)

13. How did the compensation provided to you affect your livelihood? (Probe for economic, social, etc effects on women's livelihood)

14. Have you experienced any negative effect on your livelihood due to the land(s) taken from you? If yes, can you please share with me the how land grab negatively affected your livelihood?

15. How has your household been affected by the land grabs you experienced?
16. Do you get access to other communal lands and natural resources like streams ,bole holes and rivers for water, forest for firewood, medicinal plants, shea butter and charcoal after your lands have been taken away from you, If yes how?

Reactions and Coping Strategies Used by Women Farmers to Cope with the Impact of Land Grabs

17. Can you please share with me how you make a living or survive after your land(s) were taken from you? (Probe to know the various means women farmers made a livelihood.)
18. How have you been coping with the impact of land grabs on you and your household?
19. What measures have been put in place to help government and other agencies to help you cope with the impact land Acquisition has on you and your household?

Exiting Question

20. Is there any other thing regarding land Acquisition and its impact on you that will be helpful to this researcher but have not been asked by me?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

This interview is part of an MA. Research in Development Studies majoring in Agrarian Food and Environmental studies in the International Institute of Social Studies, which explores how rural women, their lives and livelihoods have been affected and transformed due to land grabs in this district. Thank you for accepting to participate in this research. I want to assure you that any discussion that we have is not focused on proving or disproving right or wrong answers because I believe that you are the expert in your field of occupation and you know much about how land grabs in the district. Therefore, I would like to hear them all. All the interviews will be audio recorded and brief notes will be taken on the discussion with you for the purpose of clarity and later review to get the ideas and opinions you conveyed clearly as I follow the discussions. I would like to assure you at this point that information you provide during this interview will be treated as confidential. However, should you, at any point during this interview feel the need or desire not to carry on; you have the right to do so without any consequences to your person, occupation, or reputation. Please are there any objections, questions, or information for me before this interview begins?

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Women Farmers

1. Can you please tell me about yourself? (Probe for: Age, level of education, religion, marital status, position in the community/organization, duration/years living in the community/working in the organization)

Incidence of Land Grabs amongst Women Farmers

2. Have you ever heard of land grabs? If yes, what do you consider as land grab?

3. How would you describe the occurrence of land grabs in this community/district? Who are those involved in land grabs? (Probe to know: those who grabbed their lands from them, type of land grab, whether they give women prior notice of evacuation and eviction from the lands, what happens to farm produce and items on the land, their reactions, whether it was characterized by violence)

Women Farmer's Involvement in the Negotiation and Implementation of Land Deals

4. Are there any negotiations during land grabs? If yes, how are the negotiations done? (Probe for: those involved in the negotiation during land grabs, terms of conditions/agreements of the negotiations, are women involved, how are they involved and, at what stage are they involved)
5. Why are women farmers not involved in the negotiation process, if No? (Probe for all the reasons)

Underlying Power Relations that Shape Women's Exposure to Land Grabs

6. How would you describe the relationship between men and women in your community (gender relations)? Is land ownership in your community affected by these gendered relations? If yes, how does it shape women's access to and ownership of lands?
7. How do these relationships between men and women in your community contribute to the lands of women farmers being taken from them?
8. Who are the other powerful actors who contribute to decisions on land grabs in your community? (Probe for the various powerful actors and their various roles in land grabs).

Effect of Land Grabs on the Livelihood of Women Farmers

9. Are the women compensated after their lands have been taken from them? If yes, how are they compensated and who provided the compensation? (Probe for various compensations provided to the women)
10. In your own view, how does land grab affect the livelihood of women and their household? (Probe for both negative and positive effects on women's livelihood)

Exiting Question

11. Is there any other thing regarding land grabs and its impact on you that will be helpful to this researcher but have not been asked by me?

Thank You for your cooperation.