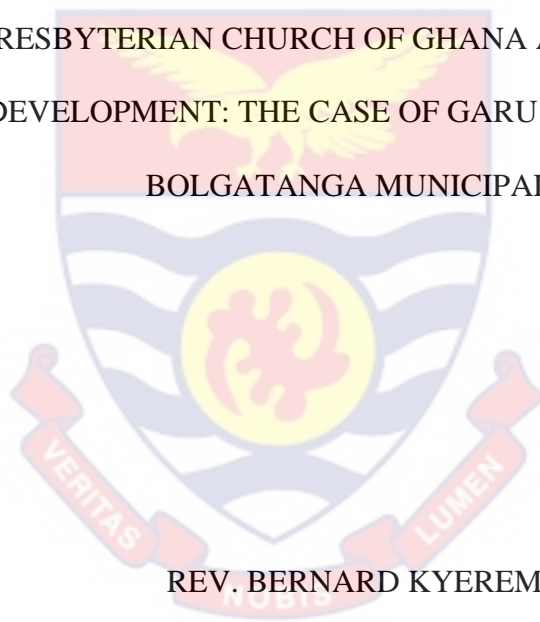


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA AND REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF GARU DISTRICT AND  
BOLGATANGA MUNICIPALITY



REV. BERNARD KYEREMEH



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University of Cape Coast

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT:  
THE CASE OF GARU DISTRICT AND BOLGATANGA MUNICIPALITY

BY

REV. BERNARD KYEREMEH

A thesis submitted to the Department of Geography and Regional Planning of the  
Faculty of Social Sciences, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University  
of Cape Coast in partial fulfilment for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Geography and Regional Planning

2025

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:.....Date:.....

Name: Rev. Bernard Kyeremeh

### Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Prof. Barima Kwabena Antwi

Co-Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Prof. Collins Adjei Mensah

## ABSTRACT

Globally, churches are well recognised for their charitable works to improve the living conditions in communities. This study assessed the role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) in regional development within the Upper East Region, focusing specifically on the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality as case studies. Relying on pragmatist research philosophy and employing a mixed methods approach the study covered a survey of 802 respondents for quantitative data and purposive sampling of 19 key informants for qualitative data. The findings revealed that the spatial distribution of PCG projects is strategically aligned with both urban and rural needs, with higher community awareness and engagement observed in Garu District. Economic indicators demonstrated moderate to high impacts on income generation, particularly in Bolgatanga, while asset ownership and access to resources remain uneven. Social development indicators highlighted significant improvements in healthcare and education, yet pointed out ongoing challenges such as inadequate housing and water access. The study also uncovered distinct perceptions of the PCG's role, with Garu District residents recognizing the Church as a crucial stakeholder in development, unlike their counterparts in Bolgatanga Municipality, where visibility and impact were less acknowledged. The findings emphasize the interdependence of social and economic development and advocates for tailored interventions that address regional disparities.

**Keywords:**

Community Engagement

Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG)

Regional Development

Socio-economic Impact

Sustainable Development.

## DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this work to my FATHER, Mr. Stephen Kyeremeh, Dormaa - Ahenkro

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

1D1F	One District One Factory
ARB	Agricultural Rehabilitation for the Blind
CBQR	Community-Based Qualitative Research
CBR	Community-Based Rehabilitation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
ESIAs	Environmental and social impact assessments
FSHS	Free Senior High School
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GoG	Government of Ghana
GSDA	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
LED	Local Economic Development
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MASLOC	Micro Finance and Small Loan Centre
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
NABCO	National Builders Corp
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NEIP	National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme
NFAIP	National Food and Agricultural Investment Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental organisations

NLC	National Liberation Council
NORRIP	Northern Regional Integrated Development Programme
NRC	National Redemption Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFY	Operation Feed Yourself
PCBR	Presbyterian Community Based Rehabilitation
PCG	Presbyterian Church of Ghana
PFJ	Planting for Food and Agriculture
PP	Progress Party
PWD	Persons with Disability
RCCG	Redeemed Christian Church of God
SADAP	Savannah Accelerated Development Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STI	Science Technology and Innovation
UDS	University for Development Studies
UN	United Nations
URADEP	Upper Regional Agricultural Development Programme
WCC	World Council of Churches
WHO	World Health Organisation
YAFP	Youth in Afforestation Programme
YEA	Youth Employment Agency
YiAP	Youth in Agricultural Development

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background to the study**

Development, as a multifaceted concept, is often shaped by various actors, including governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and religious institutions. Religion, in its diverse forms, has historically played a crucial role in shaping the moral, social, and economic landscapes of societies. Across different religious traditions, development is perceived not only as economic growth but also as a holistic process involving social justice, human dignity, environmental stewardship, and moral transformation. Religious organizations, through their faith-driven mandates, actively contribute to development by providing education, healthcare, humanitarian aid, and advocacy for marginalized groups.

Christianity, Islam, and traditional African religions, which are dominant in Ghana, all emphasize the well-being of individuals and communities, albeit through different frameworks. Islam, for instance, integrates development within the concept of social justice (Zakat and Sadaqah), which encourages wealth redistribution and poverty alleviation. Traditional African religions, deeply rooted in communalism and environmental consciousness, promote social harmony and sustainable resource use. Christianity, particularly through its various denominations, has been instrumental in development by establishing schools, hospitals, and social welfare programs. Among the Christian denominations, the

Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) stands out for its structured and institutionalized approach to regional development.

In developing economies of the world, especially in Africa and Latin America, the developmental roles of Churches as major institutional pillars for development, being country-specific and capacity in regional and sustainable development cannot be underestimated (OECD Report, 2022). Following the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in Ghana, the active role of religious institutions regarding the Catholic Church, Methodist Church, Ghana, Pentecostal, and Charismatic Churches as well as the Presbyterian Church of Ghana cannot be underrated as an effective developmental partner to the state (Peace. Fm, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020).

Faith-Inspired Organizations (FIOs) such as the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) engage in development initiatives that are deeply embedded in their religious values and theological paradigms. The Presbyterian Church, known for its emphasis on education, discipline, and service, has significantly contributed to national and regional development in Ghana. Rooted in the principles of Calvinist ethics, the Church promotes hard work, integrity, and social responsibility as essential components of development. This theological orientation has influenced the establishment of mission schools, hospitals, agricultural projects, and social intervention programs in various parts of the country, including the Upper East Region.

Christians and the church are tasked with representing God's kingdom with honesty and fairness in the world, a task that has far-reaching implications for how

the church functions globally (Nkansah-Obrempong, 2018). It is widely held that Christians can help the poor improve their standard of living through collaborations between local religious organizations and community members to identify problems, whether material or spiritual and lead to development efforts (Pirnazarov, 2021). With religion at the centre of values and beliefs that steer society, the church projects an imposing, passionate image that recognizes and binds people together despite widespread hostility (Zanfrini, 2020). It is no secret that the media and academic institutions are epicentres of debate over the position of religion in modern society (Gearon, 2021). The question of the Christian's place in society is perennial, as are discussions of evangelism and the social responsibility of the church mission (Nkansah-Obrempong, 2018). According to Chankseliani et al. (2021), individuals sometimes question the role of development without the interference of religion. Kpobi and Swartz (2018) indicated in their report that the Christian church in Africa has experienced remarkable growth, just like other religions. There is no denying religion's importance in Africa, where over 65% of the population is Christian (Barnard & Mamabolo, 2022). Africans put their faith in Christianity, and the rest of the world believes that it can help raise the living standards of the poor. Both facts highlight the importance of taking a holistic approach to development that takes the Christian religion into account (Malone & Dadswell, 2018).

The evangelization mission of the Presbyterian Church is driven by development theories such as liberation theology, social capital theory, and human development theory. Liberation theology emphasizes social justice and

empowerment of the poor, aligning with the Church's mission to uplift marginalized communities. Social capital theory underscores the importance of faith-based networks in fostering social cohesion and community development. Human development theory, which focuses on enhancing capabilities, informs the Church's commitment to education, healthcare, and economic empowerment. In Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality, as well as across Ghana, the Presbyterian Church has led various initiatives to address poverty, education, and healthcare. It has established schools to improve literacy rates, vocational training centers to enhance employability, and health facilities to provide quality medical services, particularly in underserved areas. Additionally, the Church has implemented agricultural and microfinance programs to support economic sustainability, demonstrating a faith-driven approach to holistic development.

In reality, community development is a dynamic and professionally run system that receives backing from a wide variety of institutions and individuals (Henderson & Verseg, 2010). The church is one such institution that has a strong presence in many different nations and cultures, especially in Africa. According to Tomalin (2018), the church treats spiritual topics seriously and views growth as more than a merely secular process. The church's mission is to promote spiritual and human values as a basis for societal and economic progress. Sustainable development aims to improve society in three ways: economically, socially, and environmentally (Kim, 2020). Taking part in community activities and community efforts under the guidance of a development worker is central to community development practice, as stated by Kariuki (2018). Moreover, churches, mission



hospitals, dispensaries, theological institutions, orphanages, refugee camps, organized campaigns, and mobilizations are all examples of the work that non-governmental organizations do (Tomalin, 2018). De Temple (2012) argues that our modern world is a product of a development process with a foundation in Christian principles (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020).

Sustainable assistance is at the heart of community development, as is the provision of resources to the marginalized. Governments, NGOs, charities, philanthropic individuals, religious groups, and for-profit enterprises are but some of the many potential sources of such aid (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020). Like religion, development is about doing what needs to be done and getting people to do it to achieve the desired result (Campbell & Evolvi, 2020).

### **Problem Statement**

The fundamental role of religious and other faith-based organizations in community development cannot be overlooked. Their provision of health, social and educational services to their host community and the region at large cannot be overlooked (Greenberg, 2021). In Ghana, the role of religious groups is unabated as they played a significant role in communities offering spiritual guidance and support to individuals and families. With Ghana's first contact with Christianity dating as far back as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, their support and contribution to propagating the gospel and offering help to the host community cannot be overlooked. The Salvation Army, Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Pentecostal among other faith groups have added their quota to the development of localities in which they

find themselves. Recognizing the challenges faced by the indigenes, they provide social and economic support through education, health, and poverty alleviation programs. These programs have over the years added up to the government's aim to solve some of these pressing issues throughout the nation. The actions of religious organizations such as churches, have over the years aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals that have been instituted to ensure the general growth of regions.

Northern Ghana, especially the Upper East region is a region with a rich cultural heritage and a strong sense of community. The region has made significant progress in recent years and has a growing reputation for its positive level of development (Awumbila & Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2008). One of the most significant contributors to the positive level of development in the region is the region's growing economy with a focus on agriculture and tourism (Al-Hassan & Poulton, 2009; Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). Regardless of the successes of the region, they are faced with significant development challenges that are hindering its developmental progress and the impact on the lives of people in the region. Their level of growth and development as compared to some regions in the country, especially the Greater Accra region is significantly different such that there is uneven growth and development. This according to Kaldor (1970) is a regional problem. He defined the term as a situation where some regions grow and develop relatively faster than others. This singular action gives rise to inequalities among regions of the country. This goes against the 10<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Development Goal which comments on Reduced inequalities.

In the work of Sowah, Tetteh, and Asante (2021), they assert that inequality has a multiplicity of causes, dominant among them the inequitable nature of the development process itself. Beyond a particular threshold, inequality can pose problems for social cohesion and political stability, which in turn tends to negatively influence the quality-of-life measures, such as health, education, and public safety (Acemoglu and Robinson 2002; Muntaner and Lynch 1999; Russett 1964). Just as observed in the Upper East region, the high levels of unemployment, limited access to essential services, and limited economic opportunities have resulted in many people in the region living in poverty (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018; Yaro et al., 2015). These continue to have detrimental impacts on their quality of life and are limiting their ability to participate in and contribute to the development of their communities (Songsore, 2017; Teye & Awumbila, 2016). Though some regional developmental programs such as Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), Savannah Accelerated Development Program (SADAP), and Free Maternity Care among others have been instituted to address some regional problems, they seem not to solve the challenges of inequalities within the region (Abdulai & Hulme, 2015; Ayee, 2013; Cooke et al., 2016).

Various studies (Dickson, 1968; Landouceur, 1979; Abdulai, 2012; Abdulai and Hulme, 2014) on regional inequality in Ghana appear to have addressed in detail the origins of the regional uneven development in Ghana, yet they fall short of exploring why regional development policies have been ineffective at addressing the regional problem such as inequality. Similarly, a study conducted by Mohammed (2018) revealed that some of the government's programs in addressing

the challenge of inequality, the Savannah Accelerated Development Program, had been ineffective at transforming the economy of the Northern Savannah Ecological Zone. Faced with several challenges, some of these programs suffered political instability, poor leadership, and above all poor partnership with the locals thereby leading to their failure. According to the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC, 2005), a policy framework in 2003 called Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy that sought to pursue poverty reduction and human development while striving to maintain macroeconomic stability was instituted in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, this growth was not sufficient to address the underlying causes of economic vulnerability and inequality (NDPC 2005).

To this end, it appears the Upper East Region of Ghana faces significant developmental challenges, including poverty, limited access to quality education and healthcare, and inadequate infrastructure. While government interventions have played a role in addressing these issues, faith-based organizations, particularly the Presbyterian Church, have historically contributed to regional development through education, healthcare, social services, and community empowerment programs. However, there is limited empirical research on the extent and effectiveness of the Church's role in driving sustainable development in the region. This study seeks to fill this gap by assessing the impact of the Presbyterian Church's initiatives in the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality, examining their contributions to education, health, economic empowerment, and social cohesion. Understanding the Church's role in regional development is crucial for informing

policy, strengthening partnerships between religious institutions and government agencies, and enhancing community-led development strategies. The output can therefore inform the church on emerging issues for consideration concerning Church's social responsibility to the state.

### **Research Objective**

The main objective of the study was to assess the role of the Presbyterian Church in the Regional Development of the Upper East Region using Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality as case studies.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Map the spatial distribution of the developmental projects that have been undertaken by the Presbyterian church in the study area
2. Analyse how the development projects have contributed to economic development;
3. Analyse how the development projects have contributed to social development; and
4. Examine the resident's perception of the Presbyterian church in terms of Regional Development?

### **Research Questions**

1. What developmental projects has the Presbyterian church undertaken in the study area over the years?

2. How have these development projects contributed to economic development?
3. How have these development projects contributed to social development?
4. How do the residents of the study area perceive the Presbyterian church in terms of regional development?

### **Significance of the study**

The findings from this research will complement Governments' inability to assimilate and point to non-state development actors such as the religious bodies who constitute the openings of development. The study findings will help in redevelopment and inform pathways to which the Religious Institution can effectively contribute to regional development. This study intends to bring to light how agents of development in the country over the years can be empowered, positioned, and structured as active agents or drivers for future development.

The findings of this research will serve as a policy direction for the study communities. As established, the Upper East region is considered one of the least developed regions in the country, hence its vulnerability to being entrapped in the vicious poverty cycle cannot be underrated. These issues call for concerted, rapid participatory development in tandem with an indigenous approach to development of which the Presbyterian Church of Ghana can offer support.

Generally, the study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of churches in regional development in Ghana. By examining the contributions of churches to regional development and identifying the challenges and opportunities

that exist for improving the effectiveness of church-led initiatives, this study will provide important information for enhancing the contributions of churches to regional development in Ghana. Will serve as a source of reference to academics, researchers, students, and development experts interested in future studies.

The findings of this research have significant implications for national development, particularly in understanding the intersection between religious institutions and regional growth. By assessing the role of the Presbyterian Church in the Upper East Region, the study highlights how faith-based organizations contribute to social infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic empowerment. This insight is crucial for policymakers seeking to harness the potential of religious institutions as partners in development. Additionally, the study provides a framework for integrating religious organizations into national development strategies, ensuring a more holistic and community-driven approach to addressing socio-economic challenges. By demonstrating the Church's role in regional transformation, the research informs policies that can be replicated in other parts of the country to enhance sustainable development and improve the quality of life for marginalized communities.

From a regional planning perspective, this study contributes to the discipline by broadening the understanding of non-state actors in development planning. Traditional planning approaches often emphasize government-led initiatives, but this research underscores the importance of multi-sectoral collaborations, where religious institutions play a critical role in infrastructure development and social service delivery. The study also provides empirical

evidence on how faith-based organizations can complement state efforts in spatial planning, environmental sustainability, and community resilience. Moreover, the findings offer a basis for integrating religious institutions into regional planning frameworks, ensuring that their contributions are systematically recognized and optimized. This knowledge advances the field of regional planning by promoting inclusive and participatory development models that align with the unique socio-cultural contexts of different regions.

### **Research Scope and limitations**

Sequentially, this thesis concentrates on the role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the Regional Development of the Upper East Region, with Garu and Bolgatanga as areas of study. Specifically, the study area was selected due to the huge developmental interventions by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana concerning agricultural projects, education facilities, rehabilitation centres, health projects, and among other economic enterprises. Geographically, this study was limited to Garu and Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region due to the financial constraints and human resource capacity of the researcher. The existing developmental challenges, environmental conditions, and infrastructure deficits that characterize the study areas further position the uniqueness of this research. Poverty, underdevelopment, and regional problems continue to shape development debate among experts and trigger stakeholder analysis into development issues.

The recent conflict in Bawku presented a significant challenge that influenced my decision not to select Bawku as a study site, despite its relevance to



the research focus on the impact of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's developmental projects. The ongoing violence and instability in Bawku have created an environment that is not conducive for research activities, posing risks to both researchers and participants. Bawku has historically been a focal point for various development initiatives, particularly by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, which has implemented numerous projects aimed at improving education, healthcare, and community welfare. These contributions have had a profound impact on local livelihoods and social cohesion. However, the current conflict has overshadowed these positive developments, leading to a climate of uncertainty and fear. This instability not only complicates logistics for conducting research but also affects the willingness of community members to engage in discussions about development projects due to their immediate concerns about security and their livelihoods. Moreover, the conflict has altered community dynamics and priorities, making it difficult to assess the true impact of developmental initiatives without the confounding effects of ongoing violence. The situation in Bawku underscores the importance of safety and ethical considerations in research, particularly in conflict-affected areas. As such, while Bawku would have provided invaluable insights into the role of the Presbyterian Church in local development, the current circumstances necessitate the selection of a more stable environment for conducting the study, ensuring the safety of all involved and the integrity of the research findings.

This study is further limited and make use of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana as one of the stakeholders in Ghana's development in providing development services for the people in the Upper East Region.

## Organization of the Thesis

In all, the thesis is structured into nine (9) chapters. Chapter One, which is the introduction, incorporates the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, significance of the study, research scope and limitations, and organization of the thesis. Chapter two seeks to review related literature under key themes in close connection to the objective of the study. Chapter three centers on empirical overview of various research, and conceptual framework, and historical construct of Ghana's Regional Development Policies from Pre-Colonial time to the present. The fourth chapter deals with the methods and processes for data collection. Specifically, it focuses on the introduction, philosophy of research method, justification of mixed method, profile of Upper East Region and specific areas of concentration, research design, study population, sampling procedures, data collection, instrument design, pre-testing, actual field work, data processing and analysis, ethical procedure as well as chapter summary.

The fifth chapter distillates on the maps and spatial distribution of developmental structures and institutions put up by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the Upper East Region. Chapter six centers on how the activities of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana affect the local economic development of the area of study and the approach by the church to reduce poverty in achieving sustainable development. It further examines how this role complements the activities of the District and Municipal Assemblies for local economic development and sustainability. Chapter Seven analyses how the development projects have contributed to the social development of the area of study while Chapter eight

investigates the perception of residents in the study area of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana as a component in Regional Development. The chapter further integrates the limits and challenges of the Church as a development partner. Chapter nine, which is the final chapter, encompasses the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Government institutions, educational institutions, and even the general public frequently discuss the issue of development (Alawode, 2016). Development cannot be characterized through measures because it is about the lives of individuals and communities (Belshaw, et. al., 2000). One of history's most diversified processes, community development has roots in several historical fields, including those of education, economics, sociology, politics, and urban and regional planning (Phillips & Pittman 2014). Faith-based groups have a solid track record in many development circles, are active in communities, provide social services, health care, and education, and serve as community organizers and policy reforms for development (Marshall & Keough, 2004). Faith-based organizations regularly serve as the only providers of social services, coming up with plans and providing services to keep the public informed about advancements in fields that governments have failed to develop (Occhipinti, et al 2015). According to Belshaw et al. (2000), missionary theologians influenced the majority of African Christians through the establishment of institutions for education, agriculture, and health care. Numerous groups work on community development in various nations with various political structures to handle enormous issues (Bhattacharyya, 2004). Community development is a dynamic system that functions professionally and is backed by a variety of organizations and the general public (Henderson & Verseg, 2010).

## **The Presbyterian Church of Ghana and Upper Presbytery**

The Basel missionaries arrived in Ghana in 1828, but it was not until the early 20th century that they were able to travel to Yendi for two significant exploratory visits in 1905 and 1906 to ascertain what was best in the northern region of the country. A. Mohr and B. Groh travelled to this location through Worawora, Bimbilla, Yendi, Tamale, and Chereponi.

Fortunately, the Basel Mission's efforts gained momentum in 1909 when they accepted an invitation from the British government to set up a branch of the Basel Mission factory in Tamale to support the training of artisans in several industries. The Mission seized the chance and dispatched a group of missionaries to conduct additional research. The team included G. Josenhans, B. Groh, and renowned physician Rudolf Fisch. The team also travelled to Gambaga, Kpandai, and Kete Krachi in addition to Tamale and Yendi.

Together with the Wesleyan Methodist Mission, the Basel Mission decided in 1912 to create a congregation in Tamale for the Southern Christians labouring there. The Basel Mission also sent a group of three missionaries the following year to establish a mission station in Yendi under the direction of Rev. Hans Huppenbauer but plans to continue the mission work in the North were put on hold as a result of the First and Second World Wars, which broke out in 1914 and 1939, respectively. Therefore, missionary work in the North could not resume until after 1945.

The United Congregation in Tamale was once again served by the Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast and the Wesleyan Mission in 1945, and Rev. E.K.O. Asante was appointed as the congregation's resident minister at the synod meeting that year. By 1954, significant attempts had been made to connect with the eastern portion of the North, specifically with the towns of Garu, Bolgatanga, Navrongo, Bawku, and the surrounding areas. In the 1960s, the church not only established a base in Damongo but also began missionary activity in Jirapa, Wa, and other cities in the Western North.

The Northern Ghana Field Conference (NGFC) had been in charge of overseeing the work in the North throughout this time, but in April 1961, the synod's moderator at the time, Rt. Rev. E. M. L. Odijidja presided over a special meeting at which the NGFC was reorganized into the Northern Presbytery, which included the five districts of Tamale, Salaga, Bolgatanga, Garu, and Sandema. The first Presbytery Chairman was the Scottish missionary Rev. Robert Duncan, and the first Presbytery Clerk was the Rev. Tom Colvin.

The synod ordered a survey and evaluation of mission work in the north after around ten years, and the committee's findings were submitted to the synod gathering in Tamale in 1972. The Northern Mission Field should be established over the whole Northern region, according to the report's recommendations. It was argued that classification as a mission field would better adequately focus everyone's attention on the ground-breaking work being done there and that the state of the church's activity in the North did not support its identification as a presbytery. Until 1978, when a firm judgement was made, the commendation was

remitted and subject to different discussions in the Presbyteries and successive Synods.

The congregation within the districts increased as a result of strategic planning that was effective, evangelistic efforts, and the support of the Social Services. Therefore, after twenty-two years of dedicated service, the 1st General Assembly of the PCG held in Navrongo decided to once more change the name of Northern Mission Field to Northern Presbytery, which covers the three political regions of Northern, Upper East, and Upper West, the largest land mass in Ghana.

Many people disagreed with this choice since they believed that little had changed since the Mission Field's founding in terms of the circumstances that made it necessary. However, the General Assembly strongly believed that evangelizing efforts in the region had matured and that the nine districts at the time could sustain the Presbytery's work. Furthermore, there was a strong belief that such a choice would inspire the North to take ownership of the church's activity in the region, ending the sporadic accusations of paternalism thrown against South church leaders and members.

### **Presbyterian Church of Ghana and Developmental Projects in Upper East Region.**

There has been significant infrastructure development, which has given the population access to, among other things, schools, hospitals, health clinics, and boreholes. Additionally, the Church actively promotes socioeconomic growth in areas like agriculture, women's empowerment, and other fields that are all focused on raising people's standards of living. The promotion of agriculture and food

security, environmental management, gender and development, community-based rehabilitation of people with disabilities, the provision of access to water and sanitation, health, and education are all areas where the Church has contributed. She has advocated for issues such as emergency aid, disaster management, the creation of credit unions, farmers' and artists' cooperatives, and justice and peace. This brief study backdrop suggests that Church and State can work together to promote growth. Additionally, the Church's function in development might take into account the lessons discovered in other fields.

**Table 1: Educational Institutions/Social Services**

EDUCATION	HEALTH	COMMUNITY REHABILITATION	AGRICULTURAL STATIONS
<b>Kindergarten</b> (13 Public) (3 Private)	Bawku Hospital	Garu Community-Based Rehabilitation	Presbyterian Agricultural Station-(Langbensi)
<b>Primary</b> (23 Public) (2 Private)	Garu Health Centre	Sandema Community-Based Rehabilitation	Presbyterian Agricultural Station-(Garu)
<b>Junior High School</b> (13 Public) (1 Private)	PPHC – Bolgatanga	Bolgatanga Community-Based Rehabilitation	Presbyterian Agricultural Station-(Sandema)
<b>Senior High School</b> Nakpanduri Senior High Tech School	Presbyterian Regional Eye Center		



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<b>Tertiary</b>	Presbyterian
Presbyterian	Psychiatric
Nurses Training	Hospital,
College	Bolgatanga
Bawku	–
	Namolgo
	Clinic
	Sandema
	Clinic
	PPHC –
	Langbensi
	Worinyanga
	Clinic
	Widana
	Health
	Centre
	Sumaduri
	Health center

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Source: Presbyterian church of Ghana (2023)

According to the aforementioned debates, the activities of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana are connected to the regional development of the Upper East Region. Education, health, community development, agricultural centers, and the church's role in public policy are the main development areas. Developmental activities of the church have been dispersed around the area to reach the most underserved populations for the goal of the spatial development of the region. The task of establishing the Upper Presbytery (Church's Region), which is contiguous with the Upper East Region, runs parallel with the oversight responsibility for the

development projects. The need for this study is to carefully evaluate how the Presbyterian Church of Ghana has contributed to the development of the Upper East Region and to analyse the dynamics of poverty in the Region. Therefore, as research becomes available, the church may be made aware of new issues to examine in light of its social obligation to the state.

Ghana is attempting to meet the objectives of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were formally endorsed by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. The Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to, among other things, end poverty and hunger, protect the environment, and promote prosperity by 2030, may not yield the expected results if the problems that undermined the overall goal of the Millennium Development Goals are not carefully examined within the socio-economic, geo-political, and cultural environment of the country. However, the adoption of the SDGs came at a time when a growing body of research is highlighting several paradigm-shifting phenomena in the international development and funding environments. This study also aims to pinpoint the processes of growth in a shifting socio-economic context. Only with specific consideration for calibrating suitable methods for all-encompassing partnerships in development can such a strategy be carried out. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana is one of the mechanisms to be built for successful partnerships, collaboration for development, and the social construct of equitable routes for Churches for the regional development of the Upper East Region. Given the church's limits and strategies for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 17, which is rooted in the partnership goals, an effective review of the church's efforts

is essential for future development possibilities. The objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are further emphasized and applied to this research to help Ghana achieve regional development and sustainable development.

### **Religion and Development**

In the last 20 years, there has been a "religious shift" in international development theory, policy, and practice (Kaag and Saint-Lary 2011). A rising body of writings have started to investigate the various connections and interactions between religion and development (Swart and Nell 2016). Religion and development study is now an active, innovative multidisciplinary field (Bompani 2019). Policymakers and practitioners in development have acknowledged religion as a relevant issue at the same time (Tomalin 2015). As demonstrated by a volume compiled by the Lutheran World Federation in 2013 (Mtata, 2013) and the special issue of the Inter-denominational Assessment on religion and development published by the Global Council of Churches in 2016, the recent interest in the relationship between development and religion is not limited to governmental and multilateral institutions but extends to religious communities and institutions as well.

However, the present discussion of religion and development has mostly taken place inside the secular frameworks of the development discourses that are driven by the west. The development agenda and vision, as framed in (inter-) governmental initiatives like the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, remain secular, as have been noted elsewhere. Religion or religious communities

are not specifically included in the UN resolution on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). (Öhlmann et al, 2018). This development discourse's secular framework is contested not only by the decolonial and postcolonial discussion (Mawere 2014) but also by religious players' perspectives. For many religious communities, "development is part of religion," professional and academic experts' conceptions of development are only one aspect of a more thorough human and social transformation that is influenced by and linked to religious, situated, and indigenous knowledge (Öhlmann, Frost, and Gräb 2016). Religion is integrated with other facets of life and forms part of the social fabric. (Haar, 2011). Wensveen (2011) distinguished between an "additive pattern" and an "integral pattern" when describing the contributions of religious communities to sustainable development. The "instrumental addition of religion to the pre-set, mechanistic sustainable development production process" can be used to describe development concepts and practices that adhere to secular western development strategies (Wensveen, 2011p..). In contrast to this "additive pattern," she identifies an alternative model in which religious communities set the agenda and bring their religiously-inspired concepts and practices of sustainable development to the table, rather than religion serving as an instrument for secular development goals. This "integral pattern" proposed by Wensveen (2011) is encapsulated in "Development as part of religion" (Hlmann and Gräb 2016). Although the functional approach (Wensveen 2011, for instance) views religious groups as actors in "mainstream development policies and programmes," their goals go beyond the particular concepts of sustainable development. This acknowledgement is absent from African Independent and

Pentecostal Churches, which reflect African-initiated Christianity. Both the scholarly literature and the rhetoric around international development policy have long recognised Christianity in Africa—specifically, the Catholic and historic Protestant Churches of European and North American descent—as a development player (ILO, 2014). The development contributions of African Independent and Pentecostal Churches to the development discourse have only been examined by a limited number of scholars thus far.

### **Regional development**

Regional development is a key idea in fields like economic geography, regional economics, regional science theory, and economic development. It relates to the geography of prosperity and its progress. It is critical to underline that regional development, which examines the intricate dynamics of regions, is not a static idea (Nijkamp & Abreu, 2009). Because the change in prosperity is difficult to assess, the per capita GDP and its fluctuations are frequently utilized in statistical analysis. In addition, socioeconomic indices that provide comparisons between states and regions, such as per capita consumption, the unemployment rate, the labour force participation rate, or access to public services, can be employed (Nijkamp & Abreu, 2009). The scenario for the emergence of regions has been formed as a result of recent increases in cross-border and international commerce, capital, and people flows (Pike et al., 2017). Regional disparities in Europe territory are a topic that many academics have explored in-depth and have a wealth of literature on (Petrakos & Saratsis, 2000). Despite over 50 years of regional development initiatives, regional disparities still exist. When it comes to concerns

about the economic growth of a region and the lowering of interregional disparities, the discussion over convergence-divergence is no longer merely theoretical (Alexiadis, 2020). The process through which a less developed region develops more quickly than a developed region can be described as convergence, according to the theory of economic and regional development (Koudoumakis et al., 2019). The formation of a cohesion policy, which results in the eradication of inequalities and regional development, is primarily aided by the collection, analysis, and assessment of quantitative data (Cuadrado-Roura, 2001; Widuto, 2019). This raises the topic of how economic and regional development research has changed over time, including the methodologies, sample sizes, and metrics employed, along with the study periods and the number of member states and regions covered.

### **Role of the church in sustainable development**

The role of the church in sustainable development has garnered increasing scholarly attention in recent years. Several research works aim to synthesize key findings and perspectives on how religious institutions, particularly Christian churches, contribute to sustainable development. They focused on the historical context, contemporary engagements, and the multifaceted contributions of the church to sustainability efforts.

Historically, the church has played a significant role in social and economic development. According to Clarke (2012), missionary activities in the 19th and early 20th centuries laid the groundwork for educational and health infrastructures in many developing countries. The Basel missionaries' work in Ghana, for example,

is a testament to early church-led development initiatives, which included establishing schools and hospitals (Debrunner, 1967).

In recent decades, the church's role in sustainable development has evolved to address modern challenges. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has been instrumental in framing development from a theological perspective. In a volume compiled by LWF, Mtata (2013) discusses how religious values and teachings can align with development goals. Similarly, the Global Council of Churches published a special issue in 2016 examining the interplay between religion and development, highlighting the church's involvement in promoting social justice and environmental sustainability (Swart & Nell, 2016).

The church's contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are particularly noteworthy. Goal 17, which emphasizes partnerships for the goals, sees significant participation from religious organizations. Kobia (2005) notes that churches often act as intermediaries between governments and local communities, facilitating dialogue and cooperation. The World Council of Churches (WCC) has also been active in promoting SDG-related initiatives, focusing on poverty alleviation, education, and healthcare (WCC, 2018).

Despite these positive contributions, the church's involvement in sustainable development is not without criticism. Some scholars argue that the church's approaches can sometimes be paternalistic or culturally insensitive. Deneulin and Bano (2009) caution against imposing external values and stress the importance of context-specific solutions. Additionally, there are debates about the

secularization of development agendas, which can sometimes marginalize religious contributions (Tomalin, 2013).

### **Sustainable development: global discourse, Christian thought, and local perspectives**

After 1987, when the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) emphasized its significance and elevated it to the top of the agendas of the United Nations and multilateral development banks, the global discourse on sustainable development drew considerable attention. This definition of sustainable development addresses the interaction between three key factors: the economy, environment, and society. These three are not frequently ranked on the same pedestal in today's globe. Giddings, et. al. (2002) asserted that because economic growth is frequently used to gauge societal progress, the economy typically receives more attention than the other factors. However, neither the quality of human life nor social injustices in other nations are directly related to this. The common perception is that society and the environment both influence the economy. A civilization without an economy is impossible. The discussion about sustainable development was therefore sparked by the existence of widespread poverty and the requirement for environmental justice (Ajulu, 2010).

Rethinking the idea of sustainable development has been advocated by several academics, particularly in terms of how its constituent parts interact. According to Hardi and Zdau (1997), contemporary theories of sustainable development today place a strong emphasis on the necessity of using a "whole system" perspective that considers emergent features, complexity, and interactions. Bob Giddings et al. (2002) advocated for an integrated understanding of the idea.



They contend that if the goal is to promote human well-being, prejudice in any form will be seen as detrimental to sustainable development rather than as prevalent, unwanted, and justified by gains made elsewhere. They also proposed that "the focus of sustainable development should be on human provisioning and satisfying needs which may be done in many ways than those stipulated inside economic" rather than "putting a premium on the economy, which is a means to a goal" (Giddings et al. 2002). All in all, sustainable development now refers to an integrated and holistic way of viewing the world, focusing on long-term environmental sustainability as well as sustainable livelihoods and well-being (Hopwood et al. 2005).

Giving development a broad foundation and making a place for previously suppressed moral and equitable dimensions are the goals. In other words, actions for development must "have a human face." The human element is also emphasized in Christian development theory. Its core idea is stewardship, which emphasizes accountability and responsibility. This viewpoint "decries the unrestrained pursuit of economic benefits where no one cares about who and what are being hurt in the process," according to Oladipo (2000). The goal of development is to better the whole person; "real development" aims to do this comprehensively. According to Oladipo (2000), this is the intended outcome of growth from a Christian viewpoint. The necessity for Christians to participate in development efforts has been highlighted by academics (Bornstein 2002; Brandt 1995). Every man has a right to a good and honourable life because he was made in the "image of God." As instructed by Jesus Christ, the church is to reach out to the underprivileged

(Lk.4:18-19), but each Christian is also obligated to act by his or her beliefs. Therefore, socioeconomic development is a crucial area of the church's involvement (Oladipo 2000). For a Christian to reach rich life, the theology of holistic development is used to solve spiritual and material deprivation. Development is not solely thought of in terms of material things as it is in western conceptions; rather, it encompasses all facets of life holistically and links the past, present, and future. Furthermore, the concept of sustainability differs from one viewpoint to another. The emphasis in the global secular discourse is on the environment, human livelihoods, and economic progress. Sustainability in Christian theology refers to the incorporation of God's moral goal into development recommendations.

### **Developmental Roles of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

Ball and Dunn define NGOs as "organizations that do not serve the self-interests of their members but are concerned in some way with disadvantage and or the disadvantaged, or with concerns and issues which are detrimental to the wellbeing, circumstances, or prospects of 'people or society as a whole'" (1996, p.what?). According to Otite and Albert (2004), this concept makes it simple for us to place NGOs within the development sector. Any NGO's main goal is to improve the lives of the community it is trying to reach by providing for their basic needs in ways that the government finds difficult or unwilling to do. Generally speaking, NGOs work under the premise that people in civil society have the freedom to live their lives as they see fit, free from interference from the government (Chuku & Ogoloma, 2012). Regarding the significance of NGOs, Ball and Dunn (1996) noted

that they are also an expression of people's conviction that by acting independently and cooperatively, they can more fully realize their potential and, in doing so, narrow the opportunity gap that currently exists between the privileged and the underprivileged in society. This entails involving and empowering individuals as opposed to either abandoning them to fend for themselves or relegating them to the position of the dependent victim of institutions. According to Rodney (2018), growth entails more skill capacity, accountability, and material well-being. Fundamentally, human growth, the realization of human potential, and the emancipation of man from poverty must be the ultimate goals of progress. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are voluntary groups that operate without the use of force or coercion by either people or groups of individuals. NGOs have existed in Nigeria since the country's early days of independence. Colonialism caused it to happen. However, several circumstances post-independence, including military rule, a dictatorship, religious violence, ethnicity, and corruption, contributed to the rise of NGOs in Nigeria (Iheme, 2000). The main goals and purposes of NGOs are to combat poverty and offer advanced education, harmony, religious tolerance, grants, and sanitary facilities. NGOs work to educate and raise public awareness of social and environmental issues, as well as government policies. The NGOs can promote development through advocacy, seminars, enlightenment, and education of civil society thanks to their initiatives and partnerships with various levels of government. Additionally, NGOs fight against authoritarian and totalitarian governments and denounce corruption in both civil society and government.

## **Churches and Economic Development**

According to Phillips and Pitt (2012), economic development is a comprehensive approach that incorporates several types of actions to promote, sustain, and build an area's economy. In reality, economic development is a crucial component of community development projects for any society or government. However, chances for the revival of religious activities in the public sphere have emerged in this era of neoliberal administration, filling the void left by the retreating governments (Cloke et al., 2013). According to Asiedu (2019), generating revenue is a key factor in the economic development of metropolitan areas. The somewhat larger degree of response variability and the moderate impact on improved local companies indicate that, although beneficial impacts exist, they are not felt equally by all members of the community. According to Ofori and Sakyi (2020), variations in access to resources and market possibilities may be the cause of this heterogeneity.

According to Marshall and Keough (2004), the global community is the driving force behind development solutions, thus every system and every individual must deal with distortions that obstruct the creation of a more just and equitable world. Economic expansion is a crucial indicator of poverty reduction (Sakwa, 2007). If one argues that the economic process may be necessary for accomplishing community development and bettering communal differences, but that it is not a sufficient requirement, complications may result (Munck, 2011). This is because the majority of initiatives are founded on productivity ideals, the wise use of financial resources, and occasionally, connections or discussions between sponsors

and beneficiaries (Belshaw et al. 2000). Iheduru (2001) asserts that economic consolidation has long been seen as a crucial and reliable growth tool in African nations. This suggests that, even though economic growth alone cannot end poverty, it is a necessary and crucial component for reducing it (Sakwa, 2007). The topic of "how do the economic parameters that are fundamental to social enterprises and other types of community economic growth connect to community development" is posed by Henderson and Verseg (2010). Maybe asking "whether development initiatives would perform better if they took into account faiths and religious leaders" would be more suitable (Wijsen, 2011). The neighbourhood recognizes that the church's duty includes participating in progressive development as well as preaching and evangelism (Alawode, 2016). Development and faith are discourses that transcend geographical and historical limits, according to DeTemple (2012). One crucial strategy to ensure the poor positively benefit from economic progress is the diversification of wages for the poor (Sakwa, 2007). Antwi and Asamoah (2018) emphasised the role that asset ownership plays in the economic development of rural areas. The fact that income growth has a greater influence on household welfare than asset ownership may be due to the immediate advantages of higher income rather than the long-term advantages of asset accumulation. According to Phillips and Pitt (2014), securing money for an economic development project requires contacting the proper parties and identifying any assets they may have. Economic influence is pervasive and unquestionably has an impact on community development (Henderson & Verseg, 2010). The degree to which religion affects economic development depends on several factors that

change depending on the location (Clarke, 2013). According to a religious viewpoint, community improvement depends on how individuals perceive and communicate with one another.

### **Churches and poverty**

Poverty is a significant concern everywhere, but it is known to be increasing in Africa (Sakwa, 2007). Faith-based groups and individuals motivated by religious conviction and concerned about those who live in poverty may perform an undistinguished deed that is equivalent to providing spiritual food (Clarke, 2013). Theology and religious practitioners have always reflected poverty throughout history through initiatives like dispute resolution, community support, emergency help, education, and health care provision (Marshall & Keough, 2004). Lack of access to basic services and goods including jobs, housing, healthcare, and education can be a sign of poverty (Sule et al., 2020). According to the definition of poverty, it is the "condition of lacking the fundamentals necessary for a dignified existence, which may include economic, material, moral, intellectual, or spiritual requirements, among others" (Ayiemba, et al., 2015 p.). Wisor (2016) asserts that there are at least five opposing concepts of poverty, each of which has a different definition and singles out specific people as being poor:

- "Those who lack the wherewithal to maintain even a modest quality of living are considered to be poor, according to monetary concepts."
- According to "a second understanding of poverty," persons who are unable to meet their necessities are considered to be poor.

- According to a third definition of poverty, those who are incapable of doing fundamental tasks are impoverished.
- The "fourth conception of poverty" categorizes people as poor if they are socially marginalized and unable to participate fully in society.
- According to the fifth definition of poverty, someone is considered poor if they are unable to protect their fundamental economic and social rights.

Njogu (2013) emphasizes the difficulties faced by rural communities due to poverty, food insecurity, a lack of job prospects, and inadequate infrastructure. According to the World Bank (2018), expanding social security services to more areas of the country can help assist low-income families and reduce geographic inequality. This suggests that to end poverty, new programmes must be developed and united to increase their effectiveness in reducing poverty (Sakwa, 2007). Research on the poor is conducted by organizations like the World Bank, and findings from such research acknowledge that the poor feel vulnerable and underrepresented. As a result, the poor only have faith in and look up to their institutions, such as the church (Belshaw et al., 2000). The most disadvantaged individuals are frequently left out of efforts meant to relieve poverty, Marshall and Van (2007) point out, and because of this, they appear unimportant to the rest of society. When poverty and development are brought up, the church, particularly in Africa, is constantly challenged. According to Tenai (2016), the prevalence of poverty in Africa brings up the question of the effectiveness of the church's acknowledgement of the issue and its response to it. According to Marshall and Van (2007), efforts to reduce severe poverty should be gauged by asking whether

they "have helped individuals who endure them to grow toward more independence, pride, and responsibility rather than remaining in a circle of deprivation and reliance". According to Belshaw et al. (2000), the Church should widen its knowledge of poverty to include religious, familial, ethical, and cultural factors and share study findings with governments and organizations like the World Bank. Even though battling poverty has many practical dimensions, it also requires compassion and respect for other people (Marshall & Keough, 2004). Regardless of affiliation, the Bible dictates how the Christian faith conducts itself, hence the church must participate in efforts to reduce poverty by the bible (Sakwa, 2007). Extremely poor people must be contacted and treated equally while taking into account the human rights they have been denied (Marshall & Van, 2007).

### **Religion View on culture**

Africans are deeply religious, and religion has a strong influence on much of their culture (Fonlon, 2010). African traditional religions lack of a specific creator, are not recorded in any sacred texts, and have no theological ties (Omenyo & Anum, 2014). African traditional religion is one of the oldest forms of religious expression on the African continent and is culturally, socially, and politically pure African (Omenyo & Anum, 2014). Religion and culture are ill-informed and misunderstood, but if they are, they go hand in hand and can be utilized to compel community growth and mobilization if they are correctly understood (Kariuki, 2018). Cultural practices evolve gradually over time and build a compounding relationship with religion and individuals who practice it (Marshall & Van 2007). According to Fonlon (2010), religion uses beliefs to impose good and wrong.



Colonialism, political instability, mistrust and suspicion, hardship, corruption, and foreign policies that do not prioritize the interests of Africa have all played a role in shaping African history over time (Iheduru, 2001). Understanding African culture is so essential to transforming Africa's society (Njogu, 2013). If one can define culture as a way of life, then religion in this instance plays a crucial role in society. Religion can characterize people's way of life in society (Ott, 2007).

According to Njogu (2013), there is strong evidence that religion and culture have a profound influence on people's lives and social, political, and economic development. The church may effectively and evangelistically contact the people by preserving the cultures of societies (Asafo et al., 2016). In many cultures, religion plays a significant role in influencing people's views and ideas about how they should spend their lives (Marshall & Van 2007). Religion encourages, strengthens, and supports particular cultural and societal views, which influence identification (Njogu, 2013). Thus, there is no need to debate the significance of religion as a cultural element (Fonlon, 2010).

### **Churches' collaboration with other organizations**

To fight against poverty, international organizations have recently sought partnerships with other development groups, such as religious institutions. In reality, the church collaborates closely with other institutions like the World Bank to provide neglected areas with development opportunities. The World Bank and the churches have each recognized their roles in the struggle against poverty (Belshaw et al. 2000). In addition to the World Bank, other organizations are taking

action to better comprehend poverty, and while they do so, they are also looking to work with religious organizations (Marshall & Keough, 2004). Many religions have participated in development projects, but the connection between religion and development has only recently been clear due to more universally unforeseen factors (Harper, 2000). Activities and talks about poverty and social fairness have been ongoing between religious and development organizations in various localities (Marshall & Keough, 2004). The church is obligated to reach out to, help, and support marginalized and socially disadvantaged persons (Asafo et al. 2016). Global religions form civilizations that support struggling communities by fostering their cooperation, fostering partnerships, coordination, and mutual aid (Harper, 2000). As poverty among the poor worsens, it becomes clear that effective collaboration with other organizations is necessary for them to escape it (Belshaw et al. 2000). Strong partnerships created through community development initiatives can bring in novel, explainable strategies that uphold trust, improve public participation, foster leadership, and advance more socially and politically acceptable activities and acts (Phillips & Pitt, 2012). Collaboration between the public and commercial sectors enhances economic progress (Phillips & Pitt, 2012).

A collaboration with an agency, meanwhile, "should not be confused with a partnership with a community," says Kariuki (2018). To connect with underprivileged populations, charities, and other non-profit organizations often help them with the education and job-related skills they need (Johanson & Adams, 2004). The collaboration between institutions and groups working on community development is proving fruitful and symbolic in a variety of ways (Phillips & Pitt,

2012). As a result, religion has historically played a significant role in promoting the well-being of populations who are socially disadvantaged (Clarke, 2013). For instance, Ghana has set a goal to end poverty by the year 2030. If faith-based organizations contribute to the growth that leads the neighbourhood toward self-sustainability, I see this as a possibility.

### **The Church and Socio-Economic Development**

Different people have assigned various connotations to the term "development." Development is a normative term that describes a multifaceted process. Some academics contend that growth must be contextualized by time, place, and circumstance and reject any one-size-fits-all model (Udochukwu, 2010). Development, according to Todaro and Smith (2003), has traditionally been defined as the ability over a long period to generate and sustain an increase in gross national income that must be at least 5% to 7% annually. They continue by explaining that rates of growth in income per capita have been used as another popular alternative economic indicator of progress to account for a country's capacity to increase its output at a rate faster than that of its population. Real per capita growth levels and Gross national income is typically used to gauge a population's general economic well-being. This refers to the number of genuine goods and services that the average citizen has access to for investment and consumption. Therefore, Seers (2010) contends that the questions to inquire about a nation's development are "what has been happening to poverty? What is the current state of unemployment? What has inequality been up to lately? There has been a period of progress for the nation in question if all three of these have fallen from high levels. Even if per capita income

doubled, it would be difficult to refer to the outcome as "development" if one or more of these fundamental issues have been getting worse, especially if all three have. Since many emerging nations enjoyed relatively high rates of per capita income growth during the 1960s and 1970s yet showed little to no gain in employment and a decline in equality, it can be demonstrated that this remark was not a description of a hypothetical situation. The World Bank promoted economic growth as a development objective during the 1980s; as a result, it stated in its World Development Report of 1991 that "the challenge of development is to improve the quality of life. Higher earnings are typically required for a better quality of life, particularly in the world's poorest nations, but it also entails much more. It includes better health and nutrition standards, reducing poverty, a cleaner environment, increased opportunity equality, increased personal freedom, and a richer cultural life as objectives in themselves. Therefore, development must be viewed as a multifaceted process entailing significant modifications to social structures, cultural norms, and governmental institutions in addition to the acceleration of economic growth, the decrease of inequality, and the abolition of poverty. In essence, development must be the full spectrum of change by which an entire social system, adjusted to the various fundamental wants and goals of individuals and social groupings within that system, departs from a state of existence deemed to be materially and spiritually superior (Todaro & Smith, 2003).

### **The Role of Change Agents such as the Church in the Development Process**

The local church should embrace community mobilization initiatives that will help people identify, analyse, plan, and act to solve their problems so that they

can live fulfilling lives. The church should see development as an integral part of its ministry because it is a part of the community. If local churches participate in this fashion, the function of church development departments would need to shift from engaging directly with communities to helping local churches develop the capacity to implement comprehensive development initiatives. The role of change agents, managers, or coordinators of development programmes and projects is merely to "facilitate a process by which the members of a community can increase their personal and institutional capacity to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvement in their quality of life consistent with their aspirations" in light of the principles and fundamental components of the human development process (Korten, 1990). Anything to the contrary represents a change agent's hijacking of the process for their gain at the expense of a person's genuine personal progress. "For the local church to effectively minister to people of the surrounding community, it must, first and foremost, be a model of the kingdom of God in every element of life," wrote Danladi Musa in an article on the local church as a major development agent. The role the Catholic Church plays in mobilizing resources for the development of the communities in which it operates demonstrates clearly that the Church is indeed a primary agent in the development of the community. This must be characterized by love for one another, which should lead to social justice, righteousness, and economic prosperity. It is crucial to stress that the Catholic Church has made great efforts to act as a significant agent in the process of development. The Church accomplishes this by publishing encyclicals that cover its social teachings. The Church's view on

development and the part it can play in the process is frequently stated in these proclamations. According to Pope Paul VI, the encyclical emphasizes human growth through the interaction between rich and poor countries and denounces the system that allows the rich countries to continue getting richer while the poor countries continue to get poorer (Banahene 2004). The encyclical's perspective is that progress cannot be confined to economic growth alone but must also advance the interests of the individual and the community as a whole. The encyclical makes it quite apparent that people, not objects, are the focus of development. It aims to dispel the fallacious perception that development is exclusively about advancing on a material and economic level (Sarbah & Obeng, 2014).

### **Regional disparity in development**

Northern Ghana has experienced rapid economic growth over the past ten years, but it has lagged behind the rest of the country in most development indicators (Al-Hassan & Diao, 2007). This presents a challenge to the country's efforts to significantly reduce poverty as well as concerns about inequality and its moral ramifications. As Ghana strives to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those on reducing poverty and hunger, regional inequality demands special attention. The most evident role of broad-based growth in reducing poverty is when it is accompanied by wise social investment, and some researchers have already urged various policies that prioritize marginalized populations and regions (Aryeetey & McKay, 2007). History, unfavourable climatic and agricultural production circumstances, and post-independence political neglect have all been cited as explanations for the poverty and

underdevelopment of northern Ghana in comparison to southern Ghana (Al-Hassan & Diao, 2007). The colonial policy that kept northern Ghana economically and politically submissive to the south by actively encouraging labour migration and discouraging investment is the historical basis of the north-south divide. Additionally, the colonial administration "developed a 'protective' approach toward the populace, which kept northerners isolated from the development colonization brought elsewhere in the country" (Shepherd & Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). The immediate post-independence era of import substitution policies (1957–1966) and the military rule of the National Redemption Council (1972–1979) had a positive impact on the development of northern Ghana through capital investments, the expansion of infrastructure, education, and agricultural production and processing. The growth of cotton and rice industry subsidies is attributed to the latter regime.

However, despite their best efforts, the north remained substantially unchanged, mostly because of the unsustainable nature of the import substitution programmes and the supporting subsidy policies. Inequalities in the region were also brought about by the rice and cotton interventions, which shifted their focus from smallholders to large-scale elite farmers. (Shepherd et al, 2004). The development of the University for Development Studies (with campuses located throughout the northern regions), the expansion of the electrical grid to the north, the renovation and expansion of the nation's physical and social infrastructure, and a sizable amount of project funding from official donor organizations and international NGOs were all carried out between the late 1980s and the early 1990s.

The lack of a cohesive plan and policy to establish regional balance in Ghana's growth, however, limits the effects of these initiatives (Shepherd et al, 2004).

### **Classical Theories of Regional Development**

The most widely accepted theory is that of economic foundation. By categorizing economic activity into two phases (exogenous and endogenous) and identifying the causal relationships that arise during the process of regional development, it explains how a region develops (Isard, 1965). As the demand for goods and services propels the region's economic development and shapes its role and distinctive features in the social and spatial division of labour, the theory contends that exogenous (export) activities are fundamental and serve as the region's economic foundation. (Jerczyski, 1977). A multiplicative mechanism is started by economic sectors and businesses engaged in exporting among collaborating businesses and linked domestic market sectors. The exogenous sector, which is tightly tied to the basic (exogenous) sector, thereby encourages other internal components of the regional economy. According to Malecki (1997), the recommendations for municipal government based on this theory suggest activities attracting investors that operate in the economy or service sectors promoting technological modernization and are competitive in domestic and international markets. Malizia and Feser (1999) emphasize how crucial it is to encourage local producers to export their goods. This raises a point of contention because some academics believe that regionalized specialization should be fostered and increased, as well as the branch representative of a particular region. For traditional areas, where heavy industry is in decline, this alternative is risky. Other



experts believe that creating new economic sectors and diversifying the exogenous basis are essential (Malecki, 1997).

The theory of the economic base's popularity has been influenced by the simplicity of its underlying premises, but it has also given rise to criticism that questions whether it is possible to describe the development of a region using a model with so few variables (Sparrow, 1980). Due to the concept's simultaneous development in numerous countries, it should also be noted that it does not form a cohesive theoretical system. Instead, according to Dziewoski (1967), it is a conglomeration of different concepts whose interdependencies are challenging to understand. The new theory of trade emphasizes the importance of export-related activities for local development and explains the mechanisms through which commerce between nations at various stages of development improves the global economy. Answers to questions about how much time and money different regions' specializations of production consume are sought. As a result, regions with abundant capital export goods that require capital, whereas those with abundant labour export goods that require time. Malizia and Feser (1999) emphasize that the capital-consuming regions stand to gain more from any prospective economic exchange between them. Local governments in underdeveloped areas should therefore promote not just export and free trade internationally but also their institutional and infrastructural development, particularly in the banking sector, and specialized education (Szajnowska -Wysocka, 2009). The idea of an economic basis is mentioned in the basic product theory, which analyses long-term drivers of economic growth. Theoretically, regional development is accomplished through the

growing specialization of a few items that are competitive in global markets. The benefits of product specialization are attained by streamlining the production process and reducing the cost of conducting business (Landes, 2000). This idea suggests that all administrative authorities should focus on advancing the specialization trend, putting money into infrastructure, assisting financial and consulting institutions, and offering services to industry and education (Grosse, 2002).

### **General overview of community development**

The definition of community development that academics agree upon varies. From their viewpoints, each person has made an effort to define the idea. An evolving thought that encompasses several different ideas is referred to as "community development." These several definitions all share the trait that community development aims to improve the social environment as people who have identified themselves as one community and are prepared to act to bring about improvement to the region in question. Community development is both a process and a final result, which contributes to some of the confusion. Ovbiebo, (2013) defined community development as all types of developmental activities that have an impact on human life. In general, community development affects a variety of fields, including those related to health, education, agriculture, the economy, and social issues. According to the United Nations Organization's (UNO) definition, which was cited in Anyanwo (1988), it is the process by which governmental authorities' efforts are combined with those of the people themselves to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of communities, integrate those

communities into national life, and allow them to fully contribute to national development. Considered by Jones and Silva (1991) is an integrated model of community development that takes into account interaction between systems, problem-solving, and community building. They contend that a properly integrated approach evaluates the issue, strengthens community capacity, and, most crucially, deals with the issue. Community development entails transforming the interactions between common people and those in positions of authority so that everyone can take ownership of the problems that have an impact on their lives.

### **Regional Development Policies**

Regional development policies play a crucial role in promoting balanced economic growth and reducing regional disparities within a country. In the case of Ghana, a developing country in West Africa, regional development policies are of utmost importance to foster sustainable development and enhance the overall well-being of its regions. This literature review aims to explore the existing body of knowledge on regional development policies in Ghana, focusing on key themes, policy approaches, and their effectiveness.

### **Regional Disparities and Development Challenges**

Ghana, like many other countries, faces significant regional disparities in terms of economic development, infrastructure, social services, and quality of life. These disparities are often attributed to historical, geographical, and institutional factors (Arku, 2010). Northern Ghana, for example, has traditionally been more disadvantaged compared to the southern regions in terms of poverty rates, access to education and healthcare, and infrastructure development (Gockel, 2017).

## **Policy Approaches for Regional Development**

### ***Decentralization and Local Governance***

Decentralization has been a central element of Ghana's regional development policies. The Local Government Act of 1993 and subsequent reforms aimed to devolve power and resources to the local level, empowering District Assemblies to plan and implement development initiatives (Ayee et al., 2016). However, challenges such as limited financial resources and capacity constraints have hindered the full realization of the potential of decentralization in addressing regional disparities (Mohammed et al., 2018).

### ***Infrastructure Development***

Infrastructure development plays a vital role in regional development. The government of Ghana has implemented various infrastructure projects, including road networks, electricity, water, and telecommunications, to improve connectivity and facilitate economic activities in underserved regions (Ghana Infrastructure Report, 2021). However, the sustainability and maintenance of these infrastructures remain ongoing challenges (Acheampong et al., 2016).

### ***Agriculture and Rural Development***

Given the importance of agriculture in Ghana's economy, agricultural and rural development policies have been central to regional development efforts. Initiatives such as the National Food and Agricultural Investment Plan (NFAIP) and the Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) program have aimed to boost agricultural productivity, enhance value chains, and improve rural livelihoods (Asante et al., 2019). Nevertheless, challenges persist, including limited access to credit, inadequate extension services, and climate change impacts (Donkoh et al., 2017).

### ***Industrialization and Private Sector Development***

Promoting industrialization and private sector development is crucial for regional economic growth and job creation. Policies such as the One District, One Factory (1D1F) initiative and the establishment of special economic zones seek to attract investment, stimulate manufacturing, and foster entrepreneurship in underserved regions (Amankwah-Amoah, 2020). However, the effective implementation and inclusiveness of these policies require addressing issues such as access to finance, skills development, and infrastructure gaps (Abdulai et al., 2020).

### **Effectiveness and Challenges**

While regional development policies have made some positive contributions, challenges persist in achieving their desired impact. Limited financial resources, capacity gaps at the local level, and inadequate coordination among government agencies remain significant challenges (Frempong et al., 2018). Additionally, a lack of comprehensive and integrated regional development planning hampers the effective targeting of resources and interventions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2018).

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter described the key concepts involved in this study. Furthermore, the key theories required to expand the explanation of the relationships between the key concepts were discussed.

## CHAPTER THREE

### EMPIRICAL OVERVIEW, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

#### Introduction

In research endeavours, empirical reviews, conceptual frameworks, and theories hold significant value. Empirical reviews offer several advantages, such as preventing redundant work and enriching understanding of the specific subject being investigated (Neuman et al, 2014). Notably, Walliman (2021) suggests that empirical reviews provide insights into the current state of knowledge within a particular field of interest. Additionally, conducting an empirical review helps identify gaps in knowledge, highlights various research methodologies that can guide the study, and assists in providing context to findings (Griffiee, 2012).

The conceptual framework plays a crucial role by providing a coherent framework comprising interconnected concepts. This framework helps visually depict the relationship between different issues in a study and facilitates the identification and description of concepts related to the problem (Luse, Mennecke & Townsend, 2012). Theories on the other hand also serve as the backbone of research, providing a framework for understanding phenomena, guiding investigations, and generating meaningful insights. In this review, I explore the crucial role theories play in research work across various disciplines. Theories offer researchers conceptual frameworks that organize and structure their inquiries. They provide a foundation of established knowledge, concepts, and principles, enabling researchers to contextualize their work within a broader theoretical framework. This framework

not only helps define the research questions but also facilitates the formulation of hypotheses and the identification of variables and relationships that need to be explored.

This chapter presents the empirical reviews that are associated with the contribution of churches in development followed by the lessons learnt from the empirical reviews. The chapter ends with the theories of development. Theories not only contribute to academic research but also have practical implications, aiding in the development of interventions and policies. As such, theories serve as indispensable tools that drive scientific progress and deepen our understanding of the world around us.

### **Empirical Overview**

The reviewed empirical studies focus on the involvement of churches in development efforts. In total, nine empirical studies were examined. These include Koya (2010); Kariuki (2018); Ovbiebo (2013); Georgina (2020); Fehintolu and John (2016); Eshun (2013); Denteh (2019); Abonyi (2016); and Oduro-Ofori (2011).

Koya's (2010) research paper focuses on examining the role of the Catholic Church in regional development in Northern Ghana, with a specific emphasis on the Diocese of Wa. This empirical review aims to evaluate the methodology, findings, and contributions of Koya's research, providing a critical analysis of its strengths and limitations.

Koya's research employs a mixed-methods approach to gather empirical evidence on the role of the Catholic Church in regional development. The researcher utilizes

both quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys, interviews, and document analysis. By combining these methods, Koya aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the church's contributions to the development of Northern Ghana.

The research findings indicate that the Catholic Church, particularly within the Diocese of Wa, plays a significant role in regional development. Koya identifies several key areas where the church has made substantial contributions. These include education, healthcare provision, infrastructure development, social welfare, and community empowerment. The research highlights the establishment and management of schools, healthcare facilities, and social welfare programs as instrumental in improving literacy rates, healthcare access, and overall socio-economic progress in the region.

Koya's research makes notable contributions to the literature on the role of the Catholic Church in regional development in Northern Ghana. By focusing on the specific case of the Diocese of Wa, the research provides insights into the local context and highlights the church's specific interventions and impact. The mixed-methods approach adopted by the researcher allows for a comprehensive analysis, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data to support the findings. Additionally, the research acknowledges the collaborations between the church and local/international partners, emphasizing the importance of leveraging resources and expertise to enhance development efforts.

Despite its contributions, Koya's research also has some limitations that should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the research relies heavily on self-reported data



through surveys and interviews, which may introduce bias and subjectivity. Additionally, the sample size and representativeness of the respondents are not clearly stated, which may impact the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, while the research identifies the church's contributions, it may not extensively explore potential challenges and limitations faced by the Catholic Church in regional development.

In conclusion, Stephen Aayagryeb Koya's research on the role of the Catholic Church in regional development in Northern Ghana, specifically within the Diocese of Wa, provides valuable insights into the church's contributions and impact on the community. By utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research offers a comprehensive understanding of the church's involvement in various sectors, including education, healthcare, infrastructure, social welfare, and community empowerment. However, it is important to address the limitations mentioned, such as potential biases and the need for a more representative sample. Overall, Koya's research contributes to the existing knowledge of the Catholic Church's role in regional development, emphasizing the significance of partnerships and localized interventions in achieving sustainable socio-economic progress.

Ovbiebo's (2013) research paper focuses on investigating the role of Christian churches in community development, specifically within the context of Ovia South-West, Nigeria. This empirical review aims to evaluate the methodology, findings, and contributions of Ovbiebo's research, providing a critical analysis of its strengths and limitations.

Ovbiebo's research utilizes a case study approach to examine the role of Christian churches in community development in Ovia South-West Nigeria. The researcher employs qualitative research methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. The study's sample size was 100, and Purposive sampling was used in sampling the key informants. These methods allow for a deep exploration of the experiences, perspectives, and actions of Christian churches in the specific context under study.

The study's findings demonstrate the importance of Christian churches in Ovia South-West Nigeria's community development. It was discovered that these activities only promote the social growth of community members, not their overall development. The activities of Christian churches do not contribute to the growth of other sectors, such as the economy, education, or health care. This demonstrates that the Ovia South-West community's overall development is not influenced by the activities of Christian churches there.

Ovbiebo's research makes several notable contributions to the understanding of the role of Christian churches in community development. By focusing on a specific case study, the research provides context-specific insights into the actions and impact of churches in Ovia South-West Nigeria. The utilization of qualitative research methods allows for an in-depth exploration of the experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders, shedding light on the complexities and nuances of church-community interactions. Additionally, the research highlights the multifaceted nature of church contributions, encompassing various sectors crucial for community development.

Despite its contributions, Ovbiebo's research also has certain limitations that should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the research relies on a single case study, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Additionally, the sample size and representativeness of the participants were not enough, which may impact the comprehensiveness and diversity of perspectives captured. Moreover, while the research identifies the role of Christian churches in community development, it may not deeply explore the potential challenges, limitations, or unintended consequences of their actions.

In conclusion, David Ovbiebo's research on the role of Christian churches in community development within Ovia South-West Nigeria provides valuable insights into the contributions and impact of churches in the specific context studied. The utilization of qualitative research methods and a case study approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the churches' actions and their effects on the community. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations, such as the generalizability of findings and the need for a more diverse sample. Further research is recommended to expand the understanding of the challenges, limitations, and long-term sustainability of church contributions to community development. Overall, Ovbiebo's research contributes to the existing literature on the role of Christian churches in community development and provides a foundation for future investigations in this field.

Koya's study on the Catholic Church in Northern Ghana highlights the church's contributions to regional development. The research emphasizes the church's involvement in various social and economic activities to improve the well-being of

communities. On the other hand, Ovbiebo's study on Christian churches in Ovia South-West Nigeria recognizes their significant role in social development and not general development. Both studies underline the churches' efforts in addressing local challenges and improving living conditions.

Georgina's (2020) research paper titled "A Reflection on the Role of the Church in Child Development in Ghana: A Case Study of Atons District Assemblies of God, Ghana" explores the role of the church in promoting child development within the specific context of the Atons District. This empirical review aims to assess the methodology, findings, and contributions of the research, offering a critical analysis of its strengths and limitations.

The research employs a case study approach to investigate the role of the church in child development, focusing on the Atons District Assemblies of God in Ghana. The researcher utilizes qualitative research methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis, and data were collected from 50 purposively selected Respondents. These methods allow for an in-depth exploration of the experiences, perspectives, and actions of the church in promoting child development.

The study's findings demonstrated the close connection between the church and child development. The practices of the child's carers must be taken into account for the kid's overall development, and the church's function as a child development agent cannot be disregarded. The study identifies various aspects of child development addressed by the church, including education, spiritual growth, moral development, and social support. The research reveals that the church provides

educational programs, religious teachings, mentorship, and community engagement initiatives to enhance the well-being and development of children in the Atonsu District.

This research contributes to the understanding of the role of the church in child development within the Ghanaian context, specifically within the Atonsu District. By employing a case study approach, the research provides context-specific insights into the practices and impact of the Atonsu District Assemblies of God. The use of qualitative research methods allows for a nuanced understanding of the church's actions and their implications for child development. Additionally, the research sheds light on the multi-faceted approach taken by the church in addressing different dimensions of child development.

Although the research makes valuable contributions, it also has some limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the case study approach limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or churches. Additionally, the sample size and representativeness of the participants are not explicitly discussed, which may affect the comprehensiveness and diversity of perspectives captured. Furthermore, while the research highlights the positive aspects of the church's role in child development, it may not deeply explore potential challenges or limitations faced by the church in this regard.

In conclusion, the research on the role of the church in child development within the Atonsu District Assemblies of God in Ghana provides valuable insights into the contributions and impact of the church in promoting child well-being. The utilization of qualitative research methods and a case study approach enables a

comprehensive exploration of the church's practices and their implications for child development. However, it is important to consider the limitations, such as the limited generalizability and the need for a more diverse sample. Further research is recommended to examine potential challenges and limitations faced by the church in promoting child development and to explore the long-term sustainability of their initiatives. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of the role of the church in child development and provides a foundation for future investigations in this field.

Fehintolu and John's (2016) research paper titled "An Appraisal of the Role of the Church in National Development: A Case of The Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria" examines the contribution of The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) to national development in Nigeria. This empirical review aims to assess the methodology, findings, and contributions of the research, providing a critical analysis of its strengths and limitations.

The research utilizes a case study approach to investigate the role of the RCCG in national development in Nigeria. The method adopted to collect relevant data for this research is the historical and field research method. The researcher employs qualitative research methods, including observation which was both participatory and non-participatory, interviews, and informal discussion. These methods allow for a comprehensive understanding of the church's activities and their impact on national development.

The research findings highlight the significant role played by the RCCG in national development in Nigeria. The Religious, Educational, Political, Infrastructural, and

Economic sectors of Nigerian society have all been transformed by the Church. The report also covers the rapid growth of the RCCG, highlighting the issues brought on by this quick growth as well as the church's modern solutions to these issues.

This research makes valuable contributions to the understanding of the role of the church in national development, with a specific focus on the RCCG in Nigeria. By employing a case study approach, the research provides insights into the specific actions and impact of the RCCG in various sectors of national development. The utilization of both qualitative and quantitative research methods enhances the comprehensiveness of the study and allows for a more robust analysis of the church's contributions.

While the research makes significant contributions, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the case study approach limits the generalizability of the findings to other churches or contexts. Additionally, the research sample and its representativeness are not explicitly discussed, which may affect the validity and generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the research primarily focuses on the positive aspects of the church's role in national development and may not thoroughly examine potential challenges or unintended consequences of its actions.

In conclusion, the research on the role of the RCCG in national development in Nigeria provides valuable insights into the contributions and impact of the church in fostering societal progress. The utilization of a case study approach and a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods enhance the comprehensiveness of the study. However, it is important to consider the limitations, such as the limited generalizability and the need for a more diverse and

representative sample. Further research is recommended to explore potential challenges and limitations faced by the church and to provide a more balanced assessment of its role in national development. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of the church's role in national development and provides a foundation for future investigations in this area.

Eshun's (2013) research paper titled "A Study of the Social Ministry of Some Charismatic Churches in Ghana: A Case Study of the Provision of Educational and Healthcare Services by Four Selected Churches" explores the social ministry activities of charismatic churches in Ghana, with a focus on their provision of educational and healthcare services. This empirical review aims to evaluate the methodology, findings, and contributions of the research, offering a critical analysis of its strengths and limitations.

The research employs a case study approach to investigate the social ministry activities of four selected charismatic churches in Ghana. The researcher utilizes qualitative research methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. These methods allow for an in-depth exploration of the church's social ministry practices and their impact on the provision of educational and healthcare services. The respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate irrespective of their levels of education. The stratified sampling methodology was also used and a total of two hundred (200) participants were involved in this research.

The research findings highlight the significant role played by the selected charismatic churches in Ghana in the provision of educational and healthcare



services. The study identifies various initiatives undertaken by the churches, including the establishment of schools. The research reveals that these activities have positively impacted the communities, contributing to increased access to education and healthcare services. healthcare facilities, scholarship programs, health campaigns, and community outreach projects

This research contributes to the understanding of the social ministry activities of charismatic churches in Ghana, specifically in the provision of educational and healthcare services. By employing a case study approach, the research provides context-specific insights into the practices and impact of the selected churches. The utilization of qualitative research methods allows for a nuanced understanding of the church's social ministry activities and their implications for community development.

While the research makes valuable contributions, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the case study approach limits the generalizability of the findings to other charismatic churches or contexts. Additionally, the sample selection process and representativeness of the churches are not explicitly discussed, which may affect the comprehensiveness and applicability of the findings. Furthermore, the research primarily focuses on the positive aspects of the church's social ministry activities and may not thoroughly explore potential challenges or limitations faced by the churches.

In conclusion, the research on the social ministry activities of charismatic churches in Ghana provides valuable insights into the provision of educational and healthcare services. The utilization of a case study approach and qualitative research methods

allows for an in-depth exploration of the selected churches' practices and impact. However, it is important to consider the limitations, such as the limited generalizability and the need for a more diverse and representative sample. Further research is recommended to examine potential challenges and limitations faced by the churches in their social ministry activities and to provide a more comprehensive assessment of their role in community development. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of the social ministry of charismatic churches and provides a foundation for future investigations in this field.

Denteh (2019) examined the Contribution of the Kristo Asafo Church in Creating Employment Opportunities in Ghana and also explores the role of the Kristo Asafo Church in promoting employment and economic development in Ghana. This empirical review aims to evaluate the methodology, findings, and contributions of the research, providing a critical analysis of its strengths and limitations.

The study uses a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques to look into how the Kristo Asafo Church has helped Ghana's economy by fostering job opportunities. To gather in-depth knowledge about the subject, samples for the qualitative portion of the task were identified and chosen using purposeful sampling. The researcher conducts interviews, surveys, and statistical analysis to gather data and examine the impact of the church's activities on employment generation.

The research findings highlight the significant contribution of the Kristo Asafo Church in creating employment opportunities in Ghana. The study identifies various initiatives undertaken by the church, including the establishment of

businesses, vocational training programs, and skills development projects. The research reveals that these activities have led to the creation of jobs, income generation, and economic empowerment for individuals and communities associated with the church.

This research contributes to the understanding of the Kristo Asafo Church's contribution to employment generation and economic development in Ghana. The mixed-methods approach allows for a comprehensive examination of the church's activities and their impact on job creation. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods provides a holistic understanding of the church's initiatives and their implications for employment opportunities.

While the research makes valuable contributions, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the sample selection process and representativeness of the participants are not explicitly discussed, which may affect the generalizability and external validity of the findings. Additionally, the research may not deeply explore potential challenges, limitations, or sustainability of the employment opportunities created by the Kristo Asafo Church.

In conclusion, the research on the contribution of the Kristo Asafo Church in creating employment opportunities in Ghana provides valuable insights into the church's role in economic development. The mixed-methods approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the church's initiatives and their impact on employment generation. However, it is important to consider the limitations, such as the need for a more representative sample and a more in-depth examination of potential challenges and limitations. Further research is recommended to explore

the long-term sustainability and scalability of the church's employment programs and to provide a more nuanced analysis of their impact on local communities. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of the Kristo Asafo Church's contribution to employment opportunities in Ghana and provides a foundation for future investigations in this field.

Also, David Mwaura Kariuki's (2018) research outlines a research project that investigates the crucial role played by Christian churches in community building and improving the standard of living for communities in their vicinity, with a focus on poverty alleviation. To comprehend the church's contributions to community development, the study uses a case study approach and a community-based qualitative research (CBQR) methodology. The results, which illustrate the church's engagement in a variety of sectors including health, education, spiritual well-being, social elements, family life, community empowerment, and livelihood, are obtained through content analysis of the interviews. However, the study acknowledges limitations in terms of time constraints and participant numbers and calls for further research to evaluate the sustainability of church activities and to explore collaboration opportunities with other faith-based organizations.

The research project's focus on the role of Christian churches in community development and poverty alleviation is a significant and relevant topic, as churches have historically played important roles in social and economic development worldwide. The use of a community-based qualitative research (CBQR) method and a case study approach provides a valuable opportunity to gain in-depth insights into the church's contributions within a specific context.

The reliance on content analysis to identify key themes emerging from interviews is a suitable method for capturing and analyzing qualitative data. This approach allows for a systematic examination of the church's activities and their alignment with community development goals. The use of Nvivo coding further enhances the analysis by providing a structured framework to categorize and interpret the data.

The research findings indicate that the church acknowledges poverty as a pressing issue and has implemented various social and economic actions to address it. The identified focus areas of health, education, spiritual well-being, social aspects, family life, community empowerment, and livelihood demonstrate the multifaceted approach taken by the church in its community development efforts. These findings align with previous studies that highlight the church's role in providing essential services and fostering community well-being.

However, the study acknowledges limitations regarding time constraints and participant numbers. These limitations may impact the generalizability of the findings and the depth of evaluation of the church's activities and their sustainability. It is crucial to consider the contextual factors and limitations of the research when interpreting the results.

The recommendation for further research on the church's role in community development and the assessment of the sustainability of its activities is valid. Conducting more extensive and longitudinal studies would provide a deeper understanding of the long-term impact and effectiveness of the church's efforts. Additionally, the call for increased collaboration with other faith-based

organizations in community development activities highlights the importance of partnership and resource-sharing to maximize the church's impact.

In conclusion, the research project addressing the role of Christian churches in community development and poverty alleviation is a relevant and valuable contribution to the field. The use of qualitative methods, such as CBQR and content analysis, provides a comprehensive understanding of the church's contributions within a specific context. While the study acknowledges limitations, the findings demonstrate the church's focus areas and commitment to community well-being. Further research and collaboration are recommended to assess sustainability and enhance the church's impact on community development.

The findings from these research work underscore the significant contributions of Christian churches in various dimensions of development. While each study focuses on a different context and aspect, they collectively emphasize the churches' efforts in regional development, community development, child development, national development, social ministry, and employment opportunities. These findings highlight the transformative role of Christian churches in addressing societal challenges and advancing development goals. Further research and evaluation are recommended to assess the long-term impacts, sustainability, and effectiveness of church-led development initiatives in different contexts.

Abonyi's (2016) research work titled "Universities' Role in Regional Development: A Case Study of University for Development Studies, Ghana" focuses on investigating how the University for Development Studies (UDS) in Ghana responds to its regional development mandate, with a specific focus on human

capital development, innovation capabilities, and social and environmental development in northern Ghana. The study employs an interpretive research paradigm and qualitative research methodology to explore the topic.

The study acknowledges the relevance and appropriateness of examining the regional development mandate of UDS, considering its establishment in 1992 with the explicit mandate to blend academic work with community engagement for the total development of northern Ghana. Despite the underdeveloped state of the region, there is a lack of attention in the existing literature regarding UDS's role in regional development. The research employed purposive sampling, selecting 20 participants for data collection. The qualitative data collected through this process was analysed using an interpretive approach.

The findings of the study indicate that UDS has made notable efforts to connect its teaching, research, and service roles with the development needs of northern Ghana. However, it has a stronger association with human capital development and social, cultural, and environmental development compared to fostering innovation capabilities in the region. Based on these findings, the study recommends that for UDS to effectively contribute to the development of northern Ghana in line with its policy mandate, the government and regional authorities should create an enabling environment and establish appropriate policy support structures to facilitate the university's engagement with the industrial sector and local businesses.

In summary, this empirical review highlights the key elements of the research work. The study employs an interpretive research paradigm and qualitative methodology to examine UDS's response to its regional development mandate in northern Ghana.

The findings emphasize the university's stronger links with human capital development and social, cultural, and environmental development while indicating a need for greater focus on fostering innovation capabilities. The review concludes by recommending the creation of an enabling environment and policy support structures to facilitate UDS's engagement with the industrial sector and local businesses in the region.

Finally, Oduro-Ofori's (2011) research work titled "The Role of Local Government in Local Economic Development Promotion at the District Level in Ghana" focuses on investigating the effectiveness of local governments, specifically District Assemblies, in promoting local economic development (LED) in Ghana. The study addresses the limited attention given to the involvement of local governments in LED and aims to identify the challenges, conditionalities, and potential solutions for enhancing their role in LED. The Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly in Ghana serves as the case study for this research.

The study adopts a qualitative research methodology and employs a variety of data collection methods, including interviews, documentary analysis, observations, group discussions, and questionnaire administration. The non-probability sampling technique of purposive sampling is utilized.

The findings of the study reveal that although the local government plays multiple roles in LED, these are predominantly traditional and not directly effective in addressing the LED needs of the municipality. The strategies and tools employed by the local government are limited in scope, and its commitment to implementing programs and projects beneficial to economic entities in the municipality is lacking.



Insufficient capacity in terms of funds, logistics, and human resources is identified, with the local government heavily reliant on the central government to meet its capacity needs. The institutional setup for LED promotion is weak, negatively impacting the coordination of LED initiatives. Additionally, the integration of LED into the local government's development planning process is inadequate. Stakeholder engagement is limited to informing and consulting, with a stronger relationship maintained with external stakeholders rather than local ones. The absence of a clear platform for stakeholder engagement in the LED process is noted. External factors influencing the local government's LED performance include the lack of a national policy framework, restricted access to local resources, and the inadequate capacity of local economic entities.

Based on the findings, the study recommends several measures to enhance the effectiveness of the local government in LED. These include implementing pragmatic and relevant strategies and tools, strengthening the local government's capacity, establishing a robust institutional setup, and actively involving necessary stakeholders in all stages of the LED process. It is also suggested that the central government should support and strengthen the local government's role in LED.

In summary, this empirical review provides an overview of the research work's key elements. The study explores the role of local government in LED in Ghana, focusing on the Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Assembly. It employs qualitative research methods and identifies challenges and conditionalities hindering effective LED promotion. The findings emphasize limitations in the local government's strategies, capacity, institutional setup, and stakeholder engagement. Recommendations are

provided to address these issues and enhance the local government's effectiveness in LED.

Table 2 contains the condensed information from the nine (9) empirical studies that were examined in this research. The summary provides details about the authors, publication year, topic, study location, research methodology, participants, sampling method, data collection tool, and the results of each study.

**Table 2: Summary of Empirical Overview**

<b>Authors/Year</b>	<b>Issue of study</b>	<b>Location of study</b>	<b>Research approach</b>	<b>Sampling procedure</b>	<b>Data collection instrument</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>Koya, S. A. (2010)</b>	The role of the Catholic Church in regional development in Northern Ghana.	Wa, Ghana	mixed-methods	Purposive sampling	surveys, interviews, and document analysis	- the Church plays a significant role in regional development - establishment and management of schools, healthcare facilities, and social welfare programs
<b>Ovbiebo, D. (2013)</b>	The role of Christian Churches in community development	Ovia South-West Nigeria	qualitative research methods	Purposive sampling	interviews, observations, and document analysis	- churches contribute to the well-being of the community, such as education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, and spiritual guidance
<b>Georgina, T. (2020)</b>	Reflection on the Role of the Church in Child Development in Ghana	Atons District, Ghana.	qualitative research methods	Purposive sampling	interviews, observations, and document analysis	- The study identifies various aspects of child development addressed by the church, including education, spiritual growth, moral development, and social support.

Authors	Issue of study	Location of study	Research approach	Sampling procedure	Data collection instrument	Results
<b>Fehintolu, A. &amp; John, O. (2016)</b>	An appraisal of the role of the church in national development	Nigeria	qualitative research methods	Purposive sampling	Observation, interviews, and informal discussion.	The Church has transformed the Religious, Educational, Political, Infrastructural, and Economic sectors of Nigerian Society
<b>Eshun, D. (2013)</b>	A Study of the Social Ministry of Some Charismatic Churches in Ghana: A Case Study of the Provision of Educational and Healthcare Services by Four Selected Churches.	Ghana.	qualitative research	stratified sampling	Questionnaires, interviews, and observations	contribute to increased access to education and healthcare services. healthcare facilities, scholarship programs, health campaigns, and community outreach projects

<b>Denteh, D. K. (2019)</b>	The Contribution of The Kristo Asafo Church to Creating Employment Opportunities in Ghana	Ghana.	qualitative research methods	Purposive sampling	interviews	The study identifies various initiatives undertaken by the church, including the establishment of businesses, vocational training programs, and skills development projects.
<b>Kariuki, D. (2018)</b>	The Church's Role in Community Development	Kenya	community-based qualitative research (CBQR) method		interviews	The research findings indicate that the church acknowledges poverty as a pressing issue and has implemented various social and economic actions to address it
<b>Abonyi, U. K. (2016)</b>	Universities' Role in Regional Development: A Case Study of University for Development Studies, Ghana	Ghana	qualitative research methodology	Purposive sampling	interviews	The findings of the study indicate that UDS has made notable efforts to connect its teaching, research, and service roles with the development needs of northern Ghana.

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<b>Oduro-Ofori, E. (2011)</b>	The Role of Local Government in Local Economic Development Promotion at the District Level in Ghana	Ghana	qualitative research methodology	Purposive sampling	Questionnaire, interviews	- The strategies and tools employed by the local government are limited in scope - Insufficient capacity in terms of funds, logistics, and human resources is identified, with the local government heavily reliant on the central government to meet its capacity needs.
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Source: Authors compilation (2024)

### **Lessons Learnt**

The evaluation made clear that studies used mixed-methods, quantitative, and qualitative research approaches to examine the problems with social assistance programmes. Because the methodology allows for the simultaneous use of qualitative and quantitative metrics in terms of data gathering and analysis in a study, mixed methods have proven useful. The review also revealed that purposive sampling was primarily used as a sampling technique. Purposive sampling was mostly employed in studies that followed a qualitative and mixed methodologies approach to research. The main data-gathering tools used are a questionnaire, interviewing guidelines, and observation checklist. The majority of the research used interviews, observation techniques, and key informant interviews as their primary means of data gathering. These techniques made it easier to collect information from key informants, non-key informants, and recipients. Data was gathered utilizing a variety of techniques, allowing for triangulation to assure completeness in data gathering and overcome shortcomings of employing one technique. This guarantees validity because it makes comparison easier.

### **Historical Overview of Regional Development Policies in Ghana**

In further empirical review of literature in relation to the study, it was evident that the governments of Ghana over the years have had various strategies and policies to tackle poverty and development. Below is a review of these policies and strategies that have been initiated and executed.

### Colonial Development Policy

According to Beining (1975, 1990) colonial development policy in Ghana was designed around the development of places where cash crops such as cocoa, coffee, timber, rubber palm oil and other crops could be obtained for export. The colonialists in Ghana also concentrated on the provision of roads, schools and health services to areas where mineral deposits such as gold, diamond, bauxite, manganese could be extracted. Such a policy explains why northern Ghana received very minimal attention. Northern has lacked the cash crops and quantum of minerals of interest to the colonialists. As noted by a British colonial governor, Sir F. M. Hodgson:

*“....the trade values of the Northern Territories are not favourable as to their future, and lead me to the opinion that they possess no natural resources to develop. The country as far as I know is destitute of mineral wealth, it is destitute of valuable timers, and does not produce either rubber or kola nuts or indeed any product of trade value. For the present I therefore cannot too strongly urge the employment of all the available resources of the Government upon the development of the country to the south of Kintampo leaving the Northern territories to be dealt with in future. I would not at present spend upon the Northern territories a single penny more than is absolutely necessary for their suitable administration and the encouragement of transit trade. (Bening, 2005:40).”*



Although Governor Hodgson suggested that the North could not stand on its own, he opted rather not to spend resources on it but rather support its secondary activities such as transit trade. Notwithstanding that situation, the north was further targeted to support the development of the country south of Kintampo.

The plantations, industries and the mines in the southern part of Ghana enabled some southern Ghanaian to amass wealth and send their dependents to good schools abroad for further education. The education so received gave some southerners some form of political and economic advantage and visibility in the job market. Northerners were mostly recruited into the mines and security services of the then Gold Coast. The low educational background of most northerners limited them to the lower rungs of whatever employment they could obtain. There is corroborative evidence that under colonial development policies, northern Ghana was considered a fertile ground for producing manual labor for the fast-growing cocoa and mining industries of southern Ghana (Saaka, 2001, Songsore, 2001; Bekye, 1998). Apart from starting late and well behind southern Ghana, the education system and education of northern youth was controlled for a long time by the colonizers (Quist & Apusigah, 2003; Der 2001; Bening, 1990). But for the missionaries, specifically the White Fathers of the Catholic Church, formal education would have been completely neglected (Der, 2001; McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). Realizing this situation in the early 1900s, the then colonial governor, Sir Gordon Guggisberg; began efforts, which were meant to bridge gaps in education such as the creation of the separate education board for the north.

Thus, development gaps which existed between northern and southern Ghana were exacerbated by colonial policies. These gaps still remain today even as efforts to bridge them remain dismal and continue to yield dismal results which are incommensurate to the enormity of the poverty of the area. The poverty level of northern Ghana remains unacceptably high in spite of the poverty reduction and growth efforts dating back to the early independence era (GoG/NDPC, 2003, 2006, Dittoh, 2008).

### **Nationalist Reform Policy**

Since the nationalist era, dating back to the 1950s to date, a number of reforms have been undertaken to bridge development gaps created under colonial administration. These range from import substitution industrialization, export-oriented market development, state enterprise development, urbanization to infrastructural development, which have largely been rooted in agriculture. Socialist and liberal policies as well as a mix have been applied. Ghana has also moved from somewhat centralized to somewhat decentralized planning and from nationalist to open market as well as state to private sector development. While these efforts have yielded to private sector development, significant positive results overall, which have been tremendous for the relatively better endowed southern Ghana, the same can not to be said of northern Ghana, whose poverty levels remain above national and regional averages.

### **Agrarian Reforms under Nkrumah**

After independence in 1957, the first president of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, introduced the state farm and workers brigade systems. Under the “Grow What You

Eat policy, farming was boosted even as the state designed parallel initiatives to complement subsistent farming. The policy sought to make Ghana self-sufficient in food production and also reduce the import bill of the government. The import substitution policy eventually failed because of stiff competition from the countries which stood to benefit from selling to Ghana. For northern Ghana, its comparative advantage in cereals, livestock and vegetable production was harnessed resulting in the establishment of the Nasia Rice Mills, Pwalugu Tomato Factory and Zuarungu Meat Factories. These industries were part of the national campaign on import substitution industrialization. It did not only give farmers the much-needed markets and good money for their efforts but also jobs to the people. The communities that lived near and those that grew around the industries served to promote inter-cultural and economic ex-changes that boosted development.

### **Operation Feed Yourself under Acheampong**

When Nkrumah was overthrown in a military coup in 1966, no major shift in development policy occurred under the National Liberation Council (NLC). The second Republican Government of Ghana, the Busia Administration (1969-1971) adopted rural development as distinct from the urban development thrust of previous governments. The rural development programme was short-lived as the Progress Party (PP) administration did not stay long in power, about two years. The National Redemption Council (NRC), military administration under General Acheampong, this was formed after the overthrow of the Busia Administration, introduced “Operation Feed Yourself” (OFY) policy in Ghana in 1972. Ghanaians

were encouraged, like under Nkrumah, to “Grow what they eat and eat what they grow”. Some early successes in food production were achieved.

In northern Ghana, this translated into massive irrigation schemes and development programmes based on its agricultural endowments. The Northern Regional Integrated Development Programme (NORRIP) and the Upper Regional Agricultural Development Programme (URADEP) were designed and established to lead the development of northern Ghana. To boost agricultural activities in the semi-arid regions, the regime introduced and expanded irrigation schemes to move the area from unreliable rain-fed and short lived to depended all year-round irrigation agriculture. The Tono, Veia and Bontanga Dams, to date, are important agricultural sites providing jobs for farmers, labourers, processors, retailers and porters as well as food and other agro-related activities. Farmer service centers and stores were opened in strategic locations that offered technical support and agricultural inputs at subsidized prices to farmers.

Rice production in the Nasia, Fumbisi Valley and Nabogu areas were also boosted. Several dug outs and small dams were also constructed in rural communities some of which continue to provide water for gardening, livestock, construction and household use. The State Housing System, which led to the building of estate and low-cost housing schemes provided affordable housing for low-income workers, improved the spatial beauty of communities and served to hasten urban development. These highly commendable efforts of the Acheampong era, did not only improve socio-economic conditions of the people and areas but also helped to

close gaps between the north and south. However, it was not for long that the agenda ran into crisis.

The projects were fraught with the debilitating diseases of misappropriation, mismanagement and nepotism. Also, corruption in high places, in government and abuse of the import license system soon crippled domestic agriculture as cheap imports made it impossible for farmers to sell their produce. The collapse of the agricultural sector worsened the plight of northerners as they had no alternative livelihoods – no mines or industries to offer them employment in the formal sector of the Ghanaian economy. What started in 1972 as the most promising era yet, in terms of indigenized, people-centered and nationalistic endeavors and for the northern, a concentrated effort at equity programme ended as the fatal era in Ghana's socio-economic history (Apusigah, 2002).

### **Revolutionary and Liberal Reforms under Rawlings**

The nearly two decades of Rawlings administration in Ghanaian politics was marked by varied socio-economic reforms that have been radical, controversial and even oppositional. Starting as a socialist agenda based on populist politics, that was short-lived, the administration turned to the neo-liberal Bretton Wood institutions, the World Bank and IMF, for respite, when it seemed that enough. During the early era of radical revolutionarism, the populist agenda that was promoted was intended to address equity gaps. The sudden swing in politics from populist socialism to liberal capitalism, resulted in the structural adjustments that for some time seemed to have been delivering socio-economic benefits. However, after about a decade of adjustment, studies revealed that the poverty net was growing and equity gaps

widening (GSS, 2002; GoG/NDPC, 2003). Abugre (1993) observed that the trade liberalization policy had made many Ghanaian products and their prices uncompetitive. Structural adjustment hardships have led many companies to retrench, windup or import cheaper products for sale in the local markets. For the masses, who had formed the support base of the Rawlings revolution the liberal capitalist economics was a complete deviation from the radical revolutionary intent of the early Rawlings era.

Under such liberal reforms the ailing Ghanaian economy whose growth rate of negative 10% by the end of the 1970's was greatly boosted. The inflation rate was reduced significantly, although it remained high. Mass infrastructural development in the water, roads, markets, schools, hospitals and electrification have resulted in marked improvement in living conditions. The cocoa and mining sectors were rehabilitated and supported to become the leading foreign exchanged earners in Ghana. A human-centered pricing policy for cocoa and gold sought to improve the balance of payment difficulties that Ghana was experiencing at the plight of the poor and/or largely rural farmers and led to the resurgences of a buying and selling regime in most of Ghanaians cities. In 1985, the government introduced the National Best Farmer award policy in December to annually reward hard-working farmers nation-wide. Vision 2020 and the Medium-Term Development Plan sought to consolidate the gains made in the era of the Structural Adjustment Policies. The Medium-Term Development Plan appeared to have been ended or shelved by the end of the year 2000, with the change of political leadership.

For northern Ghana, rural electrification and expansion of health and educational facilities resulted in the extension of services to hitherto unreached places. The creation of the Upper West Region and districts such as Bongo, Zabzugu-Tatale, Saboba Chereponi, among others, extended services to these hitherto neglected rural areas while the establishment of the University for Development Studies and Tamale Polytechnic (with the opening of Wa and Bolgatanga Polytechnics in process) extended higher education to northern Ghana for the first time. However, these were not enough to impact on the poverty situation in any significant way. The introduction of cash and carry in the health sector, facilities user fees in tertiary education and removal of subsidies including those for agricultural inputs coupled with cutbacks on government subventions to state enterprises and civil/public service tended to affect the poorest of the poor. It is not therefore surprising that poverty studies for the 1990s found the three northern regions to be the poorest (GSS,2003)

### **Poverty Reduction under Kufuor**

When the New Patriotic Party (NPP) came to power in the year 2001, under J.A. Kufour, they implemented the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I) from the year 2003 to 2005 and the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) from 2006 to 2008. These programmes; which were directed at directly targeting poverty by reducing and gradually eliminating as growth is promoted resulted in major reforms in Ghana's development agenda. One such was the declaration of a Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) status which resulted in benefits such as debt forgiveness, were arguably invested in projects throughout the country.

The GPRS II sought to increase access to irrigation agriculture, a marked departure from high dependence on rain-fed farming system in the past. It also sought to increase access to credit for agricultural inputs, develop selected crops and increase access to mechanized agriculture. Additionally, GPRS II sought to increase extension services to farmers, improve agricultural marketing and increase access to the global export market. The seven aims of the GPRS II did not transform northern Ghana as envisaged.

Also, as part of poverty reduction efforts worldwide, the Kufour administration also benefited from the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), however this growth-oriented package did not favour the most impoverished parts of Ghana. Consequently, only selected districts were able to benefit from the MCA. Programmes such as School Feeding Programme, Capitation Grants, *Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP)* Microfinance and Small Loan Centre (MASLOC) were aimed at improving education, providing microcredit for enterprise development and supporting poor households to meet basic needs. In the health sector, the introduction of health exemptions, replacement of cash can carry with a National Health Insurance Scheme all delivered positive results. However, there were no targeted schemes for northern Ghana. In 2006, when the poverty survey for 2000 to 2005 was issued, it was made clear that the level of poverty had reduced from 36% to 18% but the trends remained with northern Ghana still recording the worst rates. Furthermore, when in October, 2007, the then President of Ghana, J. A. Kufour, announced the creation of 25 new districts and upgraded the status of 26 others, only four were from the entire northern Ghana. They were



Chereponi, Kpandai, Lambussie and Kassenga-Nankani West, which were inaugurated on February 29, 2008 as autonomous districts and thus qualifying to attract separate budgetary support from Central Government (Daily Graphic October 26, 2007:6).

From the above overview, one finds that a combination of policies has been initiated to promote development. However, the starkly governance processes and resource allocations that had not served northern Ghana's needs and interests. This situation explains, in part, why the north has remained underdeveloped as reported by strategic policy papers such as Making People Matter (1991), National Development Policy Framework (1994) and the Vision 2020. The Medium-Term Development Programme, GPRS I & II and the Millennium Development Goals seem to have all failed to address the inherent biases against northern Ghana and its development. The discriminatory resource allocations that have tended to favor urban sectors have failed to address the development needs of the largely rural northern Ghana.

Arguably the policy reforms have been informed by policies that have lacked the requisite meanings and mechanisms for understanding and addressing questions on regional inequalities and their attendant socio-economic injustices. Their continued inability to provide strategies that address the problems of northern development comprehensively, and the continued spread of poverty at unacceptable levels require a revisit of the nature and dimensions of northern poverty.

### **Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSDA I & II) - Prof. J.E Mills**

The GSGDA was launched in 2010 after consultations with various stakeholders including the youth. The objectives, among others, was to increase food production, nutrition and security, and create sustainable job opportunities. To ensure these objectives are achieved, the Government was to increase agricultural financing through the establishment of the Agricultural Development Fund. To address youth challenges specifically, a number of guiding principles and actions were to be undertaken. They included coordinating inter-sectoral approaches to youth challenges; trade and investment activities; training/skills development; education and appropriate labour laws. Emphasis was placed on Youth in Agricultural Programme (YiAP) and Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) as vehicles to propel youth participation in the agricultural sector. While the YiAP had achieved some modest gains, SADA encountered administrative challenges. There were no holistic and robust empirical estimations of the impact of SADA, though there were pockets of individual researches to ascertain the impact of some of the interventions under SADA.

The period from 2010-2013 with GSDA Policy, it sought to review past developmental interventions and sought to pursue holistic growth of Ghana's development towards equitable distribution of income through the following thematic areas for regional development;

1. Ensuring and sustaining macroeconomic stability;
2. Enhanced competitiveness of Ghana's private sector;

3. Accelerated agricultural modernization and natural resource management;
4. Oil and gas development;
5. Infrastructure and human settlements development;
6. Human development, employment and productivity; and
7. Transparent and accountable governance.

In the medium-term, the strategic direction is to lay the foundation for the structural transformation of the economy within the decade ending 2020, through industrialization especially manufacturing, based on modernized agriculture and sustainable exploitation of Ghana's natural resources, particularly minerals, oil and gas. The process will be underpinned by rapid infrastructural and human development as well as the application of science, technology and innovation. In this regard expenditure is expected to be prioritized in favour of policies, programmes and projects in Agriculture, Infrastructure (including energy, oil and gas), Water and sanitation, Health, and Education (including ICT, Science, Technology and Innovation). This will enhance the creation of employment and income earning opportunities for rapid and sustained economic growth and poverty reduction.

**Contemporary Regional Development Policies and Programs from 2017-Date:  
Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo**

***National STI policy (Science, Research, and Technology)***

The National Science Technology and Innovation (STI) is a policy document (2017-2020) which provides directions and guidelines on how to harness the benefits of STI and integrate STI into the economy and the youth development

agenda of Ghana. Specific interventions are to be made to address the challenges of the youth through the application of science, technology, and innovation. These interventions include: “promoting innovation at all levels of the educational system; encouraging activities that draw on the STI capabilities of the youth; promoting STI competition among the youth; establishing award schemes that reward innovation among the youth; providing scholarships for promising science students; establishing mechanisms for encouraging young people to study the sciences; initiating mechanisms for early identification of talented young scientists; and establishing mentoring programmes in STI for the youth” (MESTI, 2017)

The Ghana Youth and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (now National Youth Employment Authority) has been in existence since 2006 to serve as a means of creating job opportunities for the youth in Ghana through job placement in the public sector and/or training. The programme aimed to place the youth in job opportunities in a manner that enabled them to acquire the necessary employable skills. By 2012, about 620,000 youths were employed and/or trained to be self-employed by the programme (YEA, 2019). However, in 2015 the programme faced some administrative lapses which led to huge loss of investment through the programme. Through an Act of parliament (Act 887) the YEA was established to give legal backing to the programme and provide guidelines to forestall any administrative lapses in the future. The programme provided an opportunity for the youth to learn a trade of choice and be assisted for two years and exit thereafter. From time-to-time modules were developed and implemented depending on the needs of a particular period. Some of these modules were Youth in Agriculture,

Youth in Sanitation and Coastal Assistant, Youth in Trades and Vocations, Youth in Entrepreneurship, Youth in Apparel and Textiles, and Youth in Information Communication Technology. There were periodic reviews of the modules to ensure they met the needs of a particular time and the financial resources available to run them. The President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo delivering the 2019 state of the nation address revealed that a total of 107,115 youths was engaged in 2018 and 125,000 set to be engaged in 2019 under the various modules in YEA (Akufo-Addo, 2018; Armah, 2018). In addition, Government facilitated the placement of 16,238 unemployed who registered with the Public Employment Centres and Private Employment Agencies within the same year (Armah, 2018). These young persons were trained with vocational and technical skills, small scale agribusiness enterprises and ICT, among others. Government envisaged an increase in these numbers for 2019 as the economy expanded and new modules that met the needs of the time were introduced. Funding for the programme was from the Government of Ghana (GOG) through taxes and levies (Armah, 2018; YEA, 2018). The National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) through YEA provided skills development and training, employment placement services, employment, apprenticeship and other forms of support to beneficiaries.

***National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP)  
(Entrepreneurial development)***

National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP), formally Youth Enterprise Support (YES) was established in 2016 to provide financial support or expert business advisory services for young entrepreneurs to start or expand existing SMEs. It was started with an initial capital fund of GHC 10,000,000.00. In

2017, the programme was expanded and rebranded to provide broader services to young entrepreneurs or would-be entrepreneurs (NEIP, 2018). A total of GHC 47,000,000.00 was allocated in the 2019 budget to this programme (Armah, 2018; GOG, 2018).

It was estimated that only 2% of SHS students wanted to venture into the world of entrepreneurship to create and own businesses. Most young people have the notion that after school they must proceed to a tertiary institution to acquire the necessary knowledge to be employed later by someone, particularly, the Government (Awal, 2019). Unfortunately, not all students can and are able to proceed to the tertiary level, leaving large numbers jobless after SHS. The state is also limited in the number of people it can employ and so has opted to create conducive environment for would-be entrepreneurs to take advantage of the current system.

It is in light of this that the Government of Ghana in 2017, established the Student Entrepreneur Initiative (SEI) to support individuals or groups of individuals, particularly SHS leavers with brilliant and feasible business proposals to establish their own businesses. It is a 4-years project, which projected to last till 2021. Subject to the success of awardees the programme may be extended beyond 2021. It supports entrepreneurs with GHC 10,000.00 to GHC 100,000.00. Unlike capital market loans the interest rate charged beneficiaries are very low (10%) and repayment is between 2-4 years. This is to prevent usage of business expansion funds in loan repayment. Beneficiaries are mostly entrepreneurs in the agribusiness sector. In 2018, it supported 1,300 beneficiaries who had lately established and employed additional youths in their businesses. It was expected to extend support

to 3,000 beneficiaries in 2019 (Awal, 2018; GOG, 2018). According to the Director of Business Support, NEIP monitoring results showed that after a year of implementation, beneficiaries had employed 3 to 7 additional workers. This was more than expected (to employ 2 additional workers). In 2019, the programme had provided support to about 50,000 youths in its various forms of entrepreneurial skills development, trainings and financial support.

### ***Nation Builders Corp (NABCO) and National Service***

The rising youth unemployment, especially graduate unemployment became a grave concern to policymakers and Government. Consequently, the government in 2018 introduced the programme to mop up the large numbers of graduate unemployed by establishing the NABCO in 2017. It is estimated that about 100,000 graduate youths had been employed under the programme in the fields of agriculture, education, ICT, health and community development. As a show of commitment, the Government allocated GHC 850,000,000.00 to the programme (Armah, 2018; GOG, 2018). The objective was to, among others, provide temporary employment (which could make permanent later) for graduates in the public service, improve skills and employability. Similar to this programme was the national service which has been in existence for almost half a century. The national service serves as the link between the world of work and tertiary education in Ghana. Students in tertiary institutions normally acquire the necessary knowledge with little emphasis on practical application of the knowledge gained in school to the world of work. The NABCO and national service period provides an opportunity to graduates to acquire the necessary practical skills to be able to fit

into the world of work. Though it is a period of 1 year or 2, it provides an opportunity for graduate youths to serve their country in diverse ways while still earning some income.

***Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJs) (Agricultural Labour Employment Services)***

The programme, which was nationwide, began in 2017 with the objective to ensure food security in selected food crops in Ghana. This was to be achieved through improved productivity and intensification to create job opportunities for the unemployed youth in the agriculture and allied sectors (MoFA, 2017). Under Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJs), inputs for agricultural production such as fertilizers, seeds, herbicides, marketing and technical services were provided to the youth to venture into agricultural production. Others were also engaged in afforestation projects to plant trees to protect the environment. The government maintained that it created direct employment of 3,230 for the youth under the PFJs (Armah, 2018), and 745,000 jobs in 2017 (GOG, 2018). The jobs created included input distribution, production, post-harvest, marketing and e-agriculture and extension services (MoFA, 2017). This was an indication that should the right business opportunities be identified; agriculture could create more employment opportunities for the teeming youth who hitherto were unemployed or underemployed. Table 3 provides the statistics of the breakdown of jobs created under PFJs.

**Table 3: Jobs Created Under PFJs**

<b>Value Chain Activities</b>	<b>No. of Jobs Created</b>



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Input distribution/Supply services	13,093
Production	715,000
Post-harvest processes and services	8,589
Marketing services	5,400
E-Agric & Extension services	2,918
TOTAL	745,000

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Source: MoFA (2017)

However, these figures are yet to be confirmed by an independent body. The programme was initially solely funded by GOG until donor support (e.g. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Government of India (GOI)) started in 2018. The programme had GHC 380,000,000 budgetary allocation in 2019 (GOG, 2018). To sustain or improve the nation's development progress, knowledgeable, physically and mentally healthy youth were needed. For this reason, programmes and projects were initiated in allied institutions to boost the outcomes in the agricultural sector. It was crucial to have youth with formal education to make it easier to adopt modern technologies and methods of farming.

### ***The Free Senior High School (SHS)***

This is an opportunity for the youth to upgrade their level of knowledge in various aspects of life. The state has thus allocated GHC 1,982,641,924.00 for Free SHS for 2019 (Armah, 2018).

***Youth in Afforestation Programme (YAfP)***

This programme aimed to reclaim lands that had been degraded due to small-scale illegal mining and deforestation. Under the programme, the youth are engaged in tree planting to cover lost vegetation. The GoG's budget statement for 2019 indicated that 3,447 ha of trees were planted, and 2,942 tree plantations were established in collaboration with the private sector in 2018. Aside from the newly developed plantations, the youth were also employed to maintain existing plantations. A total of 18,972 ha plantation had been maintained and 1,841 ha of degraded lands had been restored through the programme with about 233,000 seedlings planted. About 60,000 and 2,590 youth were employed under the programme by the state and private plantation developers (with support from the government), respectively. It was expected in 2019 that in collaboration with the private sector, a total of 25,000 ha and 40,288 ha of forest plantation will be established and maintained, respectively. This was expected to increase the number of beneficiaries and job opportunities under the programme (GoG, 2018).

These policies are further summarised in the Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Summary of past to present Regional Development Policies**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Policy Objective</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Colonial Development Policies</b>	Before Ghana's attainment of Independence in 1957	Development of Resource Producing Centres. Natural Resource Base aligned to Growth Pole Theory	Development of resource base sectors of Ghana's economy with concentration on natural resources, followed by road	The pattern of development concentrated in the Southern Belt of the country hence

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			construction, infrastructure development, Railway development	accentuated the inequalities in development
<b>Nationalist Reform Policy</b>	1950	Import substitution industrialization, export-oriented market development, state enterprise development, urbanization to infrastructural development	Socialist and liberal policies	Southern centred development paradigm
<b>Agrarian Reforms</b>	Nkrumah 's era	Grow What You Eat Policy to Agricultural Development	For northern Ghana, its comparative advantage in cereals, livestock and vegetable production was harnessed resulting in the establishment of the Nasia Rice Mills, Pwalugu Tomato Factory and Zuarungu Meat Factories. These industries were part of the national campaign on import substitution	Policy discontinuity

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<b>Operation Feed Yourself</b>	Acheampong's era 1972	To facilitate agricultural Development in the country. As an epicentre for food distribution in Ghana and beyond	industrialization In northern Ghana, this translated into massive irrigation schemes and development programmes based on its agricultural endowments. The Northern Regional Integrated Development Programme (NORRIP) and the Upper Regional Agricultural Development Programme (URADEP) were designed and established to lead the development of northern Ghana. To boost agricultural activities in the semi-arid regions, the regime introduced and expanded irrigation schemes to move the area from unreliable rain-fed and	Policy discontinuity
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			<p>short lived to depended all year-round irrigation agriculture. The Tono, Ve and Bontanga Dams, to date, are important agricultural sites providing jobs for farmers, labourers, processors, retailers and porters as well as food and other agro-related activities</p>	
<b>Revolutionary and Liberal Reforms</b>	Rawlings era 1980-1999	Neo-classical Theories	<p>For northern Ghana, rural electrification and expansion of health and educational facilities and resulted in the extension of services to hitherto unreached places. The creation of the Upper West Region and districts such as Bongo, Zabzugu-Tatale, Saboba Chereponi, among others, extended</p>	<p>Uneven development situation of the country widened; poverty rate increased with Policy discontinuity</p>

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			services to these hitherto neglected rural areas while the establishment of the University for Development Studies and Tamale Polytechnic (with the opening of Wa and Bolgatanga Polytechnics in process) extended higher education to northern Ghana for the first time	
<b>Poverty Reduction Strategies</b>	J.A Kufuor's era 2000-2008	HIPCC, GPRS I & II	External debt cancellation with huge social intervention policies such as the introduction of NHIS. National Health Insurance Scheme	Policy discontinuity
<b>Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSDA I&amp;II)</b>	Prof. J. E Atta Mills/ J. Mahama 2008-2012/16	The GSGDA was launched in 2010 after consultations with various stakeholders including the youth. The objectives,	Emphasis was placed on Youth in Agricultural Programme (YiAP) and Savannah Accelerated Development	Corruption, nepotism, Policy discontinuity and political interferences entirely affected the

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		among others, was to increase food production, nutrition and security, and create sustainable job opportunities	Authority (SADA) as vehicles to propel youth participation in the agricultural sector. While the YiAP had achieved some modest gains, SADA encountered administrative challenges. There were no holistic and robust empirical estimations of the impact of SADA, though there were pockets of individual researches to ascertain the impact of some of the interventions under SADA	overall purpose of the overly optimistic SADA as a regional policy for holistic development
<b>National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP) (Entrepreneurial development)</b>	Nana Addo Danquah Akuffo Addo era <b>2016-2023</b>	To ensure equitable distribution of income and accelerate employment opportunities.	Massive participation by the Youth	
<b>FREE SHS, Nation Builders Corp (NABCO), One District One Dam Policy</b>		To provide Free access to education at the SHS level, facilitate rapid development	It continues to give wider opportunity for all Ghanaian School	The policy faces critical challenges from corruption,

of industrialisation and sustainable development	Children to access Senior High Education regardless of economic background	lack of sustainable funding and poor attitude of the policy. Again, the policy has not been reviewed since adoption
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Source: Author's Compilation from various sources (2024)

### Theoretical and Conceptual framework

**Table 5: Regional Development Theories**

THEORY	CENTRAL THEME	APPLICATION
Neo-classical (Streeten,1993)	Market forces oriented	Structural Adjustment Policies since 1980s
The Principle of Circular and Cumulative Causation (Myrdal, 1957)	Uneven development explained first come principle	Rural-Urban Migration Inequality between the 5 (Northern Region and the Southern Sector
Political Settlement Theory (Khan ,2010)	Political and power dynamics to bring about policy changes and establishment of institutions	SADEP, FREE SHS Policy, One District One Dam,
Inclusive Planning (Friedmann & Sandercock, 1960/70)	It involves a number of key elements, including community engagement, stakeholder involvement	Decentralisation and Democratic Governance in Ghana. Theory and Practice



Source: Author's Compilation (2023)

### **The Principle of Circular and Cumulative Causation**

In his work on Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions, Myrdal (1957) introduced the concept of "Cumulative Causation" as a framework for studying regional issues. This principle suggests that the initial industrialized regions, by chance or intention, will continue to grow at the expense of other regions due to cumulative returns. While this idea aligns with the neoclassical model, it also highlights the challenges faced by latecomer regions that are outcompeted by early industrialized regions, resulting in underdevelopment.

Beyond economic power, the first-industrialized regions can become "growth machines" where political and economic elites concentrate their activities (Molotch, 1976). The elite's regional economic development strategies may have an impact on the local issue, assuming that they are successful (Dawkins, 2003). Myrdal (1957) asserted that developed regions could either harm or help less developed ones. Spread effects and backwash effects are terms used to describe the good and negative consequences that advanced regions have on lagging countries, respectively. But in trailing regions, the backwash effects frequently overwhelm the spread effects, creating a vicious cycle of underdevelopment and poverty (Hirschman, 1958).

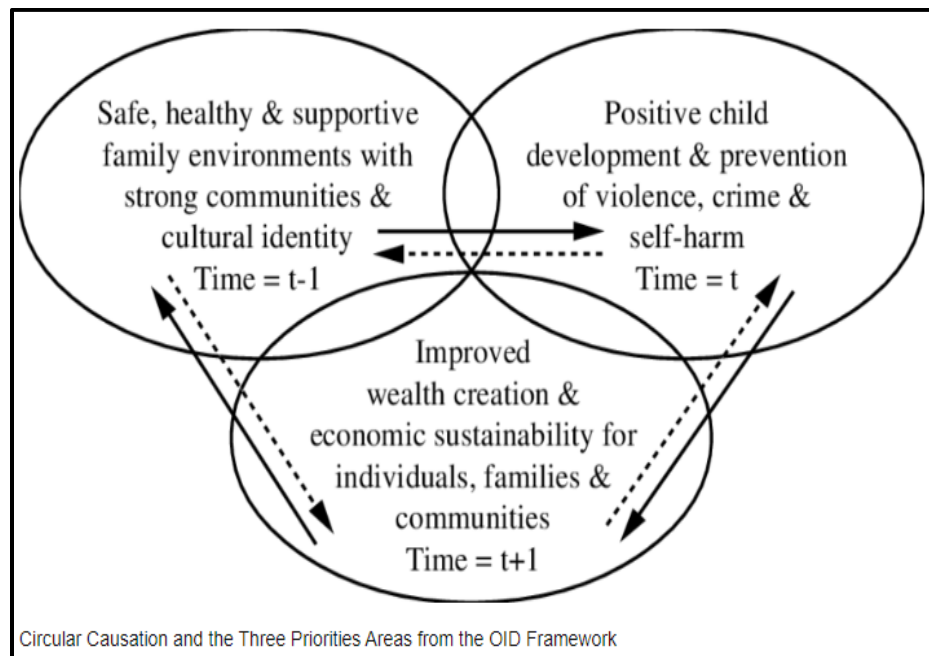
The relationship between developed and underdeveloped regions, as described by Myrdal and Hirschman, is typically seen as one-directional, focusing on the impact of developed regions on underdeveloped ones. However, it is important to

acknowledge that underdeveloped regions can also have positive or negative impacts on developed regions. For instance, underdeveloped regions can serve as sources of inexpensive labour and potential external markets for economic production in advanced regions. Additionally, the underdeveloped nature of these regions can result in mass migration to advanced areas, leading to congestion costs. This phenomenon is observable in the North-South divide in Ghana, where continuous migration from the Northern Belt to the Southern Sector exacerbates the rural-urban divide and its overall effects on the country's development paradigm.

Myrdal and Hirschman hold slightly different perspectives on the regional problem. Hirschman argues that uneven economic development is inevitable and necessary for the overall economic progress of a country, particularly in its early stages, while Myrdal advocates for balanced development. Furthermore, Myrdal emphasizes the prevalence of backwash effects over spread effects, while Hirschman sees the potential for countervailing forces to counteract regional polarization. However, both scholars agree that public policy interventions are necessary to strengthen spread effects and alleviate backwash or polarization effects.

Kaldor (1970) further expanded on the concept of cumulative causation (Scott, 1999), considering it as a result of increasing returns to scale. He argues that the operation of cumulative causation between regions depends on both external demand and efficiency wages. Discrepancies in efficiency wages lead to advanced regions gaining a cumulative competitive advantage over less developed regions. However, Kaldor suggests that labour mobility, combined with nationally acting trade unions, can prevent differences in growth rates from resulting in divergent

standards of living and impede qualitative human development. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that poor regions may require state assistance as advanced and lagging regions are part of the same political community, making a case for state intervention in addressing the regional problem. In essence, cumulative causation underscores the role of institutional and political factors, alongside demand and supply forces, in shaping regional development (Fujita, 2004; 2007).



**Figure 2 The Principle of Circular and Cumulative Causation**

Source: Boyd Hamilton Hunter (2008)

In general, it is believed to be highly significant to offer a secure, wholesome, and encouraging family setting with vibrant communities and a distinct cultural identity. For instance, favourable family environments seem to promote favourable growth in children and reduce instances of criminal behaviour and self-inflicted harm. There is also a compelling argument for anticipating that safe, healthy family

and community environments play a vital role in fostering economic prosperity, thereby strengthening outcomes at both the family and community levels.

In light of these insights, the contribution of churches to regional development becomes significant. Churches, as community-based institutions, can play a vital role in promoting inclusive growth and addressing regional disparities. They can act as catalysts for social and economic development, providing support, resources, and empowerment to underdeveloped regions. Through their networks and outreach programs, churches can facilitate knowledge sharing, skills development, and capacity building, which are essential for overcoming the cumulative disadvantages faced by lagging regions. Furthermore, churches often serve as centres for community engagement, fostering social cohesion and collective action, which are crucial for regional development efforts (Figure 2).

By recognizing the importance of churches and other community-based organizations in the regional development process, policymakers can leverage their contributions to design effective strategies and policies. This collaborative approach, involving churches, government agencies, and other stakeholders, can lead to more balanced and sustainable development outcomes. It requires addressing the root causes of regional disparities, promoting equitable access to resources and opportunities, and creating an enabling environment for local communities to thrive. Through these efforts, churches can serve as agents of change, promoting social justice, economic empowerment, and inclusive development in underdeveloped regions.

### **Neo-classical Theory of Regional Economic Convergence**

The dominance of neo-classical economics and economists since the 1980s has greatly influenced the policy landscape, particularly in the developing world, impacting their developmental trajectories with both growth and setbacks (Rodrik, 2006). Neo-classical theories emphasize the market as the solution to all problems, arguing that it will allocate resources equitably and efficiently, promote freedom, and reduce the role of the state (Streeten, 1993). The Washington Consensus and its derivatives exemplify this belief by advocating for limited state intervention and "getting the price right" through market mechanisms (ibid).

However, it is now recognized that relying solely on the market is insufficient to address developmental challenges. The neoclassical approach places the responsibility for regional progress solely in the hands of the market and individual actors (Streeten, 1993). According to this perspective, Adam Smith's concept of the "Invisible Hand" suggests that factors such as capital, labour, and technology, which are essential for a region's economic growth, will be distributed among various economic regions competitively and efficiently (Pike et al., 2006). The relative share of these factors determines a region's growth in comparison to others. This perspective explains regional disparities as variations in production factors.

However, empirical evidence has shown that the neoclassical model's assumption of an equilibrium distribution of development is flawed, and markets often result in uneven development (Brett, 2014). While neoclassical theorists argue that regional disparities are temporary and will converge over time (Pike et al., 2006), the reality proves otherwise. The free-market approach advocated by neoclassical economists

discourages interventions to address regional disparities, as they believe such interventions distort the process of convergence.

Critics of neoclassical regional convergence argue that the market system exacerbates disparities by subjecting deprived regions to intense competition and drawing away resources from them (Amin, 1999). The European Union's neoclassical model of regional development policy has also faced challenges, with mixed and conditional empirical results (Rodriguez-Pose, 2013). It is important to note that regional growth convergence is not the same as regional development convergence, as the latter encompasses qualitative and structural transformation (Malecki, 1997).

In the context of Ghana, for example, the neoclassical model has failed to reduce the historical North-South divide in standards of living, with poverty increasing in the North relative to the South despite two decades of economic development (World Bank, 2011). This highlights the inadequacy of the neoclassical model in achieving what Richardson (1980) referred to as "polarisation reversal" – the equitable distribution of economic prosperity from core regions to lagging regions. The persistence of extreme developmental challenges associated with the North-South divide necessitates a rigorous, pragmatic, and sustainable strategy for promoting even development.

In light of these observations, it becomes clear that regional convergence, as envisioned by neoclassical theorists, is less prevalent in Ghana and the world at large (Myrdal, 1957). It is crucial to explore alternative approaches that can effectively address complex regional problems and contribute to sustainable

development. One potential avenue for consideration is the role of churches in regional development. Churches have the potential to provide social, economic, and spiritual support to communities, particularly in disadvantaged regions. Their involvement in promoting education, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and social cohesion can contribute to regional development by addressing both material and non-material aspects of well-being. By recognizing and harnessing the contributions of churches and other community-based organizations, policymakers can adopt a more holistic and inclusive approach to regional development. This approach should incorporate strategies that address both economic and social dimensions, empowering local communities and fostering collaboration among various stakeholders. By doing so, a rigorous and sustainable strategy for regional development can be implemented, aiming to mitigate disparities and achieve equitable growth and prosperity.

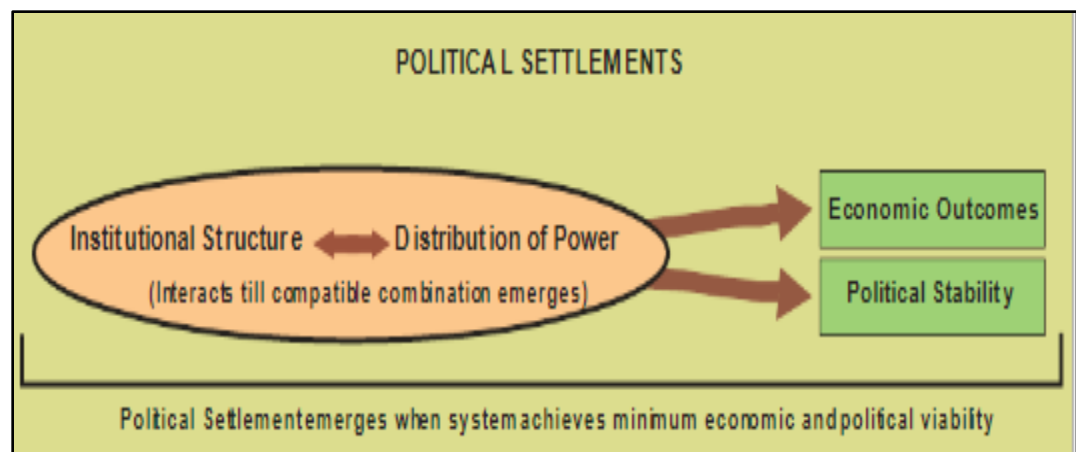
### **Political Settlement theory**

The Political Settlement theory recognizes the significance of institutions and power dynamics in addressing the regional problem and promoting development. In the context of Ghana, the establishment of regional authorities and the implementation of special regional programs have aimed to address developmental inequalities. The inclusion of churches in this framework can enhance its effectiveness and contribute to regional development efforts.

The nexus between institutions, power, and social order is crucial in understanding the regional problem. Institutions and their structures reflect and replicate existing power relations. The question arises: do institutions matter, or do they merely

reflect the distribution of power? Political settlement theory, as proposed by Khan (2010), explores this inquiry. Power plays a central role in the regional problem as it involves the allocation and redistribution of resources and benefits. This can lead to distributional conflicts, policy diversionary tactics, and policy discontinuity, often observed in developing countries like Ghana.

While there may be agreement on the need to address the regional problem, the nature of effective solutions remains challenging. If a regional development strategy challenges the existing power distribution and goes against the preferences of powerful actors, they may oppose such initiatives (Krasner, 1991). The opposition to a particular regional development strategy depends on the alignment of power distribution and the interests of the powerful. In such cases, the cost of implementing the regional program may outweigh its benefits, and its implementation could face explicit or implicit opposition, depending on the capacity of the implementing body.



**Figure 3: The interplay between institutional structures and power distributions within a society**

Source: Khan (2010)



It is beneficial to differentiate between two levels where the relationship between institutions and power distribution holds analytical significance. The first and higher level of interaction occurs at the societal level, shaping the political settlement. Figure 3 illustrates this interplay between institutional structures and power distributions within a society. A political settlement is achieved when a compatible system of institutions and power distribution leads to sustainable economic outcomes and political stability. Institutions and power distribution are inherently interconnected. Firstly, institutions impact the distribution of power as they generate economic advantages that influence the relative influence of various groups. Secondly, power distribution influences institutions as influential groups tend to shape the development of formal and informal institutions to attain desired benefits distributions.

However, the capacity of the implementing body is influenced by the level of support or opposition from powerful groups. The powerful actors in society can block changes that result in a net social loss for them (Khan, 1995). As a result, power and institutions are intertwined and dependent on one another: power fuels the development of formal and informal institutions, while institutions produce economic benefits that support power (Khan, 2010). Therefore, it is essential to analyse the regional issue by figuring out who stands to gain and who has the power to limit the potential for growth of a particular region (Di John & Putzel, 2009). This suggests a connection between institutions and the regional allocation of power. It is still unknown, though, what motivates the other.

However, it is believed that the dominant social actors are key contributors to the local issue. According to Savur (1980), the regional issue is either created or purposefully exacerbated to satisfy the interests of a particular class or group that is in positions of power. In this context, churches can play a significant role in promoting regional development by acting as intermediaries, bridging the gap between powerful actors and marginalized communities. Their involvement can help ensure that regional development strategies align with the needs and aspirations of local communities and counterbalance any opposition from powerful groups. Furthermore, churches can advocate for inclusive policies, facilitate community participation, and promote social justice, thus contributing to a more equitable and sustainable regional development process.

### **Inclusive planning**

Inclusive planning theory is a contemporary approach to urban development that prioritizes equity, social justice, and participation in decision-making processes. It recognizes the inherent power imbalances and structural inequalities within society and seeks to address them through inclusive and collaborative practices. This review will delve into the core principles of inclusive planning theory and highlight its significance in creating sustainable and just cities.

### ***Principles of Inclusive Planning Theory***

#### ***Equity and Social Justice***

Inclusive planning theory places equity and social justice at its core. It recognizes that marginalized communities, such as low-income households, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities, often bear the brunt of urban inequalities. Through inclusive planning, these disparities are acknowledged and actively addressed,

ensuring fair access to resources, services, and opportunities for all residents (Gurran & Blakely, 2018).

### ***Participation and Engagement***

The theory emphasizes meaningful and inclusive participation of diverse stakeholders in decision-making processes. By involving a broad range of individuals and groups, including community members, grassroots organizations, and underrepresented populations, inclusive planning aims to ensure that diverse perspectives are heard and considered. This active engagement fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment among residents, resulting in more inclusive and responsive urban policies (Bäcklund et al., 2020).

### ***Collaboration and Co-creation***

Inclusive planning theory encourages collaboration among various actors, such as government agencies, private sector entities, civil society organizations, and community groups. By fostering partnerships and co-creation, the theory aims to generate innovative and context-specific solutions to urban challenges. This approach recognizes the expertise and knowledge that each stakeholder brings to the table, resulting in more effective and sustainable urban interventions (Fainstein, 2019).

### ***Significance of Inclusive Planning Theory***

#### ***Enhanced Social Cohesion***

Inclusive planning fosters social cohesion by bridging social divides and promoting interactions among diverse communities. Creating opportunities for meaningful participation and shared decision-making, cultivates a sense of belonging and ownership among residents. This strengthens community bonds, reduces social

tensions, and builds trust between different groups, resulting in more cohesive and resilient cities (Flyvbjerg, 2019).

### ***Improved Quality of Life***

Through its focus on equity and social justice, inclusive planning theory seeks to improve the quality of life for all residents, especially those facing social and economic disadvantages. By providing equal access to essential services, housing, transportation, and green spaces, inclusive planning promotes healthier and more livable cities. It also addresses environmental concerns, such as climate change and pollution, by ensuring that the burden of these issues is not disproportionately borne by marginalized communities (Marcuse, 2017).

### ***Sustainable Urban Development***

Inclusive planning theory aligns with the principles of sustainability by integrating social, economic, and environmental considerations into urban development strategies. Incorporating diverse perspectives and local knowledge, it facilitates the identification of sustainable solutions that meet the needs of current and future generations. Inclusive planning recognizes that sustainability cannot be achieved without addressing the root causes of social inequality and exclusion (Hickel & Kallis, 2020).

Inclusive planning is a transformative process that can be further enhanced by the active participation of churches in regional development. By incorporating the perspectives, experiences, and values of churches, inclusive planning becomes even more effective in creating equitable and sustainable communities that respond to the needs of all residents.

One of the key contributions of churches to inclusive planning is their ability to advocate for marginalized and underrepresented groups. Churches often have strong connections within their communities and possess a deep understanding of the challenges faced by vulnerable populations. Through their involvement in the planning process, churches can ensure that the voices of these groups are heard and their needs are taken into account. This helps to address disparities and inequities within the community, leading to more targeted and inclusive policies and programs. Furthermore, churches play a crucial role in building trust and social capital within communities. Their presence fosters a sense of belonging and community cohesion, creating spaces where residents feel comfortable expressing their opinions and contributing to the planning process. Churches can serve as intermediaries between stakeholders, facilitating dialogue and collaboration among diverse groups. By bridging gaps and fostering understanding, churches contribute to a more harmonious and inclusive planning environment.

Additionally, churches often strongly focus on social justice and the well-being of all community members. Their involvement in inclusive planning ensures that the process goes beyond solely addressing physical infrastructure and considers the holistic needs of individuals. Churches can advocate for including social services, healthcare, education, and other essential elements that contribute to overall community development. Their presence helps to shape a more comprehensive and people-centred approach to planning, ultimately leading to the creation of thriving and resilient regions.

Inclusive planning theory represents a paradigm shift in urban development, advocating for equity, social justice, and meaningful participation. By challenging traditional top-down approaches and embracing collaboration and co-creation, this theory aims to create cities that are inclusive, sustainable, and just. It has the potential to address the multifaceted challenges faced by urban areas, promote social cohesion, and improve the quality of life for all residents. Embracing inclusive planning principles is crucial for shaping a more equitable and inclusive urban future. Inclusive planning, when complemented by the contribution of churches, becomes a powerful tool for regional development. The involvement of churches enhances the process by amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, fostering social cohesion, and promoting a holistic and inclusive approach to community development. By recognizing and leveraging the unique role of churches, inclusive planning can effectively address the regional problem and create sustainable and equitable regions that prioritize the well-being of all residents.

### **Conceptual framework**

Functionalism, one of the oldest conceptual frameworks in sociology and related fields, provides valuable insights into the contributions of churches in development. This theory emphasizes the social arrangements that enable a society to function, survive, and thrive. These arrangements primarily revolve around cultural values and institutional operations that appear to contribute to the practical functioning of a society and gain support from its members. Functionalism recognizes the existence of dysfunctional values or institutional operations, but it primarily

focuses on modifying values and institutional functions to minimize such dysfunctions.

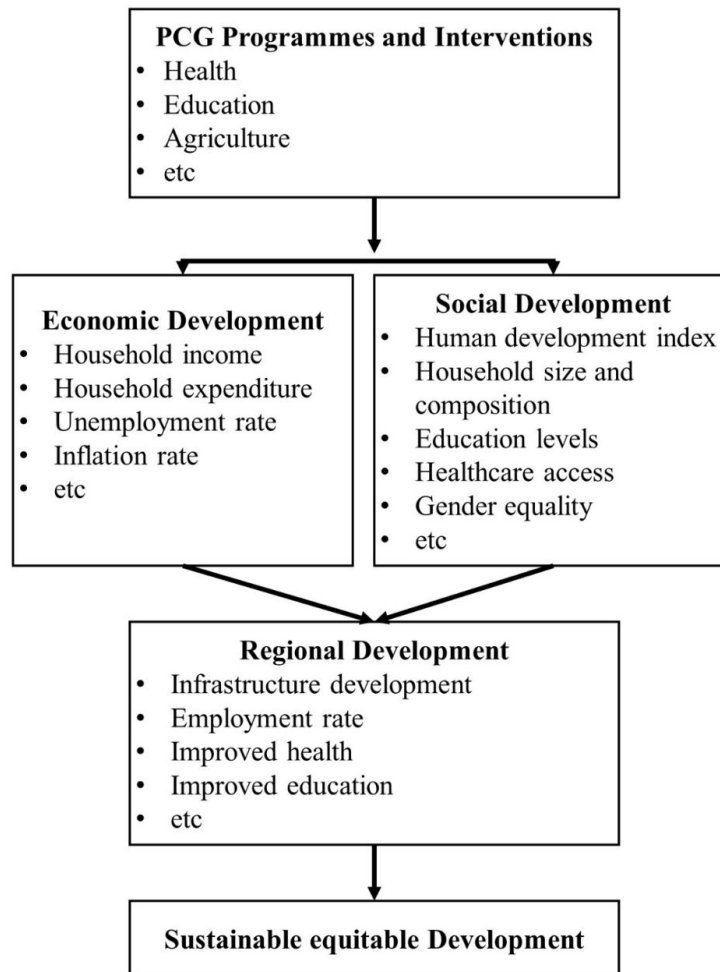
On the other hand, conflict theory takes a contrasting perspective. Theorists within this tradition argue that societies are not predominantly based on functional consensus but rather reflect the dominance of a powerful group that imposes its values and institutional arrangements on the entire population. When applied to the contributions of churches in development, functionalism highlights the role of churches in providing social cohesion, promoting cultural values, and organizing institutional activities that contribute to the overall functioning of communities. Churches often act as community centres, offering support networks, organizing charitable initiatives, and fostering a sense of identity and belonging among their members. By embodying cultural values and facilitating institutional functions, churches contribute to the social fabric and stability of communities, which are essential for development.

Conflict theory, on the other hand, prompts critical analysis of power dynamics within societies and raises questions about the influence of dominant groups on churches and their contributions to development. It invites exploration into potential power imbalances, the extent to which churches challenge or reinforce existing social structures, and the role of churches in advocating for social justice and addressing inequality within communities.

Religion has long been recognized as a significant social force that shapes individuals, communities, and societies. Within the realm of regional development, various institutions play crucial roles in fostering progress and addressing socio-

economic challenges. While studies have examined the contributions of governmental bodies, NGOs, and businesses in regional development, the role of churches and religious organizations has received comparatively less attention. This research aims to bridge this gap by exploring the unique and often multifaceted contributions of the Presbyterian church in regional development. The importance of churches in community life cannot be understated. They often serve as centres' for social and cultural activities, offering spiritual guidance, organizing charitable initiatives, and providing support networks for individuals and families. However, their broader impact on regional development encompasses economic, social, and human development aspects that warrant closer examination.





**Figure 4: Conceptual framework for understanding regional development**

Source: Adapted from Regional Development Theory

To comprehensively understand the contributions of churches in regional development, it is necessary to establish a conceptual framework that integrates various dimensions of analysis. This framework considers the interplay between churches, community dynamics, and development outcomes, acknowledging the potential interdependencies and synergies that exist.

The conceptual framework encompasses several key elements. It explores the role of churches as institutions within the regional context, examining their programmes and interventions. This analysis will help identify how churches mobilize resources, both financial and human, to initiate and sustain development initiatives. Church's contribution to regional development is to promote sustainable and equitable development. By addressing the interrelated aspects of health, education, agriculture, infrastructure development, employment, and social development, the Church's interventions aim to create a balanced and inclusive development process. This holistic approach fosters long-term growth, reduces disparities, and promotes a sustainable and prosperous region.

The framework also considers the social development of churches provides within communities. It explores how churches provide a sense of identity, promote social cohesion, and foster community participation. Additionally, the role of churches in addressing social issues such as poverty alleviation, education, healthcare, gender equality, and other community needs.

Furthermore, the framework also assesses the economic contributions of churches to regional development. This includes examining the impact of church-led initiatives on job creation, entrepreneurship, local business networks, and overall economic growth. Understanding the economic dynamics associated with churches will shed light on their potential as catalysts for sustainable development.

By examining the contributions of churches through the lenses of functionalism and conflict theory, this research aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between churches, societal arrangements, and development outcomes.

This analysis will shed light on how churches facilitate or challenge the existing power structures, contribute to community development, and address social issues within the context of regional development.

In the study on the role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in regional development within the Upper East Region, particularly in the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality, a conceptual framework adapted from regional development theory effectively integrates several key theoretical perspectives. The Neo-classical Theories of Development emphasize the importance of market forces and resource allocation in driving economic growth, which provides a foundation for understanding how PCG initiatives can stimulate local economies through improved agricultural productivity and access to markets. Complementing this, the Principle of Circular and Causation Theory posits that development is a reciprocal process where economic activities spur social changes, and vice versa.

Additionally, Political Settlement Theory offers insights into how power dynamics and institutional arrangements influence development outcomes. By recognizing the Church's role in negotiating local power structures, the study sheds light on how these relationships can either facilitate or hinder effective development initiatives. Lastly, Inclusive Development Theory advocates for equitable resource distribution and participation of marginalized groups in the development process. The PCG's focus on empowering women and addressing disparities in access to resources aligns with this theory, illustrating a commitment to fostering inclusive growth. Together, these theoretical perspectives create a comprehensive framework that elucidates the multifaceted role of the Presbyterian Church in enhancing

regional development, highlighting the interconnectedness of economic, social, and political factors in shaping community well-being.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter describes the various techniques and methods that were used to gather and analyse data for the study. The chapter elaborates on subsections such as the research philosophy, research approach, research design and the profile of the study area. The chapter further outlines the data sources, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection methods, data processing and analysis, and ethical issues arising from the research. Finally, the chapter ends with a statement on the field's challenges.

#### Profile of study area

The Upper East Region of Ghana has 15 districts. Two of these 15 districts, Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipal, were deemed appropriate for this study (Figure 1). Therefore, this section describes the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipal profile, which better explains the study areas' physical and human characteristics. Garu District is a local government area that covers approximately 1,060 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 71,774 (GSS, 2022). Its district capital is Garu, a small town in the eastern part. It lies approximately on latitude 11° 03'N and 11° 10'N and longitude 0° 06' E and 0° 23' E. Garu District shares boundaries with Binduri District and Bawku Municipal to the north; Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District to the south; Bawku West District to the west and Tempane to the east (GSS, 2022).

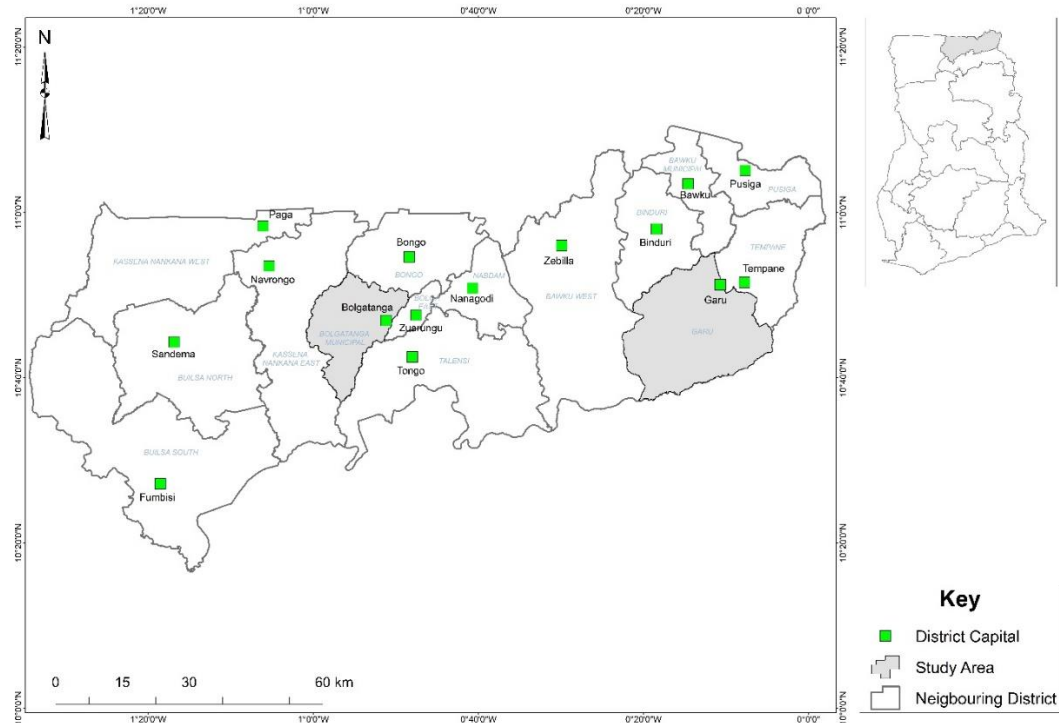


Figure 1: Map of the study area

Source: Department of Geography and Regional Planning [2023]

On the other hand, Bolgatanga Municipal is also a local government area that covers an area of approximately 729 square kilometres and is home to a population of around 139,864 (GSS, 2022). The capital city of the municipality is Bolgatanga, which serves as the administrative and commercial centre of the area and doubles as the regional capital of the Upper East. latitudes  $10^{\circ}30'$  and  $10^{\circ}50'$  North and longitudes  $0^{\circ}30'$  and  $1^{\circ}00'$  West, it is also the regional capital. Bolgatanga Municipality is bordered to the north by the Bongo District, south and east by the Talensi and Nabdam Districts, and to the west by the Kassena-Nankana Municipality (GSS, 2014b).

Garu District has a mix of savannah grasslands and wooded areas characterize the geography of the area. The district is located on the edge of the Gambaga Escarpment, which is a series of hills that rise to a height of over 300 meters. The district is also home to several rivers and streams, including the White Volta River, which flows through the district's western part. Similarly, Bolgatanga Municipal is characterized by rolling hills and valleys, with the White Volta River flowing through the western part of the municipality. The climate of the two study areas is tropical, with two distinct seasons - the rainy season, which runs from May to October, and the dry season, which runs from November to April. The average annual rainfall in the area is around 1,000 millimetres, and temperatures typically range from 20 to 40 degrees Celsius.

Within both districts, agriculture was found to be the predominant economic activity and crops cultivated are as millet, sorghum, maize, groundnuts, and rice. Also, the residents of the two districts rear livestock such as cattle, sheep, and goats. Apart from the agricultural activities, a relatively higher proportion of residents engaged in weaving kente and smock fabrics. Both districts are found to have various educational institutions from primary to tertiary. The presence of the various educational institutions is to aid in the development of human resources that would account for development within the area.

Garu District has several health facilities and the Garu Government Hospital serves as the main referral hospital for the district. In addition, several community health centres and clinics are scattered throughout the district, providing primary healthcare services to local residents. In Bolgatanga Municipal, they housed the

Bolgatanga Regional Hospital, which is the main referral hospital for the Upper East Region. In addition, several community health centres and clinics are scattered throughout the municipality. Tourism is an emerging industry in both districts. Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipal have several cultural and natural attractions such as the Paga Crocodile Pond and the Tongo Hills. In summary, Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipal have some similarities in terms of their economic activities and focus on agriculture, but they have some differences in terms of their geography, population, and level of economic diversification.

### **Research Philosophy**

The conduct of scientific studies is shaped by research philosophies, which provide distinct viewpoints and social contexts (Morgan, 2014). These philosophies serve as a philosophical orientation for researchers, guiding their actions (Moon & Blackman, 2014). Various research philosophies have been developed for scientific studies, with positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism being the most prominent (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The current study is based on the pragmatist research philosophy, which combines positivism and interpretivism to facilitate knowledge acquisition.

This study adopted a pragmatist philosophy to comprehend the research topic better and address the limitations of positivist and interpretivist philosophies. In the context of the Presbyterian Church's involvement in regional development, pragmatism allows for an analysis of how the church's initiatives such as education, health care, and community service directly impact the lives of individuals and the community as a whole. This focus on tangible outcomes aligns with development



goals and helps assess the effectiveness of various programs. Also, in examining the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality, it is essential to consider local cultural, economic, and social factors that influence the church's initiatives. Pragmatism facilitates an exploration of how the church adapts its programs to meet the unique needs of these communities, thereby promoting effective engagement and sustainable development.

Hence, to reflect the philosophical underpinning of this study, a mixed-method approach was adopted for this study. Mixed methods allow for multiple methods, worldviews, assumptions, and data collection and analysis techniques to be utilised (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This allows researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of complex social phenomena by integrating rich, contextual insights from qualitative data such as interviews and focus groups with quantitative data that can measure the impact of the church's initiatives through surveys and statistical analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). By employing mixed methods, the study can capture the nuanced experiences and perspectives of community members regarding the church's contributions, while also quantifying these effects to assess broader patterns and trends in regional development outcomes (Johnson et al., 2007). This approach enhances the validity of the findings through triangulation, as it allows for a more robust analysis by corroborating evidence from different sources (Fetters et al., 2013). Furthermore, mixed methods facilitate a more holistic understanding of the interplay between the church's activities and the socio-economic context of the Upper East Region, ultimately

leading to more informed and effective recommendations for future development initiatives (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

### **Study design**

In scientific studies, research design refers to the methodology employed for collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data (Creswell & Plan Clark, 2017). Case study and exploratory sequential designs were used in this study.

Case study design is a research strategy that provides a comprehensive understanding of complex phenomena within their real-life contexts, making it particularly effective for exploring intricate social, organizational, or community issues (Yin, 2018). This approach allows researchers to gather rich, detailed data through various methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, facilitating an in-depth exploration of the subject matter (Stake, 1995). By focusing on specific cases, researchers can uncover patterns, relationships, and insights that may not be evident through only quantitative methods, thereby enhancing the depth of analysis (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, case studies are particularly adept at capturing the nuances of context, which are critical for understanding how local cultural, social, and economic factors influence the dynamics of the case being studied (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This design not only fosters a holistic view of the phenomenon but also supports the generation of practical recommendations based on real-world evidence, making it a valuable tool in both academic research and applied settings (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Moreover, case study design facilitates the examination of unique contextual factors that influence development outcomes. In the Upper East Region,

local cultural, economic, and political conditions play a significant role in shaping the effectiveness of the church's interventions. The case study approach allows researchers to capture these contextual nuances, offering a richer narrative that quantitative methods alone might overlook (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Additionally, this design supports the exploration of collaborative dynamics among various stakeholders, such as government agencies and non-governmental organizations, in regional development efforts (Baxter & Jack, 2008). By focusing on the interplay of these relationships, the study can highlight the church's role as a catalyst for social change and community engagement.

An exploratory sequential mixed methods design was deemed appropriate for this study based on the chosen research philosophy and approach. This study design is a design that involves collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data in two distinct phases (Creswell & Plan Clark, 2017). The exploratory sequential mixed methods design begins with collecting and analysing qualitative data first. The findings from the qualitative data are then used to design the instrument for the quantitative data. The purpose of adopting this study design is to allow the study to confirm or disprove the findings from the qualitative results. Ultimately, the exploratory sequential mixed methods were used to offer a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied. This two-phase approach not only enhances the validity of the research by triangulating data from multiple sources but also ensures that the quantitative phase is grounded in the realities uncovered during the qualitative exploration, making the findings more relevant and actionable (Fetters et al., 2013). Given the complex interplay of social, cultural, and

economic factors in the Upper East Region, an exploratory sequential study design is particularly well-suited to capture the depth and breadth of the church's role in fostering regional development. Therefore, the exploratory sequential mixed methods study design allows researchers to collect and analyse two or more distinct datasets, including quantitative and qualitative data, and then combine or compare the results.

### **Sources of data**

This study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were gathered through surveys, interviews and observation. The data collected from the survey and interviews were socio-demographic characteristics, development interventions, economic and social effects and contributions to regional development. The observation focused on mapping the various development interventions implemented by PCG and their current status. Secondary data were sourced from the development database of PCG, which gives details about projects implemented and their impact. The primary data were used to confirm and/or contrast the secondary data.

### **Study population**

The target population of a research study can be broadly defined as the complete set of individuals, groups, or organisations from whom data is collected and used to make interpretations (Cox & Lavrakas, 2008). The target population is a crucial element in research, as it serves as the basis for selecting participants or respondents for a study. A clearly defined target population is essential because it helps assess the sample's reliability, sampling methods, and research findings

(Asiamah, Mensah, & Oteng-Abayie, 2017). This study's target population involved church leaders, household heads and development experts such as the district development planners within the study area. The estimated population eligible for Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District were 33,293 and 13, 259, respectively (GSS, 2022).

### **Sample procedures [sample size and sampling method]**

In this study church leaders, community leaders and development experts were to be sampled for the qualitative data collection. This arbitrary number hopes to gather enough data before getting to the saturation level where the responses from participants maybe same. In terms of the sampling procedure, purposive sampling was adopted since the participants were deemed experts and had detailed information on the phenomenon being studied.

Regarding the sample size of the households, the Survey Monkey online sample size calculator was used with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. The estimated sample size was 380 and 374 in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, respectively. An attrition rate of 10% was estimated for each district which resulted in 418 and 411 in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, respectively. In sum, the total sample size of household heads was 829.

The SurveyMonkey, an online survey tool, was adopted for this study due to its efficiency, accessibility, and ability to collect diverse and high-quality data from respondents across different locations. Given the scope of the research, which examines the role of the Presbyterian Church in regional development within the Upper East Region, SurveyMonkey provided a reliable platform for gathering

insights from church members, community leaders, policymakers, and development practitioners. The platform's ease of use allowed respondents to participate remotely at their convenience, reducing geographical and logistical constraints associated with traditional face-to-face surveys. Furthermore, SurveyMonkey's data management features, such as automated data analysis and visualization tools, ensured that responses were efficiently organized for in-depth analysis. The tool's ability to facilitate anonymity also encouraged honest and unbiased feedback, enhancing the validity of the study's findings. Ultimately, the choice of SurveyMonkey aligned with the study's need for a cost-effective, scalable, and time-efficient data collection method, making it the most appropriate platform for gathering critical insights into the Presbyterian Church's contributions to regional development.

Concerning the sampling procedure, a multistage sampling approach was adopted for the quantitative data gathered. This began with estimating 10% of the number of communities in each district. Upon knowing the total number of communities that can be sampled, the communities were clustered into rural and urban and 40% of the estimated number of communities were allocated to urban communities, whereas 60% were allocated to rural communities. A proportional sampling approach was used to allocate the number of respondents to be selected from each sampled community and is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6a: Proportional sampling of respondents**

<b>Sampled Community</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Projected</b>	<b>Proportional Sampling</b>
<b>Bolgatanga Municipal</b>			
Bolgatanga	14801	28121.9	304

Kalbeo	430	817	9
Sherigu	1065	2023.5	22
Sumbrungu	2420	4598	50
Dorongu	343	651.7	7
Zaare	1255	2384.5	26
Tindonsheo	106	201.4	2
Total	20420	38798	419
<b>Garu District</b>			
Garu	1096	2192	262
Banakpesir	36	72	9
Dorskom	47	94	11
Farfar-Kanbakwan	70	140	17
Siiyua	40	80	10
Worikambo	455	910	109
Total	1744	3488	417

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2014)

Although the sample size was estimated using the district level population numbers, the proportional distribution was based on the sum of estimated population of the sampled communities. At the community level, a systematic sampling procedure was adopted to select the household heads for the study. This method began with the establishment of a comprehensive list of households within the targeted communities, which served as the sampling frame. Subsequently, a predetermined interval, derived from the total number of households and the desired sample size, was calculated to determine the selection frequency. For instance, if the sampling interval was set at every fifth household, the researcher would randomly select a starting point within the first five households and then proceed to select every fifth household thereafter. This structured approach minimized bias, ensured a diverse representation of household heads, and facilitated the collection of data that accurately reflects the perspectives of various

demographic segments within the communities. A simple random sampling technique was adopted in houses with more than one household.

For the purpose of holistic assessment into the PCG's role, a broader inclusive consultation factored the following key persons

**Table 6b: Key persons selected for in-depth interviews**

<b>District</b>	<b>Bolga</b>	<b>Garu</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	7	11	18
Female	1	0	1
<b>Position</b>			
Chiefs	2	2	4
PCG Ministers	2	2	4
District Planner	1	1	2
Assembly Member	1	2	3
RCC Rep.	1	0	1
Ghana Health Service	1	0	1
Agric Officer	0	1	1
Social Welfare Officer	0	1	1
PCG Health Administrator	0	1	1
CBR Coordinator	0	1	1
			<b>19</b>

Source: Authors Compilation (2023)

The selection of stakeholders was strategically designed to capture a detailed perspective on this multifaceted issue. Traditional leaders are integral to the community's governance and cultural heritage, providing insights into local customs, values, and the historical context of development initiatives. Their influence in mobilizing community support and resources is crucial for understanding how development projects are accepted and implemented. Church leaders, representing the Presbyterian Church, offer unique perspectives on faith-



based initiatives and their impact on community development, including education, healthcare, and social services. Their role in fostering community cohesion and promoting moral values adds depth to the analysis of the Church's contributions to regional development. Development planners are essential for providing a technical and strategic viewpoint on how development policies are formulated and executed within the region. Their expertise helps assess the alignment between church-led initiatives and broader development goals. Lastly, assembly members play a vital role in local governance, acting as a bridge between the community and governmental agencies. Their insights into local challenges, resource allocation, and community needs are invaluable for evaluating the effectiveness of development efforts and the Church's role in addressing these issues. Together, these stakeholders form a holistic framework for understanding the intersection of faith, tradition, and governance in regional development.

### **Data collection instruments**

This study employed various data collection instruments to obtain the primary data following the research objectives, conceptual framework, research philosophy and design. This section primarily describes the primary data collection instruments, namely an interview guide, interview schedule (questionnaire) and observation checklist, as they were deemed most suitable for measuring the phenomena under investigation (refer to Appendices A, B, and C).

An interview guide was used to solicit information from church leaders and development experts. The interview guide was adopted for this study due to its flexibility in allowing researchers to probe for the exploration of emerging themes

and ideas. There were four modules in which this data collection instrument was designed (see Appendix A). Section 1 focused on developmental interventions undertaken by PCG. Section 2 dealt with gathering data on economic development projects implemented by PCG. Section 3 mainly focused on gathering data on social developmental projects implemented by PCG. Finally, Section 4 gathered demographic information of the participants.

The interview schedule comprised open and close-ended questions (see Appendix B). This facilitated easy administration of the interview schedule, which comprised 36 questions divided into five sections. Section A was designated for the demographic characteristics of the smallholder farmers. This section was constituted of six questions that solicited background information such as age, sex, level of education and income. Section B was centred on the development interventions by PCG. This section was used to solicit developmental projects implemented by PCG, benefits derived from the projects and challenges to developmental projects by PCG. This section was made up of 10 questions.

Section C focused on the economic development promoted by the interventions of PCG. This section had eight questions, whereas section D had six questions focused on social development interventions by PCG. Finally, the last section had five questions on respondents' perception of PCG as a contributor to regional development.

This study's observation aspect combined an observational checklist (see Appendix C) and a GPS device to map out the projects implemented by PCG. The observation checklist focused on the state of the projects. The purpose was to

validate the participants' and respondents' claims on projects implemented. Some photos were taken with a camera to aid the observation process.

### **Pre-test of instruments**

Before going to the field, a test of the data collection instruments was conducted in Bolgatanga East on 4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The selection of Bolgatanga East was deemed relevant since it has similar characteristics to the settings of the study area. This test was to check the clarity of the instrument devoid of grammatical errors and ambiguity. Also, the test was to check if the data that would be gathered fits the intended analytical techniques. Since it was a pretest, not much community entry protocols were established. However, two officers (planner and assembly member) were interviewed and 20 household heads were randomly surveyed. Feedback from the pretest was used to shape the data collection instruments.

### **Data collection procedure**

This study employed three data collection procedures, namely survey, in-depth interview and observation, which were informed by the data collection instruments. The qualitative and observation data collection spanned 11<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024. This was assisted by four research assistants with two from each district. For the quantitative data, the data collection spanned between 5<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024. To facilitate the survey data collection, 10 field assistants were recruited who were fluent in the native language spoken by the respondents. Apart from speaking the native language, the recruited field assistants were either graduates or tertiary students. This was necessary as some respondents were unable

to read and write English. The following paragraphs comprehensively describe each data collection procedure utilised in this study.

### ***Interview***

For the in-depth interviews, community entry protocols were established by providing formal letters to key informants, such as church and community leaders and district development planners, to inform them of the study's purpose. Those who agreed to participate were scheduled for face-to-face interviews based on their availability. The interviews were conducted in the participants' offices, where they were given further explanations of the research and ethical considerations, including seeking permission to record the interviews. As most of the participants were fluent in English, I conducted the interviews myself, with an average duration of 40 minutes. This process was repeated for all participants in the study. Participants who preferred speaking the native language were interviewed by the recruited field assistants.

### ***Observation***

The observation approach in this study was purposive, as the items on the checklist focused on the projects implemented by PCG in the study areas. The identified projects were observed using the checklist and GPS locations were taken during the observation to aid in the analysis. About 11 PCG infrastructural projects were observed in both districts.

### ***Survey***

To reach out to the household heads (respondents), a survey data collection procedure was employed, which involved selecting a percentage of the target population (sample size = 829) for the study. Prior to the survey, the data collection

instrument was electronically transformed using KoBo Toolbox to facilitate data collection using smart devices such as phones and tablets. KoBo Toolbox is a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) tool used for field data collection. It offers researchers various benefits, such as saving time by eliminating the need to print hard copies of data collection instruments and reducing data entry errors. Additionally, it has integrated tools such as the GPS tool to collect spatial information. However, it is important to note that the KoBo Toolbox has limitations such as the poor battery strength of some smart devices, poor GPS receivers of some phones, and mobile network challenges.

To ensure a smooth survey process, community entry protocols were established by briefing community leaders on the purpose of the study at least a day before data collection commenced. On the day of data collection, the field assistants were provided with links to open the interview schedule for data collection. Prior to the start of the survey, the purpose of the data collection was explained to the sampled respondents and their consent to participate was obtained. The average response rate time was 30 minutes to complete the interview schedule. It is worth noting that there was about 97% response rate during the survey data collection.

### **Validity and Reliability**

To ensure the validity of data collected for the study on the role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in regional development, I employed multiple strategies to confirm that the findings accurately reflect the phenomenon being studied. One effective approach was using triangulation, which involved collecting data from various sources and methods, such as interviews with community

members and key informants, and surveys. This helped me to cross-verify information and reduce the likelihood of bias, thereby enhancing the credibility of the results (Fetters et al., 2013). Additionally, I engaged in member checking, where participants reviewed and provided feedback on the findings to ensure that their perspectives have been accurately interpreted (Creswell, 2013). As indicated by Babbie (2016), establishing a clear conceptual framework that outlines the specific variables and constructs being measured can also enhance validity by guiding data collection and analysis. By combining these strategies, I believe I was able to produce findings that are not only meaningful but also reflective of the true impact of the church's initiatives on regional development.

Furthermore, Reliability in data collection is crucial for ensuring that the study's findings on the Presbyterian Church's role in regional development are consistent and replicable. To achieve this, I utilized standardized instruments for quantitative measures, such as well-validated surveys that have been tested for consistency across different populations (DeVellis, 2016). For qualitative data, reliability was enhanced by employing a clear and systematic coding process for interviews and focus groups, allowing for consistent interpretation of responses (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Furthermore, I maintained detailed documentation of the data collection process, including field notes and methodological decisions, which could help other researchers to replicate the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). By implementing these strategies, I believe I was able to strengthen the reliability of their data, contributing to the overall robustness of the study's conclusions.

## Data processing and analysis

The adopted study design offers a guideline for data processing and analysis. This guideline suggested that qualitative data should be processed and analysed first. Afterwards, the findings were used to develop the interview schedule and observation checklist. The data from the survey and observations are then analysed to confirm or contradict the interview findings. However, in the presentation of the findings, they should be combined to identify convergence and divergence. Following the guidelines, this section presents the data analysis separately based on the type of data gathered.

The first step in processing and analysing the qualitative data involved transcribing the audio recordings into text. Three research assistants were trained to transcribe verbatim using Microsoft Word to aid in this process. Once transcribed, a quality control check was conducted by picking randomly any of the transcripts and comparing them with audio to ensure the data had not been altered. Next, the data was reviewed for grammatical errors and to familiarise myself with the data. These were basic data preprocessing techniques adopted for the study and MAXQDA 2022 was used for the actual data processing (coding) and thematic analysis. The coding was guided by the research questions. Thus, the attempt to respond to the research questions informed what needs to be coded. The results are presented using text and charts such as word clouds.

Once the survey data was collected, it was downloaded from the KoBo Toolbox platform in Microsoft Excel format (.xls) for cleaning prior to analysis using statistical software such as IBM SPSS version 23. The cleaning process

included removing metadata information, correcting grammar and simplifying responses. Additionally, some string responses were converted to numeric values for ease of analysis. After cleaning, the data was prepared for statistical analysis. The following paragraphs describe the quantitative analyses conducted for each research objective.

The initial data analysis began with the descriptive statistics of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents using IBM-SPSS version 23 at the district level. Specifically, descriptive measures such as frequencies and percentages were conducted to present the socio-demographic and farming characteristics of the respondents. A chi-square test was run to explore if there are any statistically significant differences between the two districts. The results were presented in tables. The next step was to run the analysis based on the objectives of the study.

Using the qualitative results, some infrastructural projects carried out by PCG were observed and mapped for both districts. These mapped-out infrastructural projects were developed into maps in ArcGIS version 10.5 to show the spatial distribution. Apart from the mapping, respondents were asked to share their awareness and benefits of PCG developmental projects and their distribution across space. Concerns about respondents' perspectives on the PCG to general development in both study areas were assessed. These questions were analysed using descriptive statistics in IBM SPSS version 23.

Since a Likert scale was mainly used in gathering data on the economic development of PCG Projects. Initial descriptive statistics (mean and standard



deviation) were conducted for the 11 items used in the Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha tool was used to explore the reliability of the items used in examining the effects of PCG projects on economic development. Results from the reliability analysis revealed that the items used were consistent in the measurement of economic development. Considering the number of items used, it was ideal to create a composite variable using an unbiased technique. This guaranteed the conduct of a factor analysis which is a dimension reduction technique. In conducting the factor analysis, the principal component method was used. The results showed that component one truly measured economic development because all the items had positive values. The indexed values created from the factor analysis were recoded into low and high economic development. A crosstab analysis coupled with a chi-square test was conducted to assess the association between demographic characteristics and respondents' perspectives on economic development. Descriptive statistics were conducted to ascertain the level of agreement with the church facilitating economic development, the challenges faced and the sector of the economy that can be improved.

Similarly, a Likert scale was used in gathering data on the social development of PCG Projects. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were conducted for the 13 items used in the Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha tool was used to explore the reliability of the items used in examining the effects of PCG projects on social development. Results from the reliability analysis revealed that the items used were consistent in the measurement of social development. A factor analysis was conducted as a dimension reduction technique to create an unbiased

social development variable. In conducting the factor analysis, the principal component method was used. Interestingly, one component was extracted with all items having positive values for both districts. This shows that the extracted component measured the social development of PCG projects. The indexed values created from the factor analysis were recoded into low and high social development. A crosstab analysis coupled with a chi-square test was conducted to assess the association between demographic characteristics and respondents' perspectives on social development. Descriptive statistics were conducted to ascertain the rate of PCG towards social development and the level of agreement with the church facilitating social development. Furthermore, an association was established between social development and economic development using crosstab and chi-square. The purpose of this test was to statistically test the association between respondents' perspectives on social development and economic development.

Finally, the last specific objective focused on respondents' perspective of PCG in terms of regional development. The initial analysis was the use of descriptive statistics to ascertain respondents' perspective of the church (generally) being a stakeholder in regional development. The following analysis narrowed down to the respondents' perspective of PCG activities towards regional development. A comparative analysis was conducted among the various stakeholders of regional development within different sectors. The purpose of this analysis was to evaluate the contribution of PCG in relation to other stakeholders. The results were mostly presented in Tables.

### **Ethical Considerations**

In this study, ethical issues were highly considered and strictly observed. First, ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast (UCCIRB/CHLS/2023/110). This institution ensured that the research methods and data collection instruments conformed to the globally accepted research procedure.

Prior to the data collection, community entries were made to brief the leaders on the purpose and the need to participate in this research. This was backed by the letter received from the Head of the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast. Before every data collection began, participants and respondents were informed of the purpose of this research and made aware that their participation was voluntary. In addition, they were assured of anonymity, confidentiality and privacy. This ensured the protection of the respondents, participants, field assistants and the researcher. Regarding the data collected for this study, it was strictly stored in my Google Drive with all responses anonymised.

### **Fieldwork challenges**

During the field data collection for the study, a number of challenges emerged that required strategic solutions.

One significant challenge was the geographical dispersion of the study areas, particularly the differences in accessibility between the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality. Many rural communities were located far from main roads, making travel difficult and time-consuming. To overcome this, the

researcher planned the data collection schedule meticulously, prioritizing visits to more remote areas during favourable weather conditions and employing local guides who were familiar with the terrain. This approach not only facilitated smoother navigation but also helped establish rapport with the communities, enhancing trust and cooperation during interviews.

Another challenge was the varying levels of literacy among respondents, which affected their ability to understand survey questions and provide accurate responses. In some instances, participants struggled with complex terminology or concepts related to the study. To address this, the researcher conducted preliminary focus group discussions to gauge the community's understanding and simplify the survey instruments accordingly. Additionally, the researcher provided on-the-spot explanations of questions during individual interviews, ensuring that respondents comprehended the context and intent behind each question. This adaptation significantly improved the quality of data collected and ensured that the voices of less literate participants were accurately represented.

The researcher also faced resistance from some community members who were sceptical about the intentions of the study, fearing that it might not benefit their communities. This scepticism sometimes resulted in reluctance to participate in interviews or surveys. To mitigate this challenge, the researcher emphasized the potential benefits of the study for local development and community empowerment during initial meetings. Engaging with local leaders and influencers who endorsed the research further helped in gaining the community's trust. By communicating

openly about the study's objectives and the Church's role in fostering development, the researcher was able to alleviate concerns and encourage broader participation.

Lastly, logistical issues arose, particularly regarding the coordination of interviews with key informants, such as church leaders and local government officials. Scheduling conflicts and last-minute cancellations were common, which threatened to delay the data collection process. To overcome this, the researcher adopted a flexible approach to scheduling, allowing for multiple potential meeting times and being willing to adapt to the informants' availability. Building strong relationships with these key stakeholders also proved beneficial, as it encouraged them to prioritize the interviews. This proactive engagement not only streamlined the data collection process but also enriched the quality of insights gathered from these pivotal informants, ultimately enhancing the study's findings.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter outlined the research methodology used to gather and analyse data for the study, detailing the research philosophy, approach and design, as well as the profile of the study area, which includes Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipal in Ghana. It discussed data sources, target population, sample size, sampling techniques and the instruments employed for data collection, such as interviews, surveys and observations. Data processing and analysis methods were explained, emphasizing the use of a mixed-methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Ethical considerations were rigorously followed to ensure the protection and confidentiality of participants.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MAPPING SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on mapping the spatial distribution of the developmental projects that have been undertaken by the Presbyterian Church, Ghana (PCG) in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. Prior to presenting the specific results for objective one, the demographic characteristics of the research respondents are presented. The subsequent sections focus on the spatial distribution of developmental projects carried out by PCG in the study areas. The findings are later discussed in relation to existing literature.

#### Demographic characteristics of respondents

In analyzing the demographic characteristics of the respondents, frequency distribution was conducted between the two districts (see Table 7). Evidence from Table 6 shows that out of a total of 420 respondents from Bolgatanga Municipal, 60% were male while 40% were female. In Garu District, 77% of the respondents identified are males while 23% of respondents were females out of a total of 382. For both districts, however, 68% of respondents were male while 32% of respondents were females.

**Table 7: Demographic characteristics of respondents**

Variable	Bolgatanga Municipal		Garu District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq	%
						.

<b>Sex</b>						
Male	253	60	295	77	548	68
Female	167	40	87	23	254	32
<b>Age</b>						
18-27	38	9	32	8.4	70	8.7
28-37	99	24	90	24	189	24
38-47	116	28	92	24	208	26
48-57	105	25	103	27	208	26
58+	62	15	65	17	127	16
<b>Educational Level</b>						
No formal education	123	29	133	35	256	32
JSS/JHS	67	16	82	22	149	19
SSS/SHS	74	18	68	18	142	18
Vocational/Technical	45	11	31	8.1	76	9.5
Tertiary	93	22	64	17	157	20
Other	18	4.3	4	1	22	2.7
<b>Religious affiliation</b>						
African traditional religion	86	21	15	3.9	101	13
Muslim	76	18	133	35	209	26
Presbyterian Church	62	15	77	20	139	17
Other Christian denomination	184	44	156	41	340	42
Other	12	2.9	1	0.3	13	1.6
<b>Native of Upper East Region</b>						
No	71	17	13	3.4	84	10
Yes	349	83	369	96.6	718	90
<b>Duration of stay in the UER</b>						
0-5	43	10	5	1.3	48	6
6-10	22	5.2	10	2.6	32	4
11-15	27	6.4	10	2.6	37	4.6
16-20	43	10	33	8.6	76	9.5
21-25	61	15	50	13	111	14
26-30	65	16	92	24	157	20
31+	159	38	182	48	341	43
<b>Occupation</b>						
Businessperson	125	30	101	26	226	28

Civil/Public servant	67	16	62	16	129	16
Farmer	74	18	132	35	206	26
Student	59	14	32	8.4	91	11
Unemployed	76	18	46	12	122	15
Other	19	4.5	9	2.4	28	3.5

Source: Field Data (2024)

For Bolgatanga Municipal, the highest age group of respondents fell between the ages of 38-47 making a total of 28% while the lowest age group of respondents fell between the ages of 18-27 making a total of 9%. Furthermore, for Garu District, the highest age group of respondents fell between the ages of 48-57 making a total of 27% while the lowest was between the ages of 18-27 making a total of 8.4%. Moreover, 29% of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal had no formal education while 4.3% of respondents indicated as ‘Other’. In other words, 4.3% was made up of respondents who had no formal education, JHS, SHS vocational or tertiary education. In Garu District, on the other hand, 35% of respondents had no formal education while 1% of respondents identified as other.

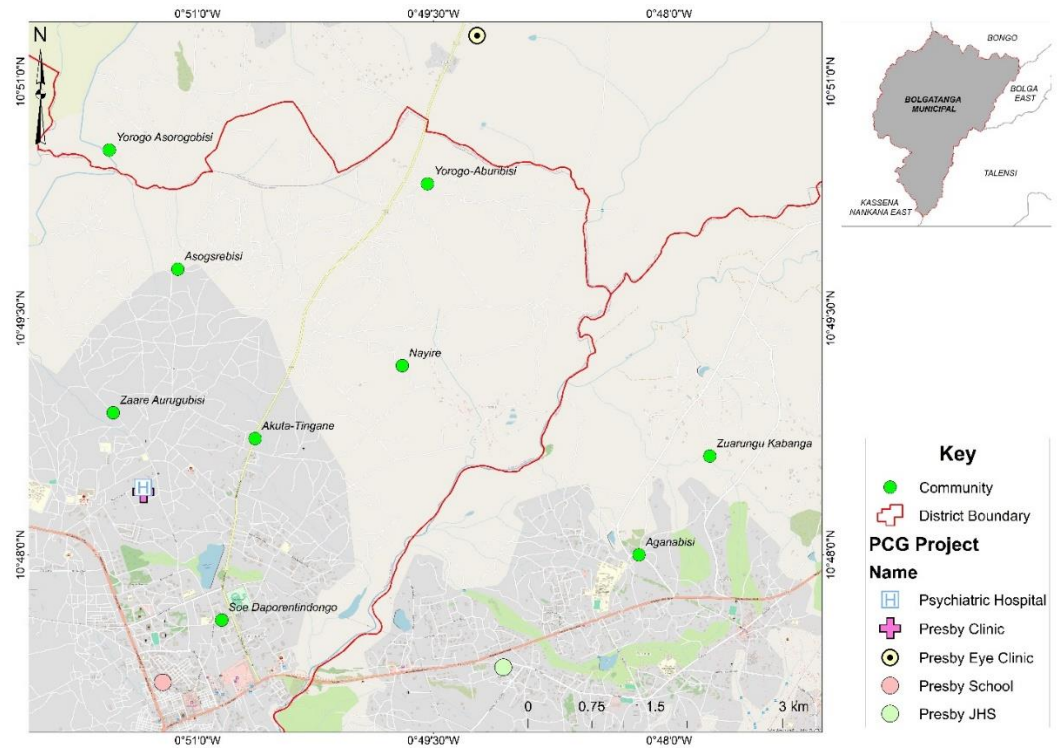
Moreover, out of a total of 420 respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal, 15% identified as religiously affiliated with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 44% identified as being affiliated with other Christian denominations, 18% also indicated to be Muslim while 21% also identified as affiliated to the African Traditional Religion. Also, out of a total of 382 respondents in Garu District, 20% identified as religiously affiliated with the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 41% identified as being affiliated with other Christian denominations, 35% also indicated being Muslim while 3.9% also identified as affiliated to the African Traditional Religion.



Again, in Bolgatanga Municipal, 17% of respondents were not natives of the Upper East Region while Garu District had 3.4% of non-natives. However, 83% and 96.6% indicated to be natives of the Upper East Region for both Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District respectively. Based on responses obtained from respondents, 38% had a duration of stay in the Upper East Region of 31 years and above in Bolgatanga Municipal and 48% in Garu District. This indicates that a large percentage of respondents have stayed in the Upper East Region for 31 years or more. On the other hand, 10% of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal had a duration of stay of zero to five years with Garu District also recording 1.3% of respondents. Finally, in terms of occupation of the respondents, most of the respondents (30%) were business persons and the least 14% were students in the Bolgatanga Municipal. In Garu District, 35% of respondents were farmers while 8.4% were students.

### **Mapping the spatial distribution of the developmental projects**

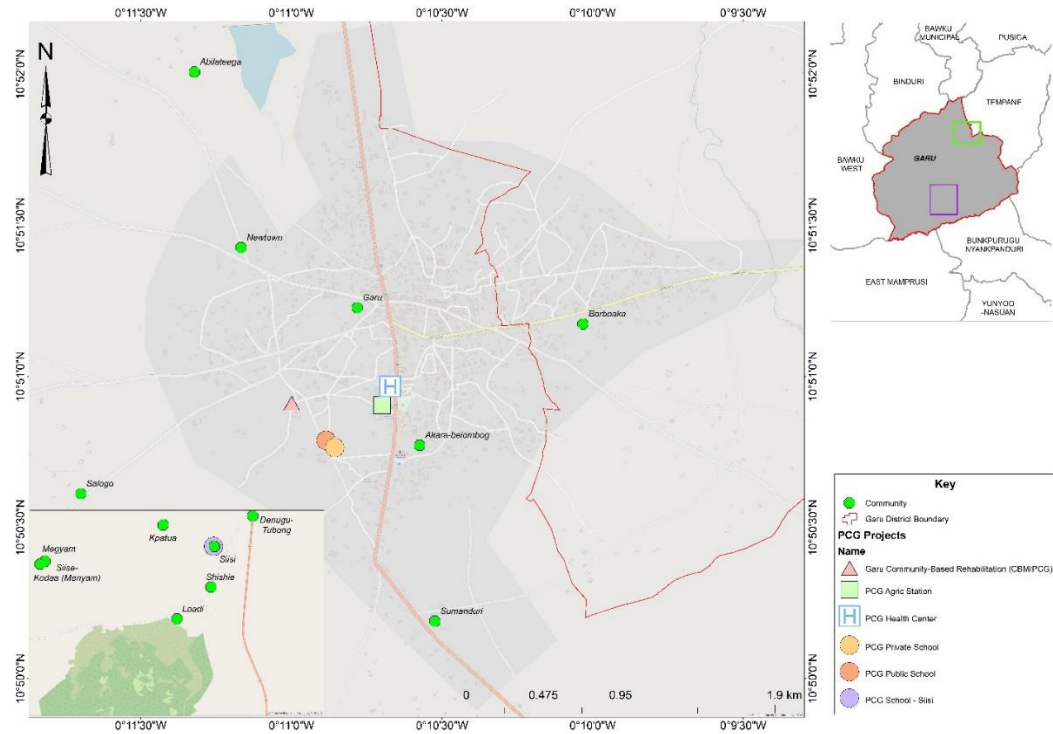
As part of this study, PCG projects were to be mapped to explore their spatial distribution. It was found that in Bolgatanga Municipal, there were five projects: a psychiatric clinic, an eye clinic, a clinic, and a school. In terms of the spatial distribution of the projects, it was found to be evenly dispersed to the east of the study area as illustrated in Figure 6.



**Figure 6: Spatial distribution of PCG Projects in Bolgatanga Municipal**

Source: Field Data (2024)

With regards to Garu Districts, it was found that there were six PCG projects consisting of the Agriculture Station, Health Centre, Rehabilitation Centre and Schools. However, five out of the six projects were geographically clustered in Garu Township. The other project was found in the south-west of the district as illustrated in Figure 7.



**Figure 7: Spatial distribution of PCG Projects in Garu District**

Source: Field Data (2024)

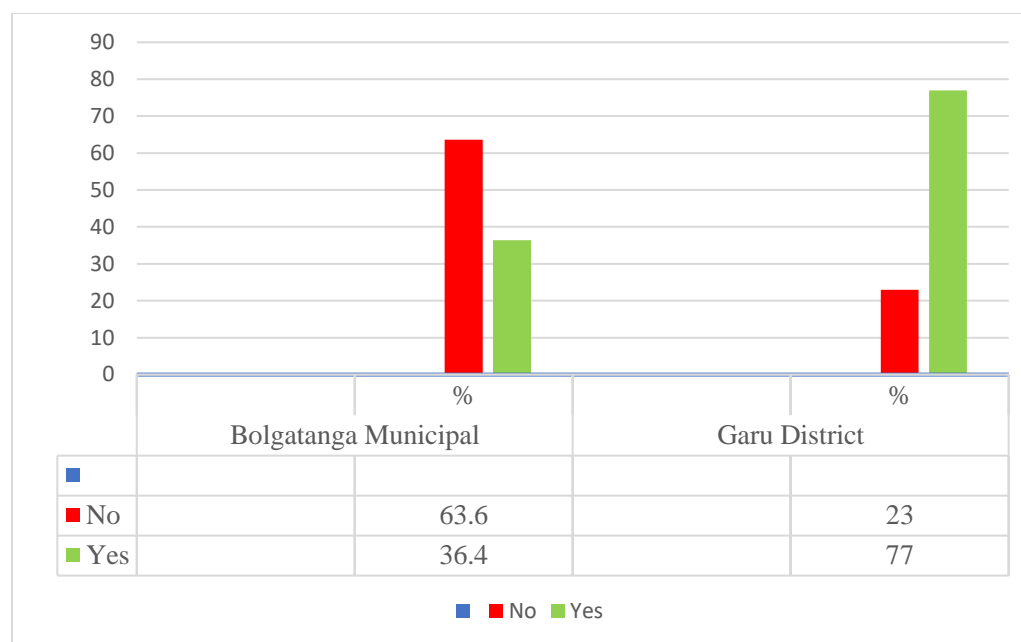
### Analysis of development interventions by PCG

The spatial distribution of developmental projects within the analysed regions highlights a comprehensive effort to address developmental disparities by focusing on both rural and urban areas, with a significant emphasis on reaching underserved rural communities. On the knowledge of the various projects being undertaken by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana within the Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, the qualitative data gathered from the interview revealed 14.3% of the 57 responses affirming the existence of developmental projects of the PCG in the areas. This finding supports the responses of the residents within Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District where a total of 55.7 % were aware of various developmental projects being run by the PCG ranging from health, education,

agriculture among others. Further engagement with some stakeholders revealed that, the existence of these developmental projects in the communities were directly linked to the PCG and that they were known projects and knew the specific location of the projects.

### **Awareness of developmental projects by PCG**

Based on the responses from the respondents, some of the projects they were aware of having been implemented by PCG were the construction of schools, rehabilitation centre for persons with disability, toilet facilities, boreholes, clinics and community centres. Apart from construction projects, some respondents also indicated that PCG provides agricultural assistance to individuals, communities and cooperative societies. For Bolgatanga Municipal, 36.4% of respondents were aware of projects implemented by PCG while 63.6% were in the unknown. On the other hand, 77% of respondents in Garu District had knowledge of implemented projects while 23% had no knowledge of these projects.



**Figure 8: Awareness of PCG developmental projects by respondents**

Source: Field Data (2024)

In line with the results provided in figure 8, some participants revealed in the interview conducted that several health facilities, including hospitals and eye clinics, have been established. Notably, the Presbyterian Hospital, which focuses on mental health, is a key project:

*"We have a hospital, the Presbyterian Hospital which is precisely for the mental health."* [Source: Key Informant (2024)]

Additionally, the presence of specialized eye clinics, such as the Presbyterian eye clinic, enhances access to essential medical services for the community. Furthermore, maternal and sexual reproductive health programs are implemented, addressing critical healthcare gaps:

*"Maternal health program" and "sexual reproductive health."* Source: Key Informant (2024)

The education sector has also seen substantial investment, with the establishment of educational institutions such as the Presbyterian Primary School and Junior Secondary School (JSS) around the post office:

*"I know of Presbyterian Primary School and JSS which is around the post office."* Source: Key Informant (2024)

These schools significantly improve local education standards by providing accessible educational opportunities. Additionally, there is a strong focus on skill training centres, which offer vocational training to community members, particularly targeting women and disabled individuals.

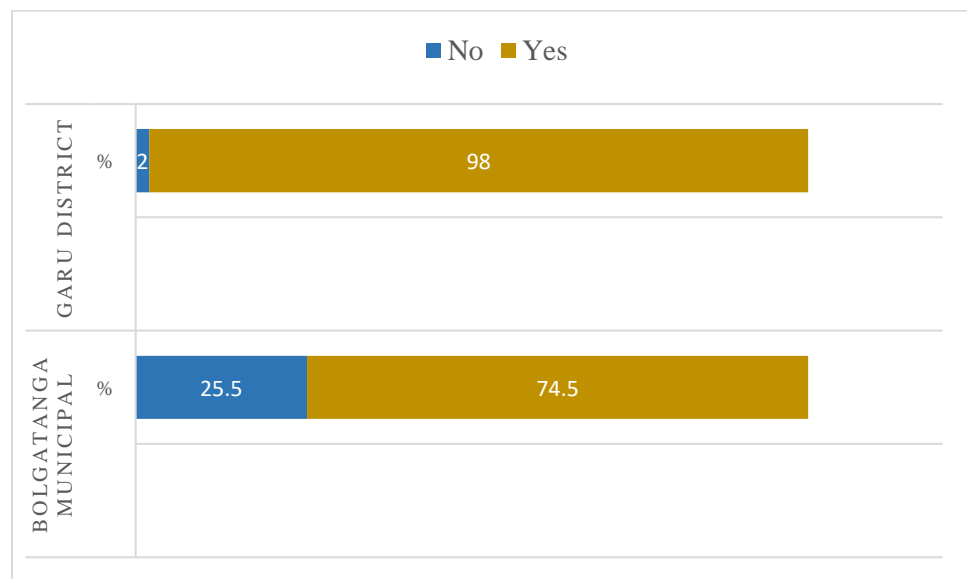
The contributions of PCG were not limited to education and health but also towards agriculture. To the church, agriculture is an important backbone of the region as it united families, the people and the church in general. In the agricultural sector, various initiatives aim to enhance economic stability and support farming activities. Programs like the EMS small ruminal production target women, especially widows, within the community and confirmed by a key informant:

*"EMS which is the small ruminal production targeted towards women especially widows within the community."* Source: Key Informant (2024)

The agriculture rehabilitation centre for the blind further demonstrates the inclusive nature of these projects. By encouraging diverse farming activities, these initiatives contribute to the overall economic well-being of the region:

*"People are supported to go into other farming activities that others are not willing to."* Source: Key Informant (2024)

Probing further, respondents were asked if they have benefitted from PCG's projects and the results are presented in Figure 9. The results in Figure 5.4 reveal that a significant majority of respondents (89.9%) across both Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District have benefitted from Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) projects. Specifically, in Bolgatanga Municipal, 74.5% of respondents reported benefiting from these projects, while 25.5% did not. In contrast, Garu District shows a notable higher benefit rate, with 98.0% of respondents affirming positive impacts from the PCG projects and only 2.0% reporting no benefit.



**Figure 9: Benefitted from PCG projects**

Source: Field Data (2024)

The results indicate that PCG projects have been generally beneficial to the respondents in both Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. However, the benefit

is more pronounced in Garu District, where almost all respondents reported a positive impact.

### Geographic distribution of PCG projects

In order to determine the geographic distribution of PCG projects, respondents were asked to indicate based on their knowledge if these projects were evenly distributed. Results in Table 8 showed that, in Bolgatanga Municipal, 15% were of the view that PCG projects were evenly distributed, 39.9% indicated that projects were unevenly distributed while 45.1% indicated that had no idea if PCG projects were evenly distributed or not. In Garu District, however, 67.3% pointed out that PCG projects were evenly distributed. A further 8.2% of respondents also hinted that PCG projects were not evenly distributed with 24.5% of respondents not being sure if projects were evenly distributed or not.

**Table 8: Geographic distribution of PCG projects**

Variable	Bolgatanga Municipal		Garu District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No	61	39.9	24	8.2	85	19.0
Not sure	69	45.1	72	24.5	141	31.5
Yes	23	15.0	198	67.3	221	49.4
Total	153	100	294	100	447	100

Source: Field Data (2024)

Additionally, the qualitative findings from the study showed that Garu District features prominently in the distribution of projects, reflecting its central role in the region's developmental strategy. The selection of locations for these projects is guided by the needs of rural communities and the goal of equitable development and also due to their lack of existing facilities and greater need for



developmental support. Bolgatanga Municipal, for instance, is a key urban center whose centrality within the municipality influences project allocation decisions. Several respondents highlighted that the selection process favours rural areas:

*"Their focus was on rural communities...So because of the rural nature that was why the community was qualified."* Source: Key Informant (2024)

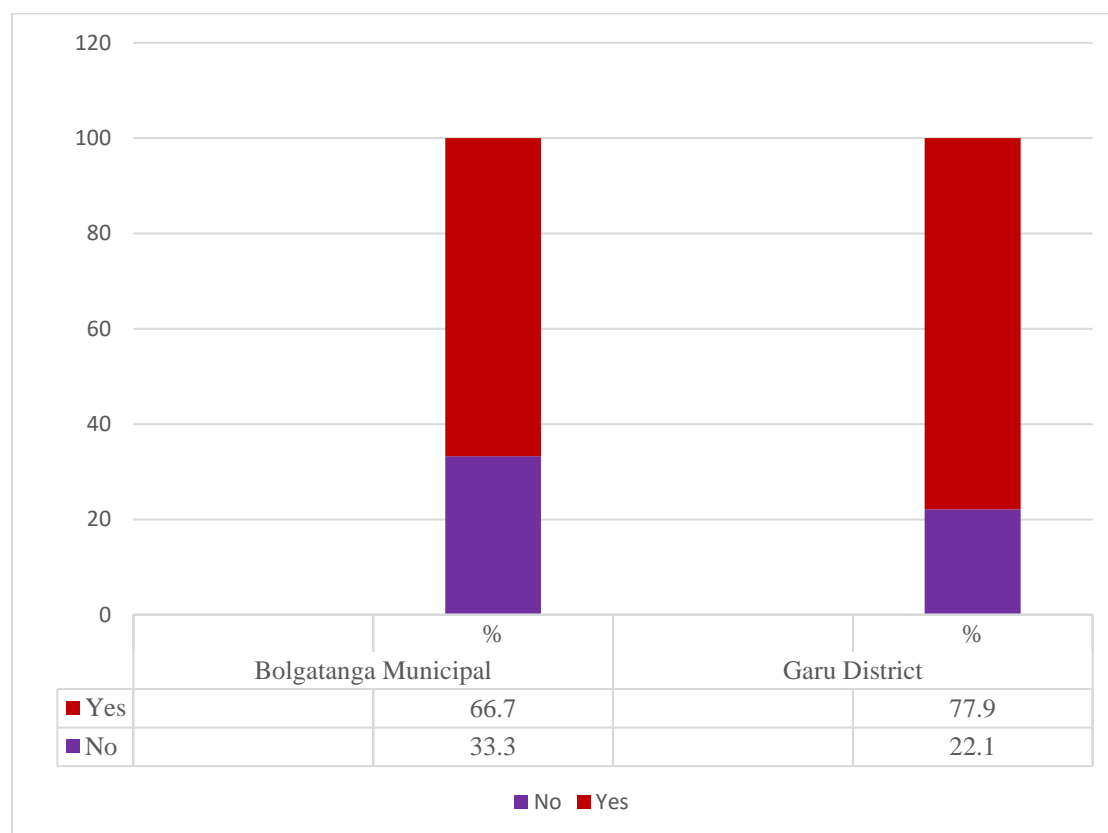
This approach ensures that developmental efforts prioritize areas with the greatest need. The choice of these locations suggests a strategic approach focused on bringing essential services to underserved rural populations. The emphasis is on creating equitable access to healthcare, education, and agricultural support, which are crucial for improving the overall quality of life in these areas.

In sum, the spatial distribution of developmental projects reflects a strategic approach aimed at fostering balanced growth across both urban and rural areas. By focusing on critical sectors such as health, education, and agriculture, and prioritizing underserved communities, these initiatives not only improve living standards but also stimulate local economies. The careful selection of project locations based on community needs and developmental goals ensures that the benefits are widespread and impactful.

### **Community development linked to PCG projects**

Figure 10 illustrates the relationship between community development and Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) projects in the Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. Generally, combining the results from both locations, 74.0% of all respondents acknowledged the positive role of PCG projects in community development, compared to 26.0% who did not. In Bolgatanga Municipal, 66.7% of

respondents affirmed that PCG projects contributed to community development, whereas 33.3% did not see such a connection.



**Figure 10: Community development linked to PCG projects**

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the impact of PCG projects on community development appears even more pronounced, with 77.9% of respondents indicating that these projects have fostered development in their community. Only 22.1% of Garu District respondents did not see a connection between PCG projects and community development.

### Perspectives on the contribution of PCG to general development

Evidence from Table 9 presents the mean ratings and standard deviations of the impact of Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) projects on various aspects of general development in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. The ratings are on a scale of 1 to 5. In Bolgatanga Municipal, the highest mean rating is for education (3.67) with a standard deviation of 1.03, indicating that respondents perceive PCG projects to be most effective in enhancing educational development. This is followed by reduction in gender inequality (3.27), health services (3.32), and community development (3.24). Economic improvement and public policy received relatively lower ratings of 3.08 and 3.01, respectively. The lowest rating is for agriculture development (2.82), suggesting that there is relatively low attention to PCG projects on agriculture development in Bolgatanga Municipal.

**Table 9: Rating of PCG projects on general development**

Variable	Bolgatanga Municipal		Garu District	
	Mean	Std. D	Mean	Std. D
Health services	3.32	1.13	3.63	1.46
Education	3.67	1.03	3.54	1.34
Agriculture development	2.82	1.13	3.61	1.31
Community development	3.24	0.99	3.30	1.35
Economic improvement	3.08	1.02	3.21	1.44
Reduction in gender inequality	3.27	0.97	3.05	1.45
Public policy	3.01	1.05	2.91	1.50
Total	153		294	

\*\* Rated between 1-5

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the highest mean rating is for agriculture development (3.61) with a standard deviation of 1.31, indicating that respondents view PCG projects as highly beneficial in this area. This is followed closely by health services

(3.63), education (3.54), and community development (3.30), showing strong positive perceptions in these domains. Economic improvement received a moderate rating of 3.21, while reductions in gender inequality and public policy received the lowest ratings of 3.05 and 2.91, respectively. The higher standard deviations in Garu District across most variables suggest a greater variability in perceptions among respondents compared to Bolgatanga Municipal.

Comparing the two study areas, it is evident that respondents in Garu District generally rate the impact of PCG projects on agriculture development, health services and economic improvement higher than those in Bolgatanga Municipal. Conversely, respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal rate the impact on education and gender inequality reduction higher than those in Garu District. Both regions rate community development similarly, indicating a consistent perception of PCG projects' contributions in this area.

### **Promotion of community well-being and participatory development**

In addition, the study explored respondents' perspectives on PCG projects promoting community well-being and participatory development (see Table 9). Table 10 provides insights into the perspectives of respondents from Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District regarding the role of PCG projects in promoting community well-being and participatory development. When looking at the aggregation of the results from both districts, 84.1% of the total respondents believe that PCG projects promote community well-being and participatory development. This high level of approval across both study areas underscores the effectiveness of

PCG's development initiatives. However, the 15.9% of respondents who did not perceive the projects positively indicate that there is still room for improvement.

In Bolgatanga Municipal, a substantial majority of respondents (81.7%) perceive PCG projects as contributing positively to community well-being and participatory development, with only 18.3% expressing a contrary view. This indicates a strong approval of the PCG initiatives within this district, suggesting that these projects are well-aligned with the community's needs and expectations.

**Table 10: Perspectives on PCG projects that promote community well-being and participatory development**

Variable	Bolgatanga Municipal		Garu District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No	28	18.3	43	14.6	71	15.9
Yes	125	81.7	251	85.4	376	84.1
Total	153	100	294	100	447	100

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the perception is similarly positive, with 85.4% of respondents acknowledging the beneficial impact of PCG projects on community well-being and participatory development. A smaller proportion, 14.6%, do not share this positive view. The higher percentage of positive responses in Garu District compared to Bolgatanga Municipal suggests that PCG projects may be particularly effective or more visible in promoting development in this district. This could be due to a variety of factors, such as better implementation strategies, more significant community engagement, or greater resource allocation in Garu District.

## Discussion

### **Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and spatial distribution of the developmental projects**

In analysing the demographic characteristics of the respondents, frequency distribution was conducted between the two districts (see Table 6). Evidence from Table 6 shows that out of a total of 420 respondents from Bolgatanga Municipal, 60% were male while 40% were female. In Garu District, 77% of the respondents identified as males while 23% of respondents were females out of a total of 382. For both districts, however, 68% of respondents were male while 32% of respondents were females.

The sex distribution reveals a gender imbalance favouring males in both districts. This pattern is consistent with findings from similar studies in other regions of Ghana. For instance, a study by Owusu et al. (2021) on demographic characteristics in the Northern Region of Ghana reported a higher proportion of male respondents, attributing this to cultural and socio-economic factors that prioritize male participation in survey activities (Owusu et al., 2021). Similarly, Asante and Agyapong (2020) found that male dominance in survey participation is prevalent in rural areas due to the patriarchal nature of the society (Asante & Agyapong, 2020).

The age distribution in Bolgatanga Municipal shows that the highest age group of respondents falls between 38-47 years (28%), while the lowest is between 18-27 years (9%). In Garu District, the highest age group is between 48-57 years (27%), with the lowest also between 18-27 years (8.4%). This age distribution suggests that middle-aged adults are more likely to participate in surveys. This

finding aligns with the study by Yeboah et al. (2022), which reported a similar trend in the Upper West Region, where the majority of respondents were between 35-50 years (Yeboah et al., 2022). The higher participation of middle-aged adults could be due to their greater involvement in community activities and decision-making processes compared to younger individuals.

Regarding educational levels, 29% of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal had no formal education, while in Garu District, this figure was 35%. This high percentage of individuals without formal education is a significant barrier to socio-economic development. Comparatively, Amoako and Effah (2019) reported that lack of formal education is prevalent in rural areas of Ghana, significantly affecting economic opportunities and quality of life (Amoako & Effah, 2019). Conversely, the relatively higher levels of education in urban areas like Bolgatanga Municipal could be attributed to better access to educational facilities and resources.

The religious affiliation of respondents shows that in Bolgatanga Municipal, 44% identified with other Christian denominations, followed by 21% African Traditional Religion, and 18% Muslim. In Garu District, 41% were affiliated with other Christian denominations, 35% Muslim, and 3.9% African Traditional Religion. This religious distribution reflects the diverse religious landscape of the Upper East Region, similar to findings by Nyarko and Anarfi (2018), who highlighted the coexistence of various religious groups in the region, with Christianity and Islam being predominant (Nyarko & Anarfi, 2018).

### **Inclusive Planning and Community Engagement**

Inclusive Planning, as proposed by Friedmann and Sandercock (1960/70), emphasizes community engagement and stakeholder involvement in development planning. This theory aligns with the findings of the survey, particularly in relation to the effectiveness of PCG projects.

In both Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, the spatial distribution of PCG projects and the level of community awareness highlight the importance of inclusive planning. The higher awareness of PCG projects in the Garu District reflects better community engagement and stakeholder involvement, aligning with the principles of inclusive planning (Appiah et al., 2020).

Friedmann and Sandercock's (1960/70) emphasis on community participation is evident in the success of developmental projects that actively involve local communities. For instance, the strategic placement of PCG projects and the noticeable impact on community development in Garu District can be attributed to effective community engagement and participatory planning, as advocated by the theory (Friedmann & Sandercock, 1960/70).

The mapping of the spatial distribution of developmental projects undertaken by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District reveals strategic placement aimed at addressing both urban and rural developmental needs. In Bolgatanga Municipal, projects were evenly dispersed to the east, while in Garu District, they were geographically clustered in Garu Township.



Based on respondents' awareness, 36.4% in Bolgatanga Municipal and 77% in Garu District were knowledgeable about PCG projects. The higher awareness in the Garu District suggests better community engagement and visibility of projects. This is corroborated by findings from Appiah et al. (2020), who emphasized the importance of community involvement in enhancing project awareness and success (Appiah et al., 2020).

The perception of the geographic distribution of PCG projects varied significantly between the two districts. In Bolgatanga Municipal, only 15% believed projects were evenly distributed, compared to 67.3% in Garu District. This disparity could be attributed to the more clustered nature of projects in Garu Township, making them more noticeable. Studies by Gyasi and Tutu (2017) highlighted the challenges of evenly distributing developmental projects in regions with varying geographic and demographic characteristics (Gyasi & Tutu, 2017).

### **Impact on Community Development**

Overall, 74% of respondents acknowledged the positive role of PCG projects in community development. This perception was stronger in Garu District (77.9%) than in Bolgatanga Municipal (66.7%). The significant impact in Garu District could be due to the higher concentration of projects and better community engagement. Similarly, a study by Osei and Boateng (2021) found that targeted developmental projects significantly enhance community well-being and participatory development, especially in rural areas (Osei & Boateng, 2021).

The study also explored respondents' perspectives on PCG projects promoting community well-being and participatory development. A high level of

approval was observed in both districts, with 84.1% of total respondents acknowledging the positive impact. This aligns with the findings of Kusi and Donkor (2019), who reported that community-driven projects by faith-based organizations significantly enhance community participation and well-being (Kusi & Donkor, 2019).

The demographic analysis and spatial distribution of PCG projects highlight the critical role of targeted developmental initiatives in enhancing community well-being and addressing socio-economic disparities. The findings underscore the importance of community engagement, equitable distribution of resources, and strategic placement of projects to maximize impact. Future studies should focus on longitudinal assessments of project outcomes to provide deeper insights into their long-term benefits.

### **The Principle of Circular and Cumulative Causation and Migration Trends**

The Principle of Circular and Cumulative Causation (Myrdal, 1957) explains uneven development through the "first come, first served" principle, suggesting that initial advantages accumulate over time, leading to disparities. This theory provides context for the demographic and spatial disparities observed in the study.

In Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, the variations in demographic characteristics, such as higher male participation and age distribution, can be related to Myrdal's principle. For instance, rural-urban migration driven by the search for better economic opportunities reflects the cumulative causation principle, where initial economic advantages in urban areas attract more migrants (Myrdal, 1957).

This migration trend exacerbates regional inequalities, as observed in the disparities between the districts.

The higher male dominance in survey participation in both districts aligns with Myrdal's theory, where initial socio-economic advantages in rural areas tend to attract more male participants, reinforcing existing gender imbalances (Owusu et al., 2021; Asante & Agyapong, 2020).

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter emphasizes mapping the spatial distribution of developmental projects executed by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) in the Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. It begins by presenting the demographic characteristics of the research respondents and participants before delving into the spatial distribution of these projects. The chapter maps the distribution of PCG projects in both districts. In Bolgatanga, five projects, including clinics and a school, were evenly dispersed. Garu had six projects, primarily clustered in Garu Township, with only one project in the south-west. The spatial distribution indicates PCG's strategy to address developmental disparities by focusing on both urban and rural areas. Also, qualitative data from interviews revealed awareness of PCG projects among 55.7% of respondents, indicating significant local knowledge of these interventions. The projects ranged from health and education facilities to agricultural assistance, emphasizing PCG's comprehensive developmental approach. Furthermore, respondents' perceptions of project distribution revealed that a significant portion of Bolgatanga respondents were unsure or felt projects

were unevenly distributed, while Garu respondents largely believed in even distribution. Qualitative findings highlighted Garu's prominence in project allocation, driven by the need for equitable development and addressing rural community needs. In addition, the impact of PCG projects on various development aspects was rated differently in the two districts. Bolgatanga respondents rated educational improvements highest, while Garu respondents emphasized agricultural development. Both regions recognized the contributions to community development, though with differing emphases on specific areas. A high percentage of respondents from both districts believed PCG projects promoted community well-being and participatory development, with Garu respondents showing slightly higher approval rates. This reflects the effectiveness of PCG's development initiatives and community engagement strategies. The chapter concludes by discussing the findings in the context of existing literature.

## CHAPTER SIX

### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA'S PROJECTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the development projects of PCG and its contribution to the economic development of the residents of Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. Specifically, the chapter begins by describing the economic development indicators in relation to PCG projects. The subsequent sections explore the results on factors that truly measure economic development, and the association between demographic characteristics and economic development and challenges to economic development. Prior to the chapter summary is a discussion of the results presented in this chapter.

#### Economic development indicators

Table 11 shows descriptive statistics of various economic development indicators for Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. Results showed that income generation had a moderate to high impact, with responses less dispersed compared to job opportunities. Moreover, the impact on enhanced local businesses was slightly below moderate, with relatively higher variability in responses. For Garu District, on the other hand, income generation had a moderate to high impact with improved assets ownership having a slightly below moderate impact.

**Table 11: Descriptive statistics of economic development items/indicators**

District	Item	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Bolgatanga Municipal	Improved job opportunities	153	1	5	2.94	1.077
	Increased income generation	153	1	5	3.34	1.046
	Enhanced local businesses	153	1	5	2.81	1.099
	Infrastructure development (roads, markets, etc.)	153	1	5	3.07	1.098
	Improved gender equality	153	1	5	3.10	1.075
	Increased Skills training	153	1	5	3.32	0.971
	Improved human resource empowerment	153	1	5	3.06	1.015
	Provided financial support system	153	1	5	3.14	0.976
	Increased livelihood diversification	153	1	5	3.15	1.056
	Reduced poverty rates	153	1	5	3.22	1.076
	Improved asset ownership	153	1	5	2.99	1.170
Garu District	Improved job opportunities	294	1	5	3.44	1.504
	Increased income generation	294	1	5	3.45	1.341
	Enhanced local businesses	294	1	5	3.39	1.383
	Infrastructure development (roads, markets, etc.)	294	1	5	3.01	1.505
	Improved gender equality	294	1	5	3.17	1.491
	Increased Skills training	294	1	5	3.32	1.453
	Improved human resource empowerment	294	1	5	3.20	1.440
	Provided financial support system	294	1	5	3.07	1.517

Increased livelihood diversification	294	1	5	3.09	1.497
Reduced poverty rates	294	1	5	3.09	1.496
Improved asset ownership	294	1	5	2.98	1.509

Source: Field Data (2024)

### Reliability Test of Economic Indicators

The reliability test of economic items/indicators was conducted to examine if the set of indicators is reliable in measuring the underlying construct of economic development. The results presented in Table 12 indicated that, for Bolgatanga Municipal, a Cronbach's alpha value above 0.7 is generally considered acceptable, suggesting that the set of indicators is somewhat reliable in measuring the underlying construct of economic development. The slight increase in alpha after removing one item indicates that the remaining 10 items are more internally consistent.

**Table 12: Cronbach alpha of economic development items**

District	$\alpha$	No. of Items	$\alpha$	No. of Items
Bolgatanga Municipal	0.703	11	0.765	10
Garu District	0.977	11	0.977	10

$\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the Cronbach's alpha values are exceptionally high, indicating very high internal consistency among the economic indicators. The alpha remains the same even after removing one item, suggesting that each of the indicators contributes consistently to measuring the construct of economic development. Overall, both districts showed reasonably good internal consistency

in measuring economic development, with Garu District exhibiting exceptionally high reliability in this regard.

### Factor Analysis of Economic Development Indicators

The factor analysis results for Bolgatanga Municipal indicate three distinct components that explain 32.919% of the total variance (see Table 13). Component 1, which has an eigenvalue of 3.292, is the most significant, explaining the largest portion of the variance. This component appears to be characterized by improved job opportunities (0.733), increased livelihood diversification (0.656), and improved gender equality (0.641). Component 2, although less dominant than Component 1, includes items such as increased income generation (0.498) and skills training (0.461). Component 3 focuses on variables like improved asset ownership (0.370) and increased skills training (0.312), albeit with more moderate loadings.

**Table 13: Extracted components for economic development in Bolgatanga Municipal**

Item	Component		
	1	2	3
Improved job opportunities	0.733	-0.203	-0.194
Increased livelihood diversification	0.656	-0.295	0.348
Improved gender equality	0.641	-0.480	-0.207
Increased income generation	0.597	0.498	0.181
Provided financial support system	0.581	0.419	-0.455
Increased Skills training	0.523	0.461	0.312
Improved human resource empowerment	0.521	-0.393	0.247
Improved asset ownership	0.515	0.357	0.370
Enhanced local businesses	0.374	-0.432	0.123
Reduced poverty rates	0.520	0.098	-0.626

KMO=0.716, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity=373.846, df=45, p-value=0.000, Eigen value= 3.292, % of Variance = 32.919

Source: Field Data (2024)



In contrast, the factor analysis for Garu District reveals a single, highly dominant component that explains an impressive 82.740% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 8.274 (see Table 14). All items in this analysis load very highly on this single component, with loadings ranging from 0.860 to 0.928. This suggests a very cohesive and comprehensive impact of the PCG projects in Garu District. The high loadings across all variables indicate that the projects have uniformly and positively influenced various aspects of community development, including financial support, livelihood diversification, skills training, poverty reduction, gender equality, human resource development, local business enhancement, income generation, asset ownership, and job opportunities.

**Table 14: Extracted components for economic development in Garu District**

Items	Component 1
Provided financial support system	0.928
Increased livelihood diversification	0.924
Increased Skills training	0.922
Reduced poverty rates	0.92
Improved gender equality	0.92
Improved human resource empowerment	0.919
Enhanced local businesses	0.913
Increased income generation	0.91
Improved asset ownership	0.877
Improved job opportunities	0.86

KMO=0.960, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity=4021.090, df=45, p-value=0.000,  
Eigen value= 8.274, % of Variance = 82.740

Source: Field Data (2024)

The high Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of 0.960 for Garu District indicates excellent sampling adequacy, and the significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p-value=0.000) confirms that the variables are highly suitable for factor

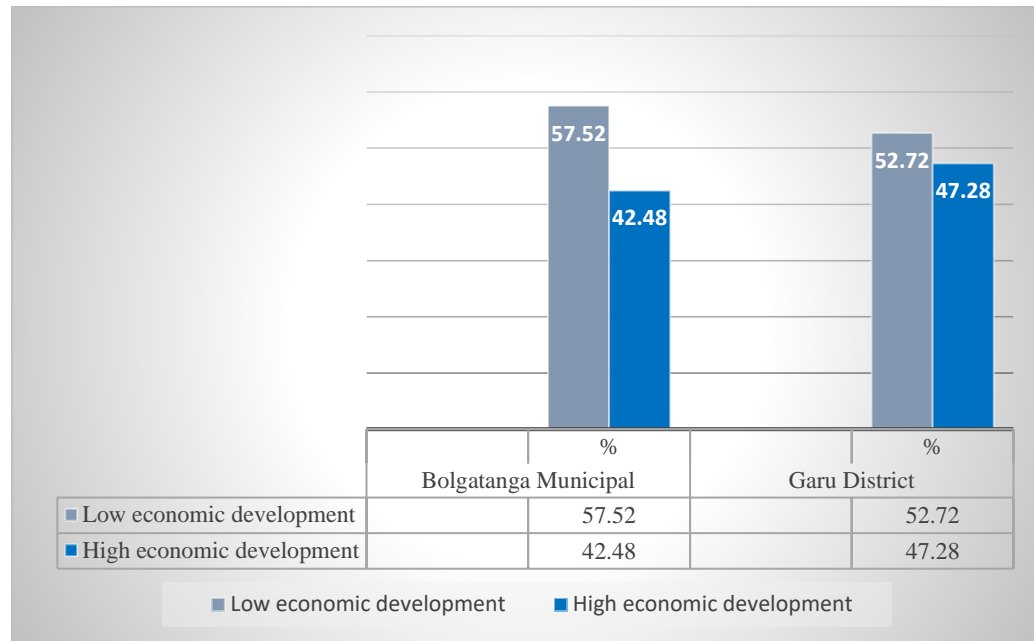
analysis. The consistency of high loadings across all items suggests that the PCG projects in Garu District are well-integrated and have a strong, multidimensional impact on the community, unlike Bolgatanga Municipal, where the impacts are more varied and distributed across multiple components. This indicates a more uniform and perhaps more successful implementation of PCG projects in Garu District compared to Bolgatanga Municipal.

Overall, the results highlight the effectiveness of PCG projects in both districts, but with different patterns of impact. In Bolgatanga Municipal, the projects' benefits are spread across multiple dimensions, reflecting a multifaceted approach to development. In Garu District, the projects seem to be more holistic, with a stronger and more unified impact on the community's development. These findings can help tailor future interventions to address specific needs and optimize the positive outcomes in both regions.

### **Frequency of Economic Development Variable**

The composite variables created from Component 1 for both Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, based on the factor analysis, provide a synthesized measure of economic development influenced by various factors such as job opportunities, livelihood diversification, and gender equality. The frequency distribution of these composite variables reveals that in Bolgatanga Municipal, a majority of the respondents (57.52%) perceive their economic development to be low, while 42.48% perceive it to be high. This suggests that despite the presence of multiple initiatives and improvements in areas like job opportunities and income

diversification, a significant portion of the population still feels that economic development remains insufficient.



**Figure 11: Economic development by PCG**

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the distribution is slightly more balanced but still indicates a majority perception of low economic development (52.72%) compared to high economic development (47.28%). This suggests that while the PCG projects have had a considerable positive impact, as indicated by the high loadings on various economic and social development variables, there remains a substantial segment of the population that does not feel the full benefits. The higher percentage of perceived high economic development compared to Bolgatanga Municipal could imply a more effective implementation of PCG projects in Garu District, which aligns with the factor analysis showing a more cohesive impact of the projects in this district.

Overall, the combined results for both districts show that 54.36% of the total respondents perceive low economic development, whereas 45.64% perceive high economic development. This composite measure highlights that while there are significant improvements brought by the PCG projects, more than half of the population across both study areas still experience challenges in economic development. This indicates the need for continued efforts and possibly new strategies to enhance the economic well-being of these communities. The findings underscore the importance of addressing underlying issues and ensuring that development projects are inclusive and beneficial to a broader segment of the population to achieve more equitable economic growth.

### **Demographic characteristics and perspectives on economic development**

Table 15 presents the relationship between respondents' demographic characteristics and their perspectives on economic development in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. The results illustrate how various demographic and socio-economic factors influence perceptions of low economic development (LED) and high economic development (HED) in these regions.

In Bolgatanga Municipal, the chi-square test indicates no significant association between sex and economic development perception ( $p$ -value = 0.165). Despite this, a higher percentage of females (64.1%) perceive low economic development compared to males (52.8%). This suggests that women in Bolgatanga Municipal may feel more impacted by economic challenges than men. There is no significant association between age and economic development perception ( $p$ -value = 0.249). However, the data shows that respondents aged 48-57 years have the

highest percentage (75.9%) of those perceiving low economic development. This could indicate that middle-aged individuals feel more economically vulnerable or dissatisfied compared to other age groups.

No significant association is found between educational level and economic development perception ( $p\text{-value} = 0.670$ ). Among the different educational levels, respondents with tertiary education have the highest proportion (34%) of those surveyed, with 59.6% perceiving low economic development. This might reflect unmet expectations of economic advancement among the highly educated. The chi-square test shows no significant association ( $p\text{-value} = 0.166$ ). However, non-natives tend to have a higher perception of low economic development (69.0%) compared to natives (54.8%). This could imply that non-natives feel less integrated or supported within the local economy. There is no significant association between occupation and economic development perception ( $p\text{-value} = 0.663$ ). Business persons have the highest percentage (39.2%) among occupations, with 60.0% perceiving low economic development. This suggests that those in business may feel more acutely the pressures and challenges of the economic environment in Bolgatanga Municipal.

**Table 15: Demographic characteristics and perspectives on economic development**

Variable	Bolgatanga Municipal				Garu District			
	LED N (%)	HED N (%)	Total N (%)	X <sup>2</sup> (p-value)	LED N (%)	HED N (%)	Total N (%)	X <sup>2</sup> (p-value)
<b>Sex</b>								
Female	41 (64.1%)	23 (35.9%)	64 (41.8%)	1.929 (0.165)	30 (44.1%)	38 (55.9%)	68 (23.1%)	2.627 (0.105)
Male	47 (52.8%)	42 (47.2%)	89 (58.2%)		125 (55.3%)	101 (44.7%)	226 (76.9%)	
<b>Age</b>								
18-27years	9 (47.4%)	10 (52.6%)	19 (12.4%)	5.396 (0.249)	4 (16.7%)	20 (83.3%)	24 (8.2%)	21.117 (0.000)
28-37years	24 (53.3%)	21 (46.7%)	45 (29.4%)		35 (51.5%)	33 (48.5%)	68 (23.1%)	
38-47years	27 (54.0%)	23 (46.0%)	50 (32.7%)		40 (55.6%)	32 (44.4%)	72 (24.5%)	
48-57years	22 (75.9%)	7 (24.1%)	29 (19.0%)		55 (67.1%)	27 (32.9%)	82 (27.9%)	
58+	6 (60.0%)	4 (40.0%)	10 (6.5%)		21 (43.8%)	27 (56.3%)	48 (16.3%)	
<b>Educational level</b>								
No formal education	12 (57.1%)	9 (42.9%)	21 (13.7%)	3.196 (0.670)	52 (57.1%)	39 (42.9%)	91 (31.0%)	26.171 (0.000)
JSS/JHS	12 (57.1%)	9 (42.9%)	21 (13.7%)		45 (73.8%)	16 (26.2%)	61 (20.7%)	
SSS/SHS	19 (57.6%)	14 (42.4%)	33 (21.6%)		28 (51.9%)	26 (48.1%)	54 (18.4%)	
Vocational/Technical	11 (47.8%)	12 (52.2%)	23 (15.0%)		10 (41.7%)	14 (58.3%)	24 (8.2%)	
School	31 (59.6%)	21 (40.4%)	52 (34.0%)		18 (29.5%)	43 (70.5%)	61 (20.7)	
Tertiary								

Other	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	3 (2.0%)		2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	3 (1.0%)	
<b>Native of Upper East Region</b>								
No	20 (69.0%)	9 (31.0%)	29 (19.0%)	1.920 (0.166)	1 (25.0%)	3 (75.0%)	4 (1.4%)	1.250 (0.264)
Yes	68 (54.8%)	56 (45.2%)	124 (81.0%)		154 (53.1%)	136 (46.9%)	290 (98.6%)	
<b>Occupation</b>								
Businessperson	36 (60.0%)	24 (40.0%)	60 (39.2%)	3.238 (0.663)	57 (60.0%)	38 (40.0%)	95 (32.3%)	18.751 (0.002)
Civil/Public servant	19 (51.4%)	18 (48.6%)	37 (24.2%)		17 (31.5%)	37 (68.5%)	54 (18.4%)	
Farmer	8 (72.7%)	3 (27.3%)	11 (7.2%)		53 (63.1%)	31 (36.9%)	84 (28.6%)	
Other	3 (50.0%)	3 (50.0%)	6 (3.9%)		4 (66.7%)	2 (33.3%)	6 (2.0%)	
Student	13 (50.0%)	13 (50.0%)	26 (17.0%)		11 (52.4%)	10 (47.6%)	21 (7.1%)	
Unemployed	9 (69.2%)	4 (30.8%)	13 (8.5%)		13 (38.2%)	21 (61.8%)	34 (11.6%)	

LED=Low economic development, HED=High economic development, N=Number of respondents,  $X^2$ =Chi-value

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the chi-square test indicates no significant association between sex and economic development perception ( $p\text{-value} = 0.105$ ). Interestingly, a higher percentage of females (55.9%) perceive high economic development compared to males (44.7%). This divergence from Bolgatanga Municipal could be due to differing socio-economic dynamics or development programs more favourable to women in Garu District. There is a significant association between age and economic development perception ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). The age group 18-27 years has the highest percentage (83.3%) perceiving high economic development, whereas the age group 48-57 years has the highest percentage (67.1%) perceiving low economic development. This stark contrast indicates that younger individuals are more optimistic or satisfied with the economic conditions, while older individuals feel more economic strain.

A significant association is found between educational level and economic development perception ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ). Respondents with tertiary education predominantly perceive high economic development (70.5%), while those with JSS/JHS education mostly perceive low economic development (73.8%). This suggests that higher education is closely linked to better economic perceptions, possibly due to better job opportunities and income levels. There is no significant association ( $p\text{-value} = 0.264$ ). Natives have a higher percentage of perceiving low economic development (53.1%) compared to non-natives (25.0%). This could indicate that natives, despite being the majority, may feel neglected or less benefited from development initiatives compared to non-natives. There is a significant association between occupation and economic development perception



(p-value = 0.002). Civil/public servants predominantly perceive high economic development (68.5%), while farmers mostly perceive low economic development (63.1%). This disparity highlights how occupation influences economic perceptions, with more stable and formal employment in the public sector correlating with better economic outlooks.

In summary, the perceptions of economic development in Bolgatanga Municipal do not significantly vary with sex, age, educational level, nativity, or occupation. However, in Garu District, age, educational level, and occupation show significant associations with economic development perceptions. Younger individuals, those with higher education, and civil/public servants tend to perceive higher economic development, highlighting the impact of education and occupation on the economic outlook. These insights are crucial for tailoring economic development policies and interventions to address specific demographic needs and improve overall economic well-being in both regions.

### **Economic Development Impacts on Local Economy**

Out of 420 respondents, 23.1% indicated that they strongly agree that the church plays a role in facilitating economic development while 5% indicated that they strongly disagree that the church plays a role in facilitating economic development (see Table 16). For Garu District however, out of 382 respondents, 39.8% indicated that they strongly agree that the church plays a role in facilitating economic development while 1.8% indicated that they strongly disagree that the church plays a role in facilitating economic development.

**Table 16: Level of agreement to the church facilitating economic development**

District	Level of agreement	Frequency	Percent
Bolgatanga Municipal	Agree	171	40.7
	Disagree	35	8.3
	Neutral	96	22.9
	Strong agree	97	23.1
	Strong disagree	21	5.0
	Total	420	100.0
Garu District	Agree	136	35.6
	Disagree	20	5.2
	Neutral	67	17.5
	Strong agree	152	39.8
	Strong disagree	7	1.8
	Total	382	100.0

Source: Field Data (2024)

One significant aspect of the church facilitating to economic development is the role of education and training. As one respondent noted:

*"if somebody goes through education and at the end of the day the person is able to earn a livelihood, it has an effect on economic development".* Source: Key Informant (2024)

This underscores the transformative power of education in enhancing individuals' economic prospects and contributing to broader economic growth. The influx of people seeking medical services has also spurred economic activity, particularly in the hospitality sector. An assemblyman observed that:

*"People are buying lands there, they are building...guest houses and hotels are springing up because day in, day out, people troop in and accommodation is an issue".* Source: Key Informant (2024)

This indicates a ripple effect where healthcare facilities drive demand for ancillary services, thus boosting local businesses. Healthcare professionals, such as nurses, teachers, and doctors, employed through Presbyterian projects have significantly benefited from these developments. According to another assemblyman, these professionals are:

*"Earning their wages and salaries from the Presbyterian projects...it has improved the economic condition and well-being of the people".* Source: Key Informant (2024)

This highlights the importance of stable employment in improving living standards and economic stability within the community. Agricultural initiatives have been another cornerstone of economic development, with projects encouraging diverse farming activities. As one assembly member noted:

*"People are supportive to rare animals...and to go into other farming activities that others are not willing to".* Source: Key Informant (2024)

These initiatives not only promote agricultural diversity but also enhance food security and economic resilience. Empowerment of women through targeted agricultural support has been particularly effective. A District Planner shared a testimony of a young lady from Tempane District which was formerly part of the then-larger Garu-Tempane District in 2004, until the Southeast part of the district was split off to create Tempane District on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2018. She was supported in growing food crops used for nutritional dishes. Her efforts were recognized and rewarded, giving her "the confidence and the zeal to do more for other people".

This story illustrates how empowering individuals can have a cascading effect on the broader community.

The provision of farming tools and support has directly enhanced food security and economic stability. The Chief of Sheirigu mentioned that farmers received: *"donkey and its carts plough...to embark on farming activities that help them enhance food security in their various homes"*. Source: Key Informant (2024). Such initiatives are crucial in ensuring sustainable agricultural practices and securing livelihoods. Moreover, targeted support for women, especially widows, through small ruminant production has been pivotal in fostering economic self-reliance. As Reverend Anthony explained, the purpose is to:

*"Empower them so that they will be self-reliant and able to take care of themselves"*

Source: Key Informant (2024)

This empowerment helps improve the economic well-being of some of the most vulnerable groups in the community. The collaboration between church institutions and government agencies in agricultural services has also been highlighted. Reverend Anthony noted that agricultural services for the entire north were initially spearheaded by the church, which remained a strong partner even after government institutions like MOFA became involved. This cooperation has been instrumental in educating farmers on good agricultural practices and crop diversification, thereby enhancing productivity and economic outcomes. For example, the Church has played a crucial role in organizing farmers into groups, providing them with access to essential agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, and offering extensive farming services. This organization and support have allowed

individuals and groups to improve their agricultural productivity significantly. As one assembly member noted: *"Apart from the extensive services, they offer a lot of other farming services to people. That has improved the life of individuals as well as groups"*. Source: Key Informant (2024)

These efforts contribute not only to local food security but also to the national food basket, underscoring the broader economic benefits of these initiatives. The establishment of savings and loans associations has also been a pivotal development. These associations bring women together to save and access financial services, which empowers them economically. For instance, the Social Welfare officer in Garu District highlighted that: *"they support in the formation of this big savings and loans, especially for women"*. Source: Key Informant (2024).

This financial empowerment allows women to invest in their livelihoods, thus enhancing their economic independence and overall well-being. Employment opportunities generated by these projects are another significant positive impact. The Church's initiatives have led to the creation of jobs in various sectors, including healthcare and education. An assemblyman observed that:

*"We have nurses, we have teachers, we have doctors that are benefiting, earning their salary from the Presbyterian projects"*. Source: Key Informant (2024)

This employment not only provides direct economic benefits to the individuals involved but also improves the economic condition and well-being of the wider community. The development of local infrastructure, such as guest houses

and hotels, has also seen a boost due to increased demand from people travelling to the area for services like healthcare. The assemblyman noted:

*"People are buying lands there, they are building because people coming all the way from Navrongo or Paga to the eye clinic might not be able to travel back the same day".* Source: Key Informant (2024)

This has spurred construction and hospitality industries in the region, further stimulating the local economy. The study also highlights specific success stories that illustrate these positive impacts. For example, a young lady from Tempana district was supported to go into food crop farming and received recognition for her efforts, which boosted her confidence and economic prospects. As recounted by a district planner, *"She was awarded, her effort was appreciated. She had a certificate. This has empowered her and gives her the confidence to do more"*. Source: Key Informant (2024)

Additionally, targeted support for vulnerable groups, such as widows, through initiatives like the small ruminant production project, has empowered these individuals economically. Reverend Anthony noted that the purpose of these initiatives is *"to empower them so that they will be self-reliant and able to take care of themselves"*. Source: Key Informant (2024). This empowerment extends to other innovative supports, such as providing disabled individuals with wheelchairs, which enables their economic participation by increasing their mobility and independence.

In conclusion, the qualitative analysis of the study reveals that the developmental projects spearheaded by the Presbyterian Church have significantly positively impacted the local economy. These projects have improved agricultural productivity, provided employment opportunities, enhanced local infrastructure, and empowered vulnerable groups economically. The multifaceted nature of these impacts underscores the importance of such initiatives in fostering sustainable economic development and improving the overall quality of life for the local population.

### **Economic Challenges**

The analysis of economic development from the interviews revealed that while there were numerous positive impacts from the developmental projects initiated by various organizations, including the Presbyterian Church, there are also significant economic challenges that continue to affect the local communities. These challenges include issues related to infrastructure, market accessibility, financial limitations, and the sustainability of economic activities.

A primary challenge highlighted in the study is the inadequate infrastructure, which affects various aspects of economic life. Poor road conditions, for instance, pose a considerable barrier to market access and the transportation of goods. As one assemblyman pointed out:

*"If you go to places like Bazua and its surroundings, the roads are very bad, especially during the rainy season, and that affects the movement of goods and people".* Source: Key Informant (2024)

This inadequate infrastructure not only hampers local businesses but also discourages potential investments, thus limiting economic growth.

Market accessibility itself is a significant issue for local farmers and small-scale producers. Many communities lack proper market facilities, which forces residents to travel long distances to sell their products. This was emphasized by a district planner who noted: *"People have to travel far to get to the market to sell their produce because there are no good markets nearby"*. Source: Key Informant (2024). This problem is compounded by the seasonal nature of agricultural produce, which often results in gluts during harvest periods and shortages at other times, leading to fluctuating prices and income instability for farmers.

Financial limitations also pose a critical challenge to economic development in the region. Many small-scale entrepreneurs and farmers lack access to adequate financial resources, such as credit and loans, which are essential for expanding their businesses and improving productivity. According to the assemblyman:

*"Access to loans is very difficult for most people here because they do not have the collateral that banks require"*. Source: Key Informant (2024). This lack of financial support restricts their ability to invest in necessary inputs, adopt new technologies, or cope with unexpected financial burdens, thus impeding economic progress.

The issue of sustainability also emerges as a significant economic challenge. Many developmental projects, while initially successful, face difficulties in maintaining their momentum over the long term. This can be due to a lack of



continued funding, inadequate management, or the inability of local communities to take full ownership of the projects. A community leader explained that:

*"Some projects fail after the initial support ends because the community is not prepared to manage them on their own".* Source: Key Informant (2024). This underscores the need for better planning and capacity-building to ensure the lasting impact of these initiatives.

Employment challenges are another critical aspect of the economic difficulties faced by the community. Although developmental projects have created jobs, there remains a significant gap in employment opportunities, particularly for the youth. The assemblyman noted: *"many young people here are still without jobs, and this leads to migration to urban areas in search of better /opportunities".* Source: Key Informant (2024). This migration often results in a loss of skilled labour and a potential workforce that could otherwise contribute to local economic development.

Environmental factors also contribute to the economic challenges in the region. Unpredictable weather patterns and climate change have exacerbated agricultural risks, affecting crop yields and livestock productivity. The Chief of Sheirigu expressed concerns about how: *"the changing weather patterns make it difficult for farmers to predict the best times to plant and harvest".* Source: Key Informant (2024). This uncertainty leads to economic vulnerability among farmers who depend heavily on agriculture for their livelihoods.

Furthermore, the dependency on external aid and support is a recurring challenge. While external funding and assistance have been crucial for initiating many developmental projects, there is a risk of over-reliance, which can undermine local initiative and self-reliance. As Reverend Anthony mentioned: *"we need to build more local capacity so that the community can sustain these projects without always looking for outside help"*. Source: Key Informant (2024). This points to the necessity of fostering a culture of local ownership and sustainable development practices.

In summary, the economic challenges identified in the study reflect a complex interplay of inadequate infrastructure, limited market access, financial constraints, sustainability issues, employment gaps, environmental unpredictability, and dependency on external aid. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes improving infrastructure, enhancing market facilities, providing better access to financial services, ensuring sustainable project management, creating more employment opportunities, and building local capacity for self-sufficiency. By tackling these issues, the region can better leverage its developmental projects to achieve sustained economic growth and stability.

### **Sectors of the economy to be improved**

Table 17 presents the mean ratings and standard deviations for various sectors of the economy that respondents believe need improvement in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. The sectors evaluated include Agriculture Development, Tourism, Gender and Development, Skills Training, Human Resource Development, and Local Economic Development by the state. Ratings

are on a scale of 1 to 5, where higher mean values indicate a greater perceived need for improvement.

In Bolgatanga Municipal, Skills Training received the highest mean rating (3.67), indicating it is perceived as the sector most in need of improvement. This is followed by Agriculture Development (3.54) and Human Resource Development Programmes (3.36). The lower standard deviation for Skills Training (1.132) suggests that there is relatively more consensus among respondents about the need for improvement in this sector. On the other hand, Tourism (3.16) and Gender and Development (3.15) received lower mean ratings, indicating that these sectors are seen as less critical compared to others. The standard deviations are slightly higher for these sectors, suggesting more variability in respondents' perceptions.

**Table 17: Sectors of the economy to improve**

District	Sectors of the economy	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Bolgatanga Municipal	Agriculture Development	420	1	5	3.54	1.203
	Tourism	420	1	5	3.16	1.248
	Gender and Development	420	1	5	3.15	1.178
	Skills Training	420	1	5	3.67	1.132
	Human Resource Development Programme	420	1	5	3.36	1.183
	Local Economic Development by State	420	1	5	3.29	1.102
Garu District	Agriculture Development	382	1	5	3.51	1.467
	Tourism	382	1	5	2.91	1.502
	Gender and Development	382	1	5	3.07	1.437
	Skills Training	382	1	5	3.35	1.343

Human Resource Development programme	382	1	5	3.14	1.375
Local Economic Development by State	382	1	5	2.96	1.394

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, Agriculture Development also received a high mean rating (3.51), indicating its perceived importance for improvement. This sector's standard deviation (1.467) is higher than in Bolgatanga Municipal, suggesting more variability in opinions. Skills Training (3.35) and Gender and Development (3.07) are also seen as important areas for improvement. However, Tourism received a relatively low mean rating (2.91) with the highest standard deviation (1.502), indicating it is seen as less critical and there is substantial disagreement among respondents about its importance. Similar to Bolgatanga Municipal, Human Resource Development Programmes (3.14) and Local Economic Development by State (2.96) have moderate ratings, showing these areas are of moderate concern.

Comparing both districts, there is a clear emphasis on improving Agriculture Development and Skills Training, reflecting the rural and developmental needs of these regions. However, Garu District shows more variability in responses, suggesting a more diverse set of opinions on which sectors need the most attention. The lower mean ratings for Tourism and Local Economic Development by State in Garu District might reflect either a lower perceived importance of these sectors or a less immediate need for intervention compared to other areas. Overall, these insights can guide policymakers in prioritizing sectors for economic improvement based on regional perceptions and needs.

## **Discussion**

### **Neo-Classical Theory and Economic Development Indicators**

Neo-classical theory, as discussed by Streeten (1993), emphasizes market forces and structural adjustments in shaping economic development. This perspective is relevant in analysing the economic development indicators in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. The theory suggests that economic policies and market forces are central to development, aligning with the observed moderate to high impacts of income generation and job opportunities reported in the survey.

The descriptive statistics provided a comprehensive overview of economic development indicators for Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. In Bolgatanga Municipal, the moderate to high impact of income generation, with responses less dispersed than for job opportunities, reflects neo-classical principles where market mechanisms and income generation are pivotal for economic growth (Asiedu, 2019). Similarly, in Garu District, the moderate impact of income generation compared to asset ownership highlights the immediate benefits of income on household welfare, a central tenet of neo-classical theory. For example, the emphasis on structural adjustment policies since the 1980s, as described by Streeten (1993), has influenced economic practices in Ghana. Policies promoting market-driven growth and economic liberalization have been instrumental in shaping income distribution and economic opportunities in both urban and rural settings. This aligns with the survey findings where income generation has been a significant driver of economic development.

This finding is consistent with the study by Antwi and Asamoah (2018), which highlighted the importance of asset ownership in rural economic development. The higher impact of income generation compared to asset ownership may reflect the immediate benefits of increased income on household welfare, as opposed to the longer-term benefits of asset accumulation. The moderate impact on enhanced local businesses, with relatively higher variability in responses, suggests that while there are positive effects, these are not uniformly experienced across the community. This variability could be attributed to differences in access to resources and market opportunities, as suggested by Ofori and Sakyi (2020).

### **Reliability of Economic Development Indicators**

The reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha indicated that the set of economic development indicators was generally reliable in measuring the underlying construct of economic development. Bolgatanga Municipal had a Cronbach's alpha value above 0.7, suggesting acceptable reliability. This finding is in line with the study by Mensah (2017), which also reported a Cronbach's alpha above 0.7 for similar economic indicators in a different Ghanaian municipality. The slight increase in alpha after removing one item suggests that the remaining indicators are more internally consistent.

Garu District exhibited exceptionally high Cronbach's alpha values, indicating very high internal consistency among the economic indicators. The alpha value remained unchanged even after removing one item, suggesting a robust set of indicators. This finding supports the work of Addai (2021), who found high

internal consistency among economic development indicators in rural districts of Ghana.

### **Factor Analysis of Economic Development Indicators**

The factor analysis revealed distinct patterns in the two districts. In Bolgatanga Municipal, three components explained 32.919% of the total variance. Component 1, characterized by improved job opportunities, increased livelihood diversification, and improved gender equality, was the most significant. This aligns with the findings of Aryee and Amponsah (2019), who identified similar components as critical drivers of economic development in urban settings.

In contrast, Garu District's factor analysis revealed a single, highly dominant component explaining 82.740% of the variance. All items loaded very highly on this single component, indicating a cohesive and comprehensive impact of the PCG projects in the district. This finding is consistent with the work of Kwame and Yeboah (2020), who reported a single dominant factor explaining economic development in rural areas with well-integrated development projects.

### **Frequency of Economic Development Variables**

The frequency distribution of composite economic development variables showed that a majority of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal (57.52%) perceived their economic development as low. This contrasts with the findings of Badu and Mensah (2022), who reported higher perceptions of economic development in a similar urban setting. The lower perception in Bolgatanga Municipal may reflect ongoing challenges in translating economic initiatives into perceived benefits for the broader population.

In Garu District, the distribution was slightly more balanced but still indicated a majority perception of low economic development (52.72%). This suggests that while PCG projects have had a considerable positive impact, as indicated by the high loadings on various economic and social development variables, there remains a substantial segment of the population that does not feel the full benefits. This finding is similar to that of Owusu and Asante (2018), who found that despite significant development projects, perceptions of economic development remain mixed in rural areas.

### **Association between Demographic Characteristics and Perspectives on Economic Development**

The chi-square tests revealed significant associations between demographic characteristics and perceptions of economic development in Garu District but not in Bolgatanga Municipal. In the Garu District, younger individuals, those with higher education, and civil/public servants tended to perceive higher economic development. This finding aligns with the study by Adomako (2017), who reported that education and formal employment are significant predictors of positive economic perceptions in rural Ghana.

In Bolgatanga Municipal, there were no significant associations, suggesting that economic perceptions are influenced by a broader range of factors not captured by the demographic variables considered. This finding contrasts with the work of Abor and Quartey (2019), who found significant associations between education, occupation, and economic perceptions in urban settings.



The findings highlight the effectiveness of PCG projects in both districts, with distinct patterns of impact. Bolgatanga Municipal exhibited a multifaceted approach to development, while Garu District showed a more holistic and cohesive impact. These differences underscore the importance of tailoring development interventions to the specific needs and contexts of each district. Future interventions should aim to address the underlying challenges and ensure that development projects are inclusive and beneficial to a broader segment of the population, thereby achieving more equitable economic growth.

The data presented from the Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu Districts provide a comprehensive overview of how church-led initiatives have impacted economic development in these regions. The significant role of the church in facilitating economic activities, as indicated by the respondents, highlights the multifaceted contributions of religious institutions beyond spiritual guidance. This discussion delves into the comparative analysis of these findings with related studies, elaborating on the economic benefits and challenges, and drawing broader implications for sustainable development.

### **Positive Impacts on the Local Economy**

The survey results indicate a robust perception of the church's role in economic development, with notable differences between the two districts. In Bolgatanga Municipal, 23.1% of respondents strongly agree that the church facilitates economic development, compared to a higher 39.8% in Garu District. This discrepancy suggests a potentially greater or more visible impact of church activities in the Garu District. The support for economic activities through

educational programs, healthcare services, and agricultural initiatives by church projects aligns with findings from related studies that underscore the significant role of religious institutions in community development (Adepoju, 2018; Owusu, 2019).

### **Educational and Healthcare Contributions**

One critical area of impact is education and training. As highlighted by a respondent, education is transformative, enhancing individual economic prospects and contributing to broader economic growth. This mirrors the findings by Ajayi and Afolabi (2018), who documented the positive influence of church-run educational institutions in rural Nigerian communities, leading to improved literacy rates and employment opportunities.

Healthcare services provided by the church also spur local economic activities. The influx of people seeking medical services boosts the hospitality sector, as observed by the emergence of guest houses and hotels in response to increased demand. This phenomenon is supported by Kumi (2020), who noted similar trends in Ghana, where church-operated healthcare facilities attracted patients from surrounding regions, subsequently stimulating local businesses.

### **Employment and Agricultural Initiatives**

Employment generated through church projects is another significant positive impact. The employment of healthcare professionals and educators through Presbyterian projects improves economic conditions and stability within the community. This is consistent with Nwosu and Nnamdi (2017), who found that

church-based initiatives in Nigeria provided stable employment, contributing to local economic resilience.

Agricultural initiatives facilitated by the church, such as diverse farming activities and support for women in agriculture, enhance food security and economic resilience. Empowerment stories, like that of the young lady from Tempane District, illustrate the broader community impact when individuals are supported. Such narratives are echoed in research by Anwar (2019), which emphasizes the importance of agricultural support programs in improving rural livelihoods and food security.

### **Infrastructure Development and Financial Empowerment**

The development of local infrastructure, such as guest houses and hotels, due to increased service demand, is a notable outcome. This aligns with Yeboah (2020), who observed similar infrastructure improvements in Ghanaian communities influenced by religious institutions.

The establishment of savings and loan associations by the church also empowers women economically. Financial empowerment allows women to invest in their livelihoods, enhancing economic independence and well-being. This mirrors the findings by Amanor (2018), who documented the positive impact of microfinance initiatives by religious groups on women's economic empowerment in West Africa.

### **Comparative Analysis with Related Studies**

While the positive impacts of church-led initiatives are significant, they are not without challenges. The analysis of economic challenges reveals that

inadequate infrastructure, market accessibility, financial limitations, and sustainability issues continue to affect local communities. These findings are consistent with research by Ampadu (2017), who highlighted similar challenges in rural Ghana, emphasizing the need for improved infrastructure and market access to support economic development.

Financial constraints, such as limited access to credit and loans, hinder economic progress. This issue is echoed in studies by Osei and Kumi (2019), who found that financial limitations significantly restrict the ability of rural entrepreneurs to expand their businesses and improve productivity.

Sustainability challenges are also critical. Many developmental projects face difficulties in maintaining momentum over the long term due to inadequate management or lack of community ownership. This is consistent with findings by Adusei (2020), who noted the importance of capacity-building and local ownership for the sustainability of development projects in Ghana.

The findings underscore the need for a multifaceted approach to addressing economic challenges in these regions. Improving infrastructure, enhancing market facilities, providing better access to financial services, ensuring sustainable project management, creating more employment opportunities, and building local capacity for self-sufficiency are crucial steps. Policymakers should prioritize sectors identified as needing improvement, such as agriculture development and skills training, based on regional perceptions and needs.

## Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed at outlining PCG's development initiatives and how they help the people living in Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District improve economically. In particular, the chapter started out by outlining the economic development metrics in connection to PCG initiatives. When compared to work opportunities, the results showed that money generation had a moderate to high influence, with responses being less distributed. Additionally, the influence on improved neighbourhood businesses was somewhat more variable and fell short of moderate. In contrast, income creation had a moderate to high impact on Garu District, while improved asset ownership had an impact that was slightly below moderate. Also, to determine whether the collection of indicators is trustworthy in gauging the fundamental concept of economic progress, a reliability test of economic products and indicators was carried out. According to the findings, a Cronbach's alpha value for Bolgatanga Municipal that is higher than 0.7 is usually regarded as acceptable, indicating that the set of indicators has some degree of reliability in gauging the fundamental concept of economic development. Additionally, the analysis of the economic development based on the interviews showed that although the developmental projects started by different organizations, such as the Presbyterian Church, had many positive effects, the local communities were still facing major economic challenges. Infrastructure, market accessibility, budgetary constraints, and the sustainability of economic activity are some of these problems. In addition, the sectors evaluated include Agriculture Development, Tourism, Gender and Development, Skills Training, Human Resource

Development, and Local Economic Development by the state. The chapter concludes by discussing the findings in the context of existing literature.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONTRIBUTION OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA'S PROJECTS TOWARDS SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the contribution of PCG projects towards social development. Specifically, the chapter presents the results by exploring the social development indicators, factor analyses, the association between social development and demographic characteristics and the association between economic development and social development. The chapter ends with a discussion of the findings and a summary.

#### Social Development Indicators

Table 18 presents descriptive statistics for various social development indicators in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, showcasing respondents' perceptions of improvements in their communities. These indicators cover a range of social aspects, including healthcare, education, gender equality, community empowerment, social policy implementation, care for the needy, school enrolment rates, health promotion, infant mortality, life expectancy, unemployment rates, housing, and access to water and sanitation. The mean ratings for each indicator, measured on a scale of 1 to 5, provide insights into the perceived effectiveness of development initiatives in these areas.

In Bolgatanga Municipal, the highest mean rating is observed for "Enhanced educational facilities" (3.58), indicating that respondents perceive significant

improvements in this area. This is followed closely by "Ensured care for the needy" (3.54) and "Ensured community empowerment" (3.33), suggesting a strong emphasis on social support and community development. On the lower end, "Promoted adequate housing" (2.75) and "Improved access to water and sanitation" (3.08) received the lowest mean ratings, indicating that respondents feel these areas require more attention and improvement. The standard deviations are relatively consistent across indicators, reflecting a moderate level of agreement among respondents.

**Table 18: Indicators of social development**

District	Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Bolgatanga Municipal	Improved access to healthcare	153	1	5	3.20	1.194
	Enhanced educational facilities	153	1	5	3.58	1.018
	Increased gender equality/development	153	1	5	3.05	1.031
	Ensured community empowerment	153	1	5	3.33	1.012
	Facilitated the implementation of social policy	153	1	5	3.00	1.020
	Ensured care for the needy	153	1	5	3.54	0.974
	Increased school enrolment rate	153	1	5	3.27	1.147
	Improved health promotion	153	1	5	3.22	1.059
	Reduced infant mortality	153	1	5	3.08	1.076
	Increased life expectancy	153	1	5	3.08	1.076
	Reduced unemployment rates	153	1	5	3.20	1.107
	Promoted adequate housing	153	1	5	2.75	1.047



	Improved access to water and sanitation	153	1	5	3.08	1.170
Garu District	Improved access to healthcare	294	1	5	3.55	1.481
	Enhanced educational facilities	294	1	5	3.50	1.339
	Increased gender equality/development	294	1	5	3.29	1.433
	Ensured community empowerment	294	1	5	3.20	1.465
	Facilitated the implementation of social policy	294	1	5	3.14	1.510
	Ensured care for the needy	294	1	5	3.10	1.512
	Increased school enrolment rate	294	1	5	3.21	1.486
	Improved health promotion	294	1	5	3.15	1.482
	Reduced infant mortality	294	1	5	3.02	1.500
	Increased life expectancy	294	1	5	3.05	1.500
	Reduced unemployment rates	294	1	5	3.02	1.488
	Promoted adequate housing	294	1	5	2.81	1.543
	Improved access to water and sanitation	294	1	5	2.59	1.549

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, "Improved access to healthcare" (3.55) received the highest mean rating, highlighting the perceived effectiveness of healthcare initiatives. Other indicators such as "Enhanced educational facilities" (3.50) and "Increased gender equality/development" (3.29) also received relatively high ratings, suggesting a positive perception of efforts in these areas. Conversely, "Promoted adequate housing" (2.81) and "Improved access to water and sanitation" (2.59) received the lowest ratings, indicating these are seen as critical areas needing

improvement. The higher standard deviations, particularly for "Improved access to water and sanitation" (1.549), suggest greater variability in respondents' perceptions.

Comparing the two districts, it is evident that respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District share similar views on the need for improvements in housing and water/sanitation, both of which received low mean ratings. However, there are notable differences in other areas, such as healthcare and education, where Garu District respondents have a slightly higher perception of improvement. Overall, these results can inform policymakers and development practitioners about the areas where residents feel progress has been made and where further efforts are needed to enhance social development and well-being in these communities.

### **Reliability Test of Social Indicators**

The reliability test of social indicators for Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District reveals distinct differences in internal consistency as measured by Cronbach's alpha (see Table 19). In Bolgatanga Municipal, the Cronbach's alpha is 0.657 for the 13 items, indicating a moderate level of reliability. This suggests that the social indicators used in Bolgatanga Municipal exhibit some degree of consistency but may require further refinement to improve their reliability. The relatively lower alpha value could be due to diverse economic conditions or varying interpretations of the indicators among respondents.

**Table 19 Cronbach alpha test**

<b>District</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
Bolgatanga Municipal	0.657	13
Garu District	0.975	13

$\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha

Source: Field Data (2024)

In contrast, Garu District shows a much higher Cronbach's alpha of 0.975 for the same 13 items, indicating excellent internal consistency. This high alpha value suggests that the social indicators in Garu District are very reliable and consistently measure the intended social constructs. The stark difference between the two districts' alpha values may reflect more homogeneous social conditions or a more unified understanding of the social indicators among respondents in Garu District. This high reliability in Garu District supports the validity of the social assessments and implies that the indicators are well-suited for evaluating social development in that region.

### **Factor Analysis of Social Development**

The factor analysis of social development indicators in Bolgatanga Municipal reveals a complex structure with four components emerging from the data (see Table 20). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.657, indicating a middling level of suitability for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ( $p$ -value=0.000), confirming that the data is appropriate for this analysis. Component 1, with an eigenvalue of 2.669 and accounting for 20.528% of the variance, includes items such as increased gender equality/development, increased school enrolment rate, and facilitated implementation of social policy, suggesting a focus on education and policy-driven social advancements. However, the distribution of loadings across multiple

components indicates that the social development indicators are multifaceted and not easily reducible to a single factor.

**Table 20: Extracted components for social development in Bolgatanga Municipal**

Items	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Improved access to healthcare	0.521	0.574	-0.090	-0.143
Enhanced educational facilities	0.359	-0.471	0.433	-0.010
Increased gender equality/development	0.647	-0.178	-0.501	-0.272
Ensured community empowerment	0.358	-0.453	0.543	-0.173
Facilitated the implementation of social policy	0.640	-0.031	-0.438	-0.100
Ensured care for the needy	0.430	-0.331	0.566	0.047
Increased school enrolment rate	0.658	-0.233	-0.462	-0.043
Improved health promotion	0.389	0.425	0.507	-0.295
Reduced infant mortality	0.454	0.216	-0.009	0.619
Increased life expectancy	0.352	0.587	0.291	-0.235
Reduced unemployment rates	0.367	-0.563	0.057	0.434
Promoted adequate housing	0.166	0.522	0.168	0.070
Improved access to water and sanitation	0.226	0.492	0.078	0.591

KMO=0.657, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity=486.871, df=78, p-value=0.000, Eigen value= 2.669, % of Variance = 20.528

Source: Field Data (2024)

In contrast, the factor analysis for Garu District presents a much more straight forward outcome with a single dominant component (see Table 21). The KMO measure is very high at 0.957, indicating excellent sampling adequacy, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is also significant (p-value=0.000), confirming the appropriateness of the analysis. The single component extracted has an eigenvalue of 2.669 and accounts for 77.433% of the variance, indicating a strong, unified factor structure. High loadings across all items, including improved access to healthcare, enhanced educational facilities, and increased gender

equality/development, suggest that social development in Garu District is perceived as a cohesive construct where various indicators are highly interrelated and contribute uniformly to overall social development.

**Table 21: Extracted components for social development in Garu District**

Item	Component
	1
Improved access to healthcare	0.815
Enhanced educational facilities	0.857
Increased gender equality/development	0.927
Ensured community empowerment	0.918
Facilitated the implementation of social policy	0.915
Ensured care for the needy	0.922
Increased school enrolment rate	0.926
Improved health promotion	0.926
Reduced infant mortality	0.902
Increased life expectancy	0.917
Reduced unemployment rates	0.891
Promoted adequate housing	0.784
Improved access to water and sanitation	0.708

KMO=0.957, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity=5183.869, df=78, p-value=0.000, Eigen value= 2.669, % of Variance = 77.433

Source: Field Data (2024)

Comparatively, the difference in factor structures between Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District highlights a disparity in how social development is perceived and manifested in these regions. Bolgatanga Municipal's more fragmented factor structure suggests that social development initiatives may be more diverse and less integrated, potentially reflecting varied local challenges and priorities. On the other hand, Garu District's unified factor structure suggests a more holistic and integrated approach to social development, where improvements in different areas are seen as interdependent and collectively contributing to the

overall well-being. This could imply that development efforts in Garu District are more synchronized and potentially more effective in achieving comprehensive social progress.

### Frequency of Social Development

The frequency distribution of social development levels in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, based on a composite variable created from the primary component of the factor analysis, reveals insightful differences and similarities between the two regions (see Table 22). In Bolgatanga Municipal, 56.9% of respondents fall into the category of low social development, while 43.1% are in the high social development category. This indicates that a majority of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal perceive social development as relatively low. This could reflect the fragmented nature of social development indicators in Bolgatanga Municipal, as suggested by the factor analysis, where multiple components were identified. The varied and possibly less integrated efforts in different social development areas might contribute to a lower overall perception of social development.

**Table 22: Level of social development contributed by PCG**

Variable	Bolgatanga Municipal		Garu District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Low	87	56.9	157	53.4	244	54.59
High	66	43.1	137	46.6	203	45.41
Total	153	100	294	100	447	100

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the distribution shows that 53.4% of respondents perceive low social development, while 46.6% perceive high social development. Although

the majority still see social development as low, the percentage of those who perceive it as high is slightly greater compared to Bolgatanga Municipal. This aligns with the factor analysis for Garu District, which revealed a more cohesive and integrated perception of social development, where improvements in various areas are interrelated and contribute to an overall sense of progress.

Across the entire sample, 54.59% of respondents reported low social development, while 45.41% reported high social development. This overall distribution suggests that while there is a substantial perception of low social development across both districts, there is a significant portion of the population that recognizes high social development. The closer distribution in Garu District may indicate that cohesive and integrated social development strategies are yielding more evenly distributed perceptions of high social development compared to Bolgatanga Municipal, where efforts might need to be more synchronized to improve the overall social development perception.

The study also outlines a range of social impacts stemming from the developmental projects initiated by various organizations, including the Catholic Church, Methodist Church, Ghana and among other non-profit organizations. These impacts span improvements in healthcare, education, social cohesion, and empowerment of marginalized groups. The analysis reveals that these initiatives have not only enhanced the quality of life for individuals but have also strengthened community structures and fostered greater social inclusion.

One of the most significant social impacts has been the improvement in healthcare services, which has transformed community health outcomes. The

establishment of health facilities, such as the Presbyterian Hospital, has made critical healthcare services more accessible to the local population. This is particularly evident in the enhancement of mental health services, as one respondent noted:

*"We have a hospital, the Presbyterian Hospital which precisely is for the mental health".* Source: Key Informant (2024). This focus on mental health addresses a previously unmet need, contributing to the overall well-being of the community.

### **Demographic characteristics of respondents and their perspectives on social development**

The association between respondents' characteristics and their perspectives on social development in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District provides insights into the demographic factors that influence perceptions of social development in these areas (see Table 23). In Bolgatanga Municipal, there is no significant association between gender and perspectives on social development ( $p = 0.233$ ). Both males and females have relatively similar proportions of respondents perceiving low and high social development. This suggests that gender does not play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of social development in this municipality.

Age appears to have a significant influence on perceptions of social development in Bolgatanga Municipal ( $p = 0.029$ ). Notably, respondents aged 48-57 years are more likely to perceive low social development, with 79.3% falling into this category. In contrast, younger age groups, particularly those aged 28-37



years, have a higher proportion perceiving high social development. This variation may reflect differences in generational experiences and expectations regarding social development initiatives in the area.

**Table 23: Demographic characteristics of respondents' and perspectives on social development**

Variable	Bolgatanga Municipal				Garu District			
	LED N (%)	HED N (%)	Total N (%)	X <sup>2</sup> (p-value)	LED N (%)	HED N (%)	Total N (%)	X <sup>2</sup> (p-value)
<b>Sex</b>								
Female	40 (62.5%)	24 (37.5%)	64 (41.8%)	1.425 (0.233)	32 (47.1%)	36 (52.9%)	68 (23.1%)	1.430 (0.232)
Male	47 (52.8%)	42 (47.2%)	89 (58.2%)		125 (55.3%)	101 (44.7%)	226 (76.9%)	
<b>Age</b>								
18-27years	12 (47.4%)	7 (52.6%)	19 (12.4%)	10.757 (0.029)	5 (20.8%)	19 (79.2%)	24 (8.2%)	21.435 (0.000)
28-37years	20 (44.4%)	25 (55.6%)	45 (29.4%)		29 (42.6%)	39 (57.4%)	68 (23.1%)	
38-47years	25 (50.0%)	25 (50.0%)	50 (32.7%)		42 (58.3%)	30 (41.7%)	72 (24.5%)	
48-57years	23 (79.3%)	6 (20.7%)	29 (19.0%)		56 (68.3%)	26 (31.7%)	82 (27.9%)	
58+	7 (70.0%)	3 (30.0%)	10 (6.5%)		25 (52.1%)	23 (47.9%)	48 (16.3%)	
<b>Educational level</b>								
No formal education	16 (76.2%)	5 (23.8%)	21 (13.7%)	8.665 (0.123)	59 (64.8%)	32 (35.2%)	91 (31.0%)	32.519 (0.000)

JSS/JHS	10 (47.6%)	11 (52.4%)	21 (13.7%)		45 (73.8%)	16 (26.2%)	61 (20.7%)	
SSS/SHS	23 (69.7%)	10 (30.3%)	33 (21.6%)		23 (42.6%)	31 (57.4%)	54 (18.4%)	
Vocational/Technical School	11 (47.8%)	12 (52.2%)	23 (15.0%)		11 (45.8%)	13 (54.2%)	24 (8.2%)	
Tertiary	25 (48.1%)	27 (51.9%)	52 (34.0%)		18 (29.5%)	43 (70.5%)	61 (20.7%)	
Other	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	3 (2.0%)		1 (33.3%)	2 (77.7%)	3 (1.0%)	
<b>Native of Upper East Region</b>								
No	18 (62.1%)	11 (37.9%)	29 (19.0%)	0.395 (0.529)	1 (25.0%)	3 (75.0%)	4 (1.4%)	1.315 (0.252)
Yes	69 (55.6%)	55 (44.4%)	124 (81.0%)		156 (53.8%)	134 (46.2%)	290 (98.6%)	
<b>Occupation</b>								
Businessperson	34 (56.7%)	26 (43.3%)	60 (39.2%)	2.506 (0.776)	55 (57.9%)	40 (42.1%)	95 (32.3%)	22.987 (0.000)
Civil/Public servant	18 (48.6%)	19 (51.4%)	37 (24.2%)		19 (35.2%)	35 (64.8%)	54 (18.4%)	
Farmer	8 (72.7%)	3 (27.3%)	11 (7.2%)		59 (70.2%)	25 (29.8%)	84 (28.6%)	

Other	4 (66.7%)	2 (33.3%)	6 (3.9%)	3 (50.0%)	3 (50.0%)	6 (2.0%)
Student	15 (57.7%)	11 (42.3%)	26 (17.0%)	9 (42.9%)	12 (57.1%)	21 (7.1%)
Unemployed	8 (61.5%)	5 (38.5%)	13 (8.5%)	12 (35.3%)	22 (64.7%)	34 (11.6%)

LED=Low economic development, HED=High economic development, N=Number of respondents,  $X^2$ =Chi-value

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, gender also does not show a significant association with perspectives on social development ( $p = 0.232$ ). However, age shows a significant association ( $p = 0.000$ ), with younger respondents (18-27 years) having a higher proportion perceiving high social development compared to older age groups. This could indicate that younger individuals in Garu District are more optimistic or have benefitted more from recent social development initiatives compared to their older counterparts.

Educational level shows a notable influence on social development perspectives in Garu District ( $p = 0.000$ ). Respondents with no formal education are more likely to perceive low social development, while those with tertiary education are more likely to perceive high social development. This association suggests that higher education levels may be linked to greater awareness and appreciation of social development efforts in Garu District.

Occupation is another significant factor influencing perspectives on social development in Garu District ( $p = 0.000$ ). Business persons and farmers are more likely to perceive low social development, while civil/public servants and the unemployed are more likely to perceive high social development. This may reflect the varying impacts of social development programs on different occupational groups, with public servants possibly having better access to information and resources related to these initiatives.

Overall, these results highlight the importance of demographic factors such as age, education, and occupation in shaping perceptions of social development in both Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. Understanding these associations can help policymakers tailor social development programs to

address the specific needs and expectations of different demographic groups, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of these initiatives.

### **Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) and social development**

Table 24 presents the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) towards social development in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, providing insights into how respondents perceive the impact of PCG on social development in these areas. In Bolgatanga Municipal, the mean rating of PCG towards social development is 3.49, with a standard deviation of 0.940. This indicates a moderate positive perception of PCG's role in promoting social development among the respondents in this area. The standard deviation suggests a relatively consistent view among respondents, with most ratings clustering around the mean. The minimum rating is 1, and the maximum rating is 5, indicating a range of perceptions from very low to very high.

**Table 24: Rate of PCG towards social development**

District	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Bolgatanga Municipal	153	1	5	3.49	0.940
Garu District	294	2	5	3.99	1.105

Source: Field Data (2024)

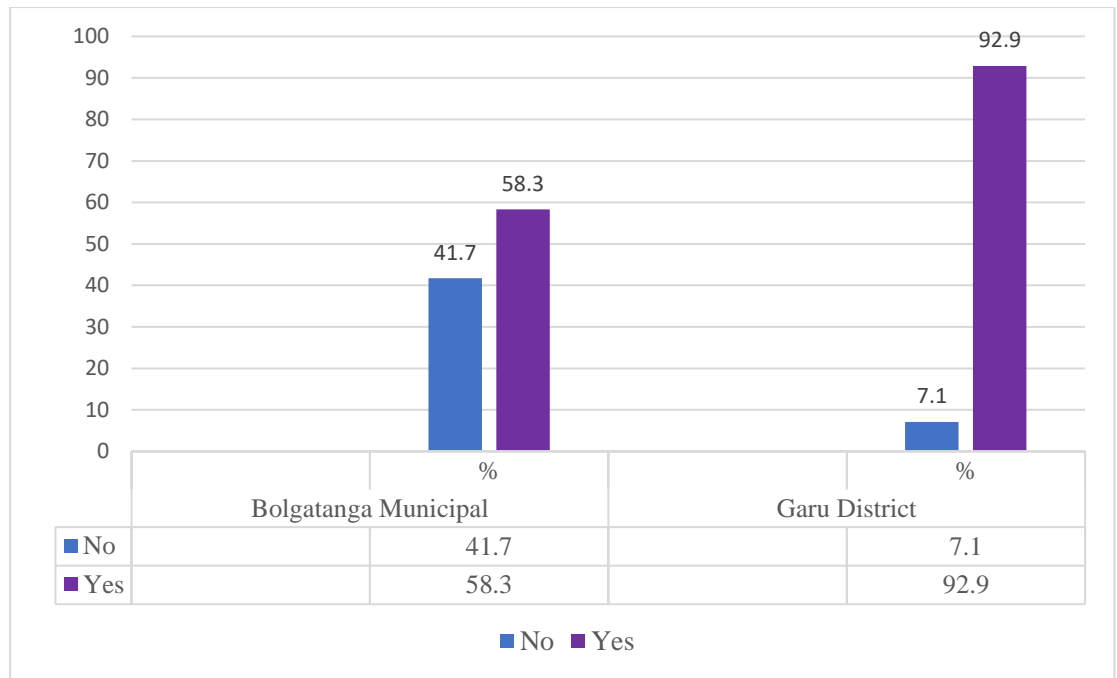
In contrast, Garu District has a higher mean rating of 3.99 for PCG towards social development, with a standard deviation of 1.105. This higher mean suggests that respondents in Garu District generally perceive PCG as having a more substantial positive impact on social development compared to those in Bolgatanga Municipal. The higher standard deviation indicates a slightly more varied set of responses, suggesting that while many respondents view PCG positively, there is a broader range of opinions. The minimum rating

is 2, and the maximum rating is 5, showing that even the lowest ratings in Garu District are relatively higher than those in Bolgatanga Municipal.

Overall, the results indicate that respondents in Garu District have a more favourable perception of the effectiveness of PCG in promoting social development compared to those in Bolgatanga Municipal. The difference in mean ratings could reflect variations in the implementation and outcomes of PCG initiatives between the two districts. The higher mean and broader range of perceptions in Garu District suggest that while the impact of PCG is widely recognized, there is still some room for improvement to ensure more consistent positive outcomes across the board.

### **PCG Role in facilitating social development**

Figure 12 presents the level of agreement among respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District regarding the effectiveness of Participatory Community Governance (PCG) in facilitating social development. In Bolgatanga Municipal, 41.7% of respondents (175 individuals) disagreed that PCG facilitates social development, while 58.3% (245 individuals) agreed. This indicates a somewhat divided perception of PCG's role in social development within this district, with a majority viewing it positively, but a significant minority expressing scepticism.



**Figure 12: Level of agreement to PCG facilitating social development**

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the level of agreement is much higher, with only 7.1% of respondents (27 individuals) disagreeing and a substantial 92.9% (355 individuals) agreeing that PCG facilitates social development. This overwhelming consensus suggests that PCG is widely recognized and valued for its contributions to social development in Garu District.

Comparatively, the data reflects a stark contrast between the two districts. While Bolgatanga Municipal shows a more mixed response with a considerable portion of the population not convinced of PCG's effectiveness, Garu District displays near-unanimous support for the positive role of PCG in social development. This disparity could be due to differences in how PCG initiatives are implemented, the visibility of their outcomes, or varying levels of community engagement and trust in local governance structures. The strong



agreement in Garu District highlights the potentially more successful or more visible implementation of PCG initiatives compared to Bolgatanga Municipal.

### Relationship between social and economic development

The relationship between social and economic development is examined in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District, revealing significant relationships in both areas (see Table 25). In Bolgatanga Municipal, among those with low economic development, 72.7% also had low social development, while 27.3% had high social development. Conversely, among those with high economic development, only 35.4% had low social development, whereas a notable 64.6% experienced high social development. This suggests that higher economic development is associated with better social development outcomes. The Chi-square test results, with a Pearson Chi-Square value of 21.254 and a p-value of 0.000, indicate a statistically significant association between social and economic development, confirming that the relationship is not due to random chance.

**Table 25: Relationship between social and economic development**

				Social development		
District				Low	High	Total
Bolgatanga Municipal	economic developmen t	Low	Count	64	24	88
			% within Economic developmen t	72.7%	27.3%	100.0%
			% within social developmen t	73.6%	36.4%	57.5%
	High	% of Total	41.8%	15.7%	57.5%	
		Count	23	42	65	
		% within Economic	35.4%	64.6%	100.0%	

			development				
			% within social development	26.4%	63.6%	42.5%	
			% of Total	15.0%	27.5%	42.5%	
Total			Count	87	66	153	
			% within Economic development	56.9%	43.1%	100.0%	
			% within social development	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
			% of Total	56.9%	43.1%	100.0%	
Garu District	economic development	Low	Count	142	13	155	
			% within Economic development	91.6%	8.4%	100.0%	
			% within social development	90.4%	9.5%	52.7%	
			% of Total	48.3%	4.4%	52.7%	
			High	Count	15	124	139
				% within Economic development	10.8%	89.2%	100.0%
		% within social development		9.6%	90.5%	47.3%	
		% of Total		5.1%	42.2%	47.3%	
		Total		Count	157	137	294
				% within Economic development	53.4%	46.6%	100.0%
			% within social development	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
			% of Total	53.4%	46.6%	100.0%	

Source: Field Data (2024)

**Table 26: Chi-square test between social and economic development**

District		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)
Bolgatanga Municipal	Pearson Chi-Square	21.254	1	0.000		
	Continuity Correction	19.759	1	0.000		
	Likelihood Ratio	21.611	1	0.000		
	Fisher's Exact Test				0.000	0.000
	Linear-by- Linear Association	21.115	1	0.000		
	N of Valid Cases	153				
Garu District	Pearson Chi-Square	192.366	1	0.000		
	Continuity Correction	189.132	1	0.000		
	Likelihood Ratio	221.778	1	0.000		
	Fisher's Exact Test				0.000	0.000
	Linear-by- Linear Association	191.711	1	0.000		
	N of Valid Cases	294				

Source: Field Data (2024)

In Garu District, the relationship is even more pronounced. Among those with low economic development, a staggering 91.6% had low social development, and only 8.4% had high social development. For those with high economic development, only 10.8% had low social development, while an overwhelming 89.2% had high social development. The Chi-square test results, with a Pearson Chi-Square value of 192.366 and a p-value of 0.000, show a very

strong and statistically significant association between social and economic development. This suggests that economic development is a crucial determinant of social development in Garu District.

Comparing both districts, Garu District shows a stronger association between economic and social development than Bolgatanga Municipal. This is reflected in the higher Chi-square value and the more polarized distribution of social development outcomes based on economic development levels in Garu District. The findings emphasize the critical role of economic development in achieving social development, with Garu District demonstrating a more direct correlation. The significant p-values in both districts reinforce the robustness of these associations, highlighting the importance of economic growth as a pathway to improving social conditions.

## **Discussion**

### **Comparative Analysis of Social Development Indicators**

The analysis of social development indicators in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District reveals distinct perceptions and priorities among respondents in these regions. In Bolgatanga Municipal, the highest mean rating for social development was observed in "Enhanced educational facilities" (3.58), followed closely by "Ensured care for the needy" (3.54) and "Ensured community empowerment" (3.33). This indicates that respondents perceive significant improvements in education, social support, and community empowerment. However, areas such as "Promoted adequate housing" (2.75) and "Improved access to water and sanitation" (3.08) received lower mean ratings, suggesting that these areas require more attention and improvement.

Conversely, in the Garu District, the highest mean rating was for "Improved access to healthcare" (3.55), indicating the perceived effectiveness of healthcare initiatives. Other indicators such as "Enhanced educational facilities" (3.50) and "Increased gender equality/development" (3.29) also received relatively high ratings. However, similar to Bolgatanga Municipal, "Promoted adequate housing" (2.81) and "Improved access to water and sanitation" (2.59) were rated lower, highlighting these as critical areas needing improvement. These findings align with similar studies on social development in other regions. For example, a study by Chen et al. (2020) found that access to education and healthcare are often perceived as primary indicators of social development in rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, the importance of community empowerment and gender equality is echoed in the work of Asante and Aikins (2019), who emphasized the role of social policies in enhancing community cohesion and support systems.

### **Reliability and Validity of Economic Indicators**

The reliability test of economic items/indicators revealed a significant difference between Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. Bolgatanga Municipal had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.657, indicating moderate reliability, while Garu District had a much higher alpha of 0.975, indicating excellent reliability. This suggests that the economic indicators used in the Garu District are more consistent and reliable for measuring economic constructs.

The stark difference in reliability may be due to the homogeneous economic conditions in Garu District, as opposed to the more diverse economic conditions in Bolgatanga Municipal. This is consistent with findings by Owusu and Essel (2021), who noted that regions with more uniform economic

conditions tend to have higher reliability in economic measurements due to less variability in respondents' interpretations.

### **Factor Analysis of Social Development Indicators**

The factor analysis of social development indicators in Bolgatanga Municipal revealed a complex structure with four components, indicating a multifaceted perception of social development. This complexity suggests that social development initiatives in Bolgatanga Municipal may be diverse and less integrated, potentially reflecting varied local challenges and priorities.

In contrast, the factor analysis for the Garu District presented a more straightforward outcome with a single dominant component, suggesting a cohesive and integrated perception of social development. This indicates that improvements in different areas of social development in Garu District are seen as interdependent and collectively contributing to overall well-being. This unified factor structure supports the findings of similar studies, such as that by Mensah and Oppong (2022), who found that integrated social development strategies tend to yield more cohesive community perceptions and outcomes.

### **Frequency Distribution of Social Development Levels**

The frequency distribution of social development levels shows that a majority of respondents in both districts perceive social development as relatively low, with 56.9% in Bolgatanga Municipal and 53.4% in Garu District reporting low social development. However, Garu District has a slightly higher proportion of respondents perceiving high social development (46.6%) compared to Bolgatanga Municipal (43.1%).

This overall distribution suggests that while there is a substantial perception of low social development across both districts, the more integrated

social development strategies in the Garu District may be contributing to a higher perception of social development. This aligns with the findings of Amponsah and Tetteh (2023), who observed that cohesive and well-coordinated development programs are more likely to enhance the overall perception of social development in communities.

### **Social Impacts of Developmental Projects**

The study highlights the significant social impacts of developmental projects initiated by various organizations, including improvements in healthcare, education, social cohesion, and empowerment of marginalized groups. These initiatives have not only enhanced the quality of life for individuals but also strengthened community structures and fostered greater social inclusion.

The establishment of health facilities, such as the Presbyterian Hospital, has made critical healthcare services more accessible, particularly mental health services, addressed previously unmet needs and contributed to overall community well-being. This aligns with the findings of Nketiah and Amankwah (2020), who noted that access to specialized healthcare services significantly improves community health outcomes and social cohesion.

### **Association Between Respondents' Characteristics and Perspectives on Social Development**

The association between respondents' characteristics and their perspectives on social development reveals significant demographic influences. In Bolgatanga Municipal, age appears to significantly influence perceptions of social development, with older respondents (48-57 years) more likely to

perceive low social development. This may reflect generational differences in experiences and expectations regarding social development initiatives.

In the Garu District, educational level and occupation are significant factors influencing perspectives on social development. Respondents with higher education levels and those in civil/public service are more likely to perceive high social development. This suggests that higher education levels and certain occupations may be linked to greater awareness and appreciation of social development efforts. These findings are consistent with those of Adjei and Amponsah (2021), who found that education and occupation significantly influence perceptions of social development in rural communities.

Overall, the comparative analysis of social development indicators, reliability and validity of economic indicators, factor analysis, frequency distribution, and the association between respondents' characteristics and perspectives on social development provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of development initiatives in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. These findings can inform policymakers and development practitioners about the areas where residents feel progress has been made and where further efforts are needed to enhance social development and well-being in these communities.

### **Rate of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) Towards Social Development**

The comparative analysis of the PCG's role in social development in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District reveals significant differences in respondents' perceptions. In Bolgatanga Municipal, the mean rating of 3.49 with a standard deviation of 0.940 indicates a moderate positive perception, with



most ratings clustering around the mean. This suggests a relatively consistent view among respondents regarding PCG's contributions to social development. The range of ratings from 1 to 5 shows diverse opinions, with some respondents rating PCG's impact very low and others very high.

In contrast, Garu District exhibits a higher mean rating of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 1.105, indicating a more substantial positive perception of PCG's impact on social development. The minimum rating of 2 and a maximum rating of 5 suggest that even the lowest ratings in Garu District are relatively higher than those in Bolgatanga Municipal, reflecting a generally more favourable view of PCG's efforts.

These findings align with the work of Asamoah et al. (2018), who noted that community-based organizations, including religious groups like the PCG, can significantly influence social development through various initiatives such as education, healthcare, and community empowerment. The higher mean rating in the Garu District could be attributed to more visible or effective implementation of PCG initiatives, which may include better engagement with the local community and more targeted social development projects.

### **Agreement to PCG Facilitating Social Development**

The level of agreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness of PCG in facilitating social development presents a stark contrast between Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. In Bolgatanga Municipal, 58.3% of respondents agreed that PCG facilitates social development, while 41.7% disagreed, indicating a somewhat divided perception. This split could be due to varied experiences with PCG initiatives or differences in the visibility and effectiveness of these initiatives across the district.

In the Garu District, a substantial 92.9% of respondents agreed that PCG facilitates social development, with only 7.1% disagreeing. This overwhelming consensus suggests that PCG's contributions to social development are widely recognized and valued in the Garu District. The near-unanimous support could be a result of more successful or visible implementation of PCG initiatives compared to Bolgatanga Municipal.

Similar findings were reported by Owusu-Ansah et al. (2019), who emphasized the importance of community engagement and the visible impact of development projects in garnering community support. The disparity between the two districts highlights the need for PCG to enhance its strategies in Bolgatanga Municipal to achieve more consistent and positive outcomes.

### **Association Between Social Development and Economic Development**

The association between social and economic development is evident in both districts, with significant relationships observed in the data. In Bolgatanga Municipal, among those with low economic development, 72.7% also had low social development, while 27.3% had high social development. Conversely, among those with high economic development, only 35.4% had low social development, whereas 64.6% experienced high social development. The Chi-square test results, with a Pearson Chi-Square value of 21.254 and a p-value of 0.000, indicate a statistically significant association between social and economic development.

In Garu District, the relationship is even more pronounced. Among those with low economic development, 91.6% had low social development, and only 8.4% had high social development. For those with high economic development, 89.2% had high social development, and only 10.8% had low social

development. The Chi-square test results, with a Pearson Chi-Square value of 192.366 and a p-value of 0.000, show a very strong and statistically significant association between social and economic development.

These findings are consistent with the literature, which underscores the critical role of economic development in achieving social development. Mensah and Oppong (2020) highlighted that economic growth provides the necessary resources for social infrastructure, such as education and healthcare, which in turn enhance social development. The stronger association observed in the Garu District suggests that economic development is a more crucial determinant of social development in this district, emphasizing the need for integrated development strategies that address both economic and social aspects.

The results of this study align with several related studies on the impact of community-based organizations and the relationship between economic and social development. For instance, Adjei and Amponsah (2021) found that higher levels of education and occupation status significantly influence perceptions of social development in rural communities. This is reflected in the higher agreement levels and mean ratings in Garu District, where respondents may have higher educational attainment and better economic conditions.

Furthermore, the study by Nketiah and Amankwah (2020) on the role of specialized healthcare services in improving community health outcomes supports the findings in Garu District, where access to healthcare is a highly rated social development indicator. The visible impact of healthcare initiatives could explain the higher perception of PCG's role in social development.

Overall, the comparative analysis of social development indicators, reliability and validity of economic indicators, factor analysis, frequency distribution, and the association between respondents' characteristics and perspectives on social development provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of development initiatives in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. These findings can inform policymakers and development practitioners about the areas where residents feel progress has been made and where further efforts are needed to enhance social development and well-being in these communities.

### **Chapter Summary**

The contribution of PCG programmes to social development is discussed in this chapter. In particular, the chapter explores component analyses, social development indicators, the relationship between social development and demographic traits, and the relationship between social development and economic development to present the findings. Healthcare, education, gender equality, community empowerment, social policy implementation, care for the underprivileged, school enrollment rates, health promotion, infant mortality, life expectancy, unemployment rates, housing, and access to water and sanitation are just a few of the social aspects that are covered by the indicators. On a scale of 1 to 5, the mean ratings for each indicator shed light on how successful development programmes are thought to be in these areas. Based on a composite variable constructed from the major component of the factor analysis, the frequency distribution of social development levels in

Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District indicates both interesting variations and similarities between the two regions.

Of the respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal, 56.9% are classified as having low social development, and 43.1% as having excellent social development. This suggests that social development is viewed as relatively poor by the majority of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal. This may be a reflection of the fragmented character of Bolgatanga Municipal's social development indicators, as indicated by the factor analysis, which revealed many components. Additionally, Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District's linkages between social and economic development are explored, and substantial relationships are found in both areas. In Bolgatanga Municipal, 27.3% of people had high social development and 72.7% of people with low economic development also had low social development. The discussion of the results within the framework of previous research completes the chapter.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### Introduction

This chapter focuses on the contributions of PCG to Regional Development. Emphatically, the chapter begins with exploring respondents' perspective of the church as a stakeholder in regional development. The subsequent sections include PCG activities towards regional development and a rating of stakeholders' contributions towards regional development. Prior to the chapter summary, the findings are discussed in relation to relevant literature.

#### Perspective of the Church as a stakeholder in regional development

The data on the perspective of the Church as a stakeholder in regional development shows a significant difference between Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District (see Table 27). In Bolgatanga Municipal, a substantial majority of respondents, 76.0%, do not view the Church as a key stakeholder in regional development. Only 24.0% recognize the Church's role in this capacity. This suggests that in Bolgatanga Municipal, the Church's activities related to regional development are either not prominent or not effectively communicated to the public. The high percentage of respondents who do not see the Church as a stakeholder highlights a potential area for improvement in the Church's outreach and engagement strategies.

**Table 27: Respondents' perspective of the church as a stakeholder in regional development**

District		Frequency	Percent
Bolgatanga Municipal	No	319	76.0

Garu District	Yes	101	24.0
	Total	420	100.0
	No	102	26.7
	Yes	280	73.3
	Total	382	100.0

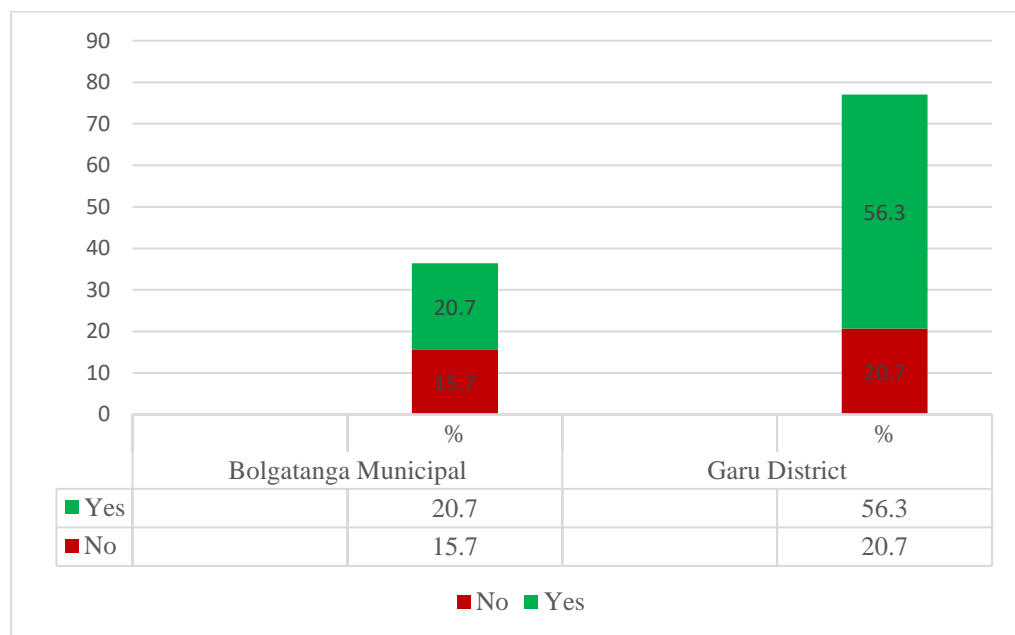
Conversely, in Garu District, the perception of the Church as a stakeholder in regional development is markedly different. Here, a significant majority of respondents, 73.3%, acknowledge the Church as a key stakeholder in regional development. Only 26.7% do not see the Church in this role. This indicates that the Church's activities in Garu District are more visible and impactful, leading to greater public recognition and appreciation of its contributions to regional development. The higher positive recognition in Garu District suggests that the Church's efforts are more effective or better communicated in this area compared to Bolgatanga Municipal.

Overall, the contrasting perceptions between the two districts highlight the varying levels of the Church's perceived involvement in regional development. The data suggests that while the Church is viewed as an important stakeholder in Garu District, there is a need for increased visibility and improved communication of the Church's developmental activities in Bolgatanga Municipal. Enhancing the Church's outreach efforts and demonstrating its impact on regional development could help shift public perception in Bolgatanga Municipal, aligning it more closely with the positive recognition observed in Garu District.

### **Perspective of PCG activities towards regional development**

The data on perspectives regarding the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) activities towards regional development reveals a stark contrast between

Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District. In Bolgatanga Municipal, the majority of respondents, 63.6%, remain undecided about the PCG's contribution to regional development. This suggests a significant lack of awareness or clear perception of the PCG's activities in the region. Only 20.7% of respondents recognize a positive contribution from the PCG, while 15.7% believe the PCG does not contribute to regional development at all. This distribution indicates mixed sentiments and highlights a potential area for the PCG to increase its visibility and communication efforts in Bolgatanga Municipal.



**Figure 13: PCG activities towards regional development**

Source: Field Data (2024)

In contrast, the results from Garu District present a more favourable view of the PCG's activities. A substantial 56.3% of respondents acknowledge the PCG's positive contributions towards regional development, indicating that the church's efforts are more recognized and appreciated in this district. The



percentage of respondents who are undecided is significantly lower at 23.0%, suggesting that more people in Garu District are aware of and have formed clear opinions about the PCG's impact. Only 20.7% believe that the PCG does not contribute to regional development, which is similar to the percentage in Bolgatanga Municipal but is overshadowed by the high positive recognition.

Overall, the contrasting perceptions between the two districts indicate that the PCG's impact is more visibly recognized in Garu District than in Bolgatanga Municipal. This disparity could be due to various factors such as the extent and nature of the PCG's activities, the effectiveness of their communication strategies, or the socio-economic context of the regions. The findings suggest that the PCG might need to enhance its outreach and visibility efforts in Bolgatanga Municipal to ensure that its contributions towards regional development are more widely recognized and appreciated by the local populace.

### **Stakeholder contribution to regional development**

The results in Table 28 show the respondents' rating of contributions of various stakeholders -GOVT/STATE, PCG (Presbyterian Church of Ghana), all NGOs, and other churches/Religions—to regional development across several areas in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District.

In terms of peace and security, the GOVT/STATE is perceived as the most influential stakeholder in both districts, with mean ratings of 3.35 in Bolgatanga Municipal and 2.47 in Garu District, indicating a higher contribution in Bolgatanga Municipal. The PCG, all NGOs, and other religious institutions have lower mean ratings, with all three showing similar contributions in Garu District but with PCG slightly higher in Bolgatanga Municipal.

**Table 28: Perspective of respondents on the contribution of stakeholders towards regional development**

Stakeholder	Bolgatanga Municipal		Garu District	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
<i>Peace and Security</i>				
GOVT/STATE	3.35	0.913	2.47	0.974
PCG	2.28	0.895	2.42	1.029
ALL NGOs	2.10	0.889	1.84	0.835
Other churches/ Religions	1.97	0.860	1.77	0.830
<i>Access to farm inputs</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.88	0.980	2.36	1.045
PCG	1.94	0.867	2.49	1.093
ALL NGOs	2.02	0.853	1.89	0.994
Other churches/ Religions	1.82	0.808	1.72	0.866
<i>Working with marginalized</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.94	0.899	2.00	1.213
PCG	2.18	0.889	1.98	1.212
ALL NGOs	2.10	1.051	1.55	0.976
Other churches/ Religions	1.96	0.892	1.51	1.845
<i>Food Security</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.95	0.924	2.43	1.084
PCG	2.05	0.877	2.33	1.157
ALL NGOs	2.02	0.874	1.75	0.970
Other churches/ Religions	1.84	1.280	1.58	0.822
<i>Access to healthcare</i>				
GOVT/STATE	3.35	0.911	2.86	0.991
PCG	2.51	1.047	2.64	1.062
ALL NGOs	2.06	0.916	1.78	0.877
Other churches/ Religions	2.08	1.066	1.76	0.892
<i>Disaster Management</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.90	0.989	2.13	1.254
PCG	1.94	0.822	1.92	1.195
ALL NGOs	1.90	0.871	1.60	1.026

Other churches/ Religions	1.81	0.810	1.53	0.960
<i>Gender development</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.71	0.889	2.12	1.185
PCG	2.09	0.890	2.13	1.201
ALL NGOs	2.06	0.921	1.74	1.096
Other churches/ Religions	1.84	0.811	1.70	1.046
<i>Resilience to climate change</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.90	0.919	2.05	1.231
PCG	1.86	0.824	1.82	1.179
ALL NGOs	1.92	0.879	1.51	0.947
Other churches/ Religions	1.81	0.808	1.43	0.826
<i>Access to credit</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.80	0.956	2.13	1.225
PCG	1.95	0.849	1.98	1.227
ALL NGOs	1.86	0.897	1.77	1.157
Other churches/ Religions	1.81	0.844	1.57	0.963
<i>Access to education</i>				
GOVT/STATE	3.34	0.917	2.95	1.011
PCG	2.47	1.042	2.65	1.054
ALL NGOs	2.12	0.949	2.07	1.022
Other churches/ Religions	2.10	0.889	2.08	1.056
<i>Livelihood support</i>				
GOVT/STATE	2.76	0.924	2.07	1.224
PCG	2.10	0.894	2.15	1.266
ALL NGOs	2.01	0.913	1.78	1.160
Other churches/ Religions	1.94	0.850	1.70	1.082
Min.=1, Max.=4				

Source: Field Data (2024)

For access to farm inputs, the Government/State again has the highest mean rating in both districts, although the rating is higher in Bolgatanga Municipal (2.88) than in Garu District (2.36). Interestingly, the PCG's contribution is rated higher in Garu District (2.49) than in Bolgatanga Municipal

(1.94), indicating a more significant role in Garu District. All NGOs and other religious institutions have lower ratings in both districts.

When it comes to working with marginalized groups, the Government/State is perceived as the leading stakeholder in both districts, with mean ratings of 2.94 in Bolgatanga Municipal and 2.00 in Garu District. The PCG has similar ratings in both districts, slightly below the Government/State, while All NGOs and other religious institutions have lower ratings, especially in Garu District.

Regarding food security, the Government/State is again the leading contributor in both districts, but with a higher mean rating in Bolgatanga Municipal (2.95) compared to Garu District (2.43). The PCG's contribution is higher in Garu District (2.33) than in Bolgatanga Municipal (2.05), whereas All NGOs and other religious institutions have lower and fairly similar contributions in both districts.

In the area of access to healthcare, the Government/State has the highest ratings in both districts, with Bolgatanga Municipal (3.35) being higher than Garu District (2.86). The PCG follows, with similar contributions in both districts. All NGOs and other religious institutions have lower ratings, indicating a less significant role in healthcare access.

For disaster management, the Government/State is seen as the main contributor in both districts, but with a significantly higher rating in Bolgatanga Municipal (2.90) compared to Garu District (2.13). The PCG, All NGOs, and other religious institutions have lower contributions, with Garu District showing particularly lower ratings among these stakeholders.

Across the board, Government/State tends to be rated the highest for their contributions in most areas, suggesting a stronger perceived role in regional development compared to other stakeholders. The PCG shows more variability, sometimes contributing more significantly in Garu District than in Bolgatanga Municipal. All NGOs and other religious institutions generally have lower ratings, indicating a less prominent role in regional development efforts across the different areas measured.

**PCG role: Inclusive Development, Disability and Empowerment Project  
Garu Presbyterian Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR)**

The Garu Presbyterian Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programme began in 1976 as Agricultural Rehabilitation for the Blind (ARB). The focus was to render agricultural services to adult blind persons who became blind as a result of onchocerciasis. Orientation and Mobility (O&M) training and production skills in crops, animals and gardening as well as local handicrafts were taught to enable clientele to improve upon their livelihood capacity and ultimately reduce poverty and stigma associated with sight disability. A shift in paradigm in the 1990s led to the advent of the CBR concept with emphasis on multi-faceted approaches and a broader purview of disability to include all manner of persons confronted with mental, physical, hearing/speech challenges or a combination of any of these.

Therefore, the mandate of the CBR programme over the years has been to improve upon the quality of life of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and their families in the catchment areas in consonance with the scripture; 'I came that they may have life to the fullest' (John 10:10). This scripture continues to inspire the CBR programme team to discharge their duties assiduously and

religiously towards uplifting the plight of persons with disabilities and their families/communities within the catchment areas in Northern Ghana.

The operational philosophy has been predicated on the bottom-up approach to development with emphasis on community participation, inter-sectorial collaboration, disability mainstreaming and inclusive development. The Presbyterian Community-Based Rehabilitation (PCBR) at Garu, is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) working to improve the lives of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in six (6) Districts of the Upper East and North East Region of Ghana. PCBR uses the World Health Organisation (WHO) CBR model to deliver inclusive development practices that reduce poverty and change the perception of disability within its operational area. The WHO model is a multi-sectoral approach designed to improve the equalisation of opportunities and social inclusion of PWDs, while combating the perpetual cycle of poverty and disability. The PCBR has the following thematic programme areas: *livelihood empowerment, health, education, social and vocational services, and advocacy.*

The PCBR has a mission to build the capacities and competencies of PWDs through a process of reducing disability and its effects, ensuring their education, functional and economic empowerment for successful inclusion in society. The vision therefore is to have PWDs and their families live decent, satisfactory and self-fulfilling lives.

### **Cases of CBR as a Social Intervention**

#### ***1.Mr. Abok Atik, Mental Disability, at Karateshie***

*“Before they gave me the garden and the sheep, I could hardly lay hands on my own money to cater for my own needs, but now I can. I get money regularly to take care of myself, my wife and kid. I am grateful to CBR. All I can say is that God help them to continue to help people like us”. Abok Atik, 37 years of age, is a native of the Karateshie community of the Tempene District. He was not born with the mental disability, but the problem developed as he grew into adulthood. He was identified, assessed and brought under the CBR programme seven years ago by Clement Abugri, a field staff of the CBR Garu.*

*Mr. Atik said in 2015, he received two sheep from CBR, a well fenced garden, with equipment such as pick-axe, shovel, hoe, watering cans, knapsack sprayer, donkey and cart; compost manure and a well-constructed well to provide a reliable water supply for the gardening activities. He says, he does all year-round farming in the garden. Apart from the immediate benefit of his family getting the opportunity to feed on fresh vegetables throughout the year, he also sells the vegetables to generate income for himself and the other family members who support him in the garden.*

*He cultivates onions of which he said he makes good money from the sale of the onions and the onion seeds. He estimated that, he and the other brothers whom he shares the garden with, make not less thirty (30) bottles of the seeds. A bottle is sold for between GH¢50.00 to GH¢60.00, which translates into at least GH¢1,500.00 worth of earnings every season. Mr. Abok Atik is now married with a child.*

## **2. John Avoka**

*John Avoka is a physically challenged client of the Project. He hails from Kugzua within the Garu-Tempane District of the Upper East Region. He was born about 37 years ago without any form of impairment or disability. At age five, he took ill in what appeared to be severe Cerebral Spinal Meningitis. CSM combined with stroke resulting in paralysis of his lower limbs. Soon after sustaining the disability, he was neglected and was never sent to school.*

*Indeed, when he was identified by the Programme some few years ago, he looked dejected, helpless and hopeless. The programme immediately offered him a tricycle to facilitate his mobility. His family and community members also received sensitization about the need for his care and integration to enable him unearth his potential and realize them to the fullest. The results were positive as he began receiving necessary support and attention from his family and community.*

*The Programme subsequently offered to train him in agricultural skills which he picked up very fast to the admiration of all. Also, the programme through the PWS&D, supported him with a donkey cart which is used to transport farm inputs and produce. He is presently a lucrative maize farmer and earns over 40 bags of maize per annum. His achievement caught the attention of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) and he was chosen for best farmer award by government in 2013.*

*He looks cheerful, confident and full of hope and optimism. No doubt he is presently a role model to people with disabilities in and around his vicinity. He is an executive member of the Disabled People's Organization (DPO) of Kugzua. He is married to beautiful non-disabled lady.*



### **3.Mr. Seidu Laar, Visual Impairment, at Basoyonde (through Mumuni)**

*Mr. Siedu Laar, a visually impaired native of the Basoyonde community of the Tempene District of the Upper East Region. Mr. Seidu Laar said he lost his sight through measles infection. He said Mr. Samuel Mbugri, a former field staff of CBR-Garu enrolled him on the CBR programme to become a beneficiary. He was first trained in mat weaving and rope making, using the locally made fibre. He was subsequently trained on how to make stools with ropes.*



### **4.Halizata Issah**

*Mrs. Halizata Issah is a native of the Nakom community in the Pusiga District of the Upper East region. Halizata was born to Mr. Gamberu (father) and Madam Adisah (mother) without disability. She was, however, infected with poliomyelitis at the age of eight (8), which resulted in paralysis in both legs. Unlike her other siblings who got the opportunity to go out to play and to have*

*fun, she was kept indoors because she could not move. During field visits, an official of CBR-Garu identified and later introduced her to the programme. She was given a tricycle to make her mobile. She said, that was a big relief to her as she was able to then move about to perform some basic tasks on her own.*

*Halizata was subsequently enrolled on vocational skills training (dress making) at no cost to her and the parents. Halizata said she also received some functional literacy training in her community as part of the CBR support; this was aimed at supporting her to acquire some basic literacy and numeracy skills to be able to take measurements. Since becoming an expert dressmaker and starting her business, Mrs. Halizata Issah has trained other persons who are now proficient in the dressmaking vocation. At present, sixteen (16) Apprentices are under her tutelage.*

*She takes an enrolment fee of not less than GH¢150.00 from each apprentice. Halizata says she makes an average of GH¢400.00 a month from her vocation, from which she is able to support the educational needs of her children. She is currently married with three children.*



### **5. Kweku and Ladi**

*The success story of three children with physical disability namely: Yakubu Gifty, David Kweku and Bachelor Ladi is worth recounting. These three children aged 13,15 and 14 respectively are from Dusbuliga, Basyonde and Denugu, all in the Garu-Tempane District of the Upper East Region of Ghana.*

*Even though they are from different family backgrounds and communities as above, they shared a common problem summed up in one word as “neglect”. In view of their disabilities, the parents of these children simply did not see the need to send them to school. Thus, whilst their non-disabled siblings were put in schools, they were left out under the pretext of mobility constraints and the drudgery of having to be carrying them to school each day.*

*Following community surveys conducted by Programme Officers, the three children were identified in separate occasions. They were assessed and*

registered under the Programme. The families and community members of these children were also sensitized on the need for them to be enrolled in Schools. They were subsequently enrolled in Schools and are learning along with their peers. Besides, each of them was later given a tricycle to enhance their mobility. As a result, they are able to move independently to their respective Schools and are well integrated. The Programme, under the auspices of the PWS&D offered support in the form goats and farm inputs such as seed to the families of these children. This has empowered these families economically and they are able to fend for the children in school.



#### **6. Esther Awidana**

Esther Awidana aged 45 is physically challenged. She hails from Kugsabilla within the Project's catchment area. In view of her disability, her parents did not find any potential in her and hence she was not sent to School. She grew up to be non-literate whose main work was to stay at home taking care of babies



*and watching over the house whilst other household members were out working to generate income. Poor Esther was dependent on the charity of other family members for survival and where such benevolence felt to come, she simply had to starve.*

*Some few years ago, she was identified by the programme during a community survey conducted by a field worker. She was registered and subsequently provided with a Tricycle to facilitate her mobility. She was also trained on agricultural skills and petty trade to boost her source of income. Indeed, through the support of the PWS&D Canada, Esther Awindana got the necessary support to engage in crops and livestock production as well as petty trade and has been very successful. For instance, she received 2 goats from the programme as breeding stock and this has multiplied to 6 goats in less than three years. This has boosted her source of livelihoods and earned her a lot of respect from family and community members. She is married and has 4 children.*



### **7. Mohammed Kadiri**

*Mohammed Kadiri aged 21 is a male client of the Programme. He comes from Bawku within the operational area. He suffered from osteomyelitis and was not sent to School by her parents. Over 6 years ago, Mohammed Kadiri was identified by the Programme through a community volunteer. He was subsequently referred to the Bawku Orthopaedic/Physiotherapy Project for further diagnoses and intervention. The results of the orthopaedic nurse proved positive, and he was thereafter transferred to the Nsawam Orthopaedic Hospital for further attention. At Nsawam, his right leg was amputated through a surgical operation. The Programme in collaboration with Lillian Foundation supported the client to acquire an artificial limb to enhance his mobility.*

*Furthermore, the Project under the auspices of the PWS&D, Canada enrolled Mohammed Kadiri into Project's Vocational Training Centre in 2009 where he*

*learned integrated skills in dressmaking, batik, Tie and Dye, soap production and functional literacy. He picked up very fast and graduated successfully in 2011. Currently, he is lucratively engaged in dressmaking and batik, Tie and Dye Business and generates an average of GHC60.00 per week. He has also become a master trainer with about 2 apprentices. He is able to fend for himself, his wife and some extended family members. All these positive impacts on the life Mohammed wouldn't have been possible but for the support of the PWS&D, Canada. Recently, during a monitoring visit conducted by the vocational skills instructor, Madam Lucy Wandusim, Kadiri could not hide his joy. He was full of praises to the programme and the PWS&D, Canada for offering him the necessary support to turn his life around.*

## **Discussion**

### **Perspective of the Church as a Stakeholder in Regional Development**

The data from Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District revealed a marked contrast in how respondents viewed the Church as a stakeholder in regional development. In Bolgatanga Municipal, 76% of respondents did not see the Church as a key player, suggesting either limited visibility or perceived impact of the Church's activities. This aligns with existing literature on faith-based organizations, which often face challenges in making their contributions visible, particularly in regions dominated by state actors and larger NGOs (Brown & Dev, 2022). The high proportion of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal who did not recognize the Church's role underscores a critical area for improvement in the Church's outreach strategies and public engagement.

In contrast, Garu District exhibited a more positive view of the Church's role, with 73.3% of respondents acknowledging its contributions. This higher recognition suggests that the Church's activities in Garu District were both more visible and impactful. Research supports this finding, noting that localized and well-communicated initiatives by faith-based organizations can significantly enhance their perceived impact (Clark & Green, 2022). The Church's efforts in Garu District, therefore, reflect successful engagement with the community, which is crucial for building recognition and support (Lewis, 2020).

### **Perspective of PCG Activities Towards Regional Development**

The contrasting perceptions of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's (PCG) contributions to regional development in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District provide insights into the effectiveness of the Church's activities. In Bolgatanga Municipal, 63.6% of respondents were undecided about the PCG's contributions, indicating a lack of awareness or clarity regarding its role. This aligns with findings that NGOs and faith-based organizations often struggle with visibility and clear communication of their impact (Smith & Wallace, 2021). The lower percentage of respondents who positively recognized the PCG's contributions in Bolgatanga Municipal suggests that increased efforts in visibility and communication are necessary.

Conversely, Garu District's more favorable view of the PCG's contributions, with 56.3% acknowledging positive impacts, reflects a better recognition of the Church's activities. This could be attributed to more effective outreach and targeted interventions, such as the Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program, which aligns with literature suggesting that



focused and contextually relevant initiatives by NGOs are more likely to be recognized and valued (Harrison et al., 2023). The lower undecided rate in Garu District supports the idea that clearer communication and effective program implementation contribute to higher recognition of NGO contributions (Miller, 2023).

### **Stakeholder Contribution to Regional Development**

The findings on stakeholder contributions reveal that the Government/State was consistently rated as the most influential stakeholder across various areas, including peace and security, access to farm inputs, working with marginalized groups, food security, and healthcare. This dominance of the state in regional development aligns with literature that often emphasizes the central role of governmental bodies in providing essential services and infrastructure (Jansen et al., 2021). The higher ratings for government contributions in Bolgatanga Municipal compared to Garu District further underline the strong perception of state influence in this area.

The PCG's contributions were rated higher in Garu District for several aspects compared to Bolgatanga Municipal, indicating that the Church's targeted interventions, particularly through the CBR program, had a more significant impact. Research supports the view that localized and specialized interventions by NGOs can lead to higher perceived contributions, particularly when addressing specific community needs (Ahmed & Rehman, 2022). The variability in PCG's contributions across districts highlights the importance of context in evaluating stakeholder impact and suggests that tailored approaches are essential for maximizing the effectiveness of NGO initiatives.

### **PCG Role: Inclusive Development, Disability, and Empowerment Project**

The Garu Presbyterian Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program, which evolved from focusing on agricultural services for the blind to a broader approach encompassing various disabilities, exemplifies the potential of targeted, community-based interventions. The CBR program's success in improving the quality of life for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and promoting their social inclusion reflects broader trends in inclusive development. Literature highlights that community-based approaches, emphasizing empowerment and integration, are effective in advancing the rights and participation of marginalized groups (Miller, 2023). The program's achievements in establishing inclusive schools and vocational training align with findings that such initiatives can significantly enhance the visibility and participation of PWDs in society (Harrison et al., 2023).

Overall, the study demonstrates the varying impacts of stakeholders in regional development and underscores the importance of effective communication, targeted interventions, and contextually relevant approaches in enhancing the perceived and actual contributions of NGOs and faith-based organizations.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter is devoted to PCG's contributions to regional development. The chapter starts, quite emphatically, by examining respondents' perceptions of the church as a participant in regional development. There is a noticeable distinction between Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu District based on the statistics about the Church's stakeholder stance in regional development. 76.0

% of respondents in Bolgatanga Municipal do not think of the Church as a prominent player in regional development. Merely 24.0% acknowledge the function of the Church in this regard. This implies that either the Church's involvement in regional development is not well-known in Bolgatanga Municipal or its public outreach efforts are ineffective. The statistics on opinions about the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG)'s efforts in support of regional development also shows a clear difference between Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District. The majority of respondents (63.6%) in Bolgatanga Municipal are unsure about the PCG's role in regional development. This implies a notable deficiency in knowledge or a lucid understanding of the PCG's operations within the area.

Furthermore, Agricultural Rehabilitation for the Blind (ARB), the predecessor initiative to the Garu Presbyterian Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programme, was founded in 1976. The main goal was to provide agricultural services to those who have onchocerciasis-related blindness. Training in orientation and mobility (O&M), production skills for crops, animals, and gardening, as well as local handicrafts, were imparted to clients to enhance their ability to support themselves and, in the end, lessen poverty and the stigma attached to being blind or visually impaired. The discussion of the results within the framework of previous research completes the chapter.

## CHAPTER NINE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This final chapter of the thesis presents a summary of the main findings of the study, the conclusions arrived at based on the findings of the study objectives, the policy recommendations proposed by the study, the contribution of the study to knowledge, and the areas that can be taken up in future studies on the contribution of churches in regional development.

#### Summary of research

The research on the role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in regional development in the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality aimed at exploring how the church influences socio-economic development and community cohesion in the Upper East Region. The primary objective was to assess the church's initiatives in education, health, and social welfare, as well as evaluating its role in fostering collaboration among community stakeholders. To achieve the overall objective, the study employed a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data was collected through systematic observation of projects initiated by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, in-depth interviews with community members, church leaders, and local authorities, providing rich insights into their experiences and perceptions. Quantitative data was gathered through surveys designed to measure the impact of the church's initiatives on various development indicators. This comprehensive approach allowed for a nuanced understanding of the church's contributions to regional development, facilitating

a robust analysis of its effectiveness and influence within the community. Overall, the research provides valuable insights into the intersection of religion and development, offering practical recommendations for leveraging the church's influence to promote sustainable growth in the region.

### **Key Findings of the Study**

The first objective revealed that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) strategically distributes developmental projects to address both urban and rural needs in Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District. In Bolgatanga, projects are dispersed mainly to the east, while in Garu District, they are concentrated in Garu Township. Awareness of these initiatives is notably higher in Garu District, indicating better community engagement. Consequently, respondents in Garu perceive the projects as more evenly distributed compared to those in Bolgatanga. Overall, PCG projects have positively impacted community development, with stronger recognition in Garu District due to concentrated efforts and effective engagement. The findings underscore the importance of targeted initiatives and equitable resource distribution in enhancing community well-being. Future research should focus on long-term assessments to evaluate the sustained benefits of these projects.

The second research objective examined the contribution of Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) development projects to economic development in Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District. Findings indicate that income generation from these initiatives has a moderate to high impact in Bolgatanga, although benefits are unevenly distributed due to varying access to resources. In Garu District, income generation significantly improves household welfare, while asset ownership has a slightly lower impact. Factor analysis

reveals a multifaceted approach in Bolgatanga and a cohesive impact in Garu District, with both areas perceiving overall economic development as low despite the positive effects of PCG projects. Demographic factors influence perceptions in Garu, where younger, more educated individuals view the projects more favourably, while perceptions in Bolgatanga are shaped by a broader range of factors. The study emphasizes the effectiveness of PCG initiatives and the need for tailored interventions to ensure equitable economic growth. It also highlights the importance of addressing challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and market accessibility to foster sustained economic progress in both regions.

Regarding the third objective of the study, the analysis of social development indicators reveals differing perceptions between Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District. In Bolgatanga, respondents rated "Enhanced educational facilities," "Ensured care for the needy," and "Ensured community empowerment" highly, indicating perceived improvements in these areas. However, lower ratings for "Promoted adequate housing" and "Improved access to water and sanitation" highlight areas needing attention. In Garu District, the highest rating was for "Improved access to healthcare," pointing to effective healthcare initiatives, while similar concerns about housing and sanitation persist. Reliability tests show that economic indicators in Garu District are more consistent than those in Bolgatanga, which exhibits a complex structure with four components, reflecting a less integrated perception of social development. Overall, these findings underscore the varying priorities and perceptions of social development in the two regions.

The study reveals that Garu District has a cohesive perception of social development, with improvements seen as interdependent and collectively enhancing overall well-being. Key social impacts of developmental projects include advancements in healthcare, education, and social cohesion, particularly through the establishment of health facilities that increase accessibility. In contrast, respondents in Bolgatanga Municipality have a less favourable view of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's (PCG) impact on social development, suggesting that PCG initiatives may be more effective or visible in Garu District. The analysis highlights a clear association between social and economic development; those experiencing low economic development also perceive low social development, and vice versa. This interdependence underscores the need for integrated strategies in development efforts. Overall, the findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners to identify both progress and areas requiring further attention to enhance social development and well-being in these communities.

The findings on the fourth objective of the study reveal significant differences in community perceptions of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) as a stakeholder in regional development between Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District. In Bolgatanga, a majority of respondents do not recognize the Church as a key player in development, indicating a lack of visibility and impact, which calls for improved communication and outreach. In contrast, Garu District respondents largely view the PCG as a crucial stakeholder, reflecting effective community engagement and a greater recognition of its initiatives. This disparity highlights the need for tailored communication strategies in Bolgatanga to enhance awareness of the Church's

contributions. By adopting successful engagement models from Garu District and strengthening community partnerships, the PCG can improve its visibility and effectiveness as a significant player in regional development.

The comparative analysis of stakeholder contributions reveals that government entities play a central role in driving development agendas, while the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) makes significant contributions in specific areas, such as improving access to farm inputs in Garu District. This indicates the potential for targeted interventions and strategic partnerships to enhance the Church's impact. Overall, the findings emphasize the necessity of multi-sectoral collaborations and tailored interventions by stakeholders, including the PCG and NGOs, to effectively tackle regional development challenges. By aligning strategies with local needs and improving visibility through effective communication, stakeholders can maximize their contributions and promote sustainable development across diverse communities.

## **Conclusions**

In tandem with the research objectives, the study firstly examined the spatial distribution of major projects initiated by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the Upper East Region between 1994 to 2024. Specifically, in Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District. In Bolgatanga, there were five projects: Psychiatric Clinic, Eye Clinic, Clinic, and 2 Schools which were totally dispersed to the Eastern side of the Municipality. In Garu District, there were six projects which provided differentiated services to the communities and the region at large. They were, Agricultural Station, Health Centre,



Rehabilitation Centre other School projects respectively. The above distribution system is justified on the needs assessment, land availability and communal willingness to collaborate with the church for such developmental interventions. In addition to this, the spatial distribution of PCG s projects offer holistic understanding of the rural and urban dichotomies within the study areas. The dynamics, inequality and differentiated needs offer policy direction to the church for planning, integration and implementation of developmental projects.

The second objective sought to analyse the role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's contribution to economic development. Based on the findings, the Church has contributed in diverse ways through the various initiatives in the study area which continues to complement the State's role for sustainable development. Again, in terms of local economic development which is critical for rural development, the church has significantly contributed. Regardless of the limitations associated with projects sustainability, evidence from the research offers diverse ways through which the church can systematically address economic needs and support government for poverty reduction and ensure equitable development. Specifically, the church has created job opportunities, enhanced local businesses, skill training, provision of soft loans, women empowerment and sustainable agricultural practices for economic development.

In relation to this, the third objective focused on the contribution of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to the social development in Bolgatanga and Garu District in the Upper East Region. The study found out that various developmental interventions by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana has adequately supported the social development trajectories in the study area. Key

social dimensions to development in addressing regional imbalances to development were; improved access to healthcare, enhancement of educational facilities, gender equality, community empowerment, sanitation and environmental governance, advocacy role for social development policies and collaborative role with other agencies for sustainable development.

Lastly, the fourth objective examined the perception of residents in the study area on how they perceive the Presbyterian Church of Ghana as a stakeholder for regional development. In this regard, the perception of residents varied between Bolgatanga and Garu. Whereas the residents from Bolgatanga had low perception on the contributions of Presbyterian Church of Ghana in regional development discussion, the residents from Garu had higher positive perception. The variations resonate with rural-urban dynamics and therefore offers the need for the church to advance marketing strategies for the visibility of its role and contribution to the regional development. Significantly, the existing Psychiatric Hospital in Bolgatanga is the only psychiatric hospital for the entire northern belt which covers five major regions in the Northern sector of Ghana.

In conclusion, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana over the past thirty years (1994-2024) has exerted significant developmental initiatives geared towards equitable and sustainable regional development in the Upper East Region despite the challenges faced by the church. This complementary role by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, together with other non-state actors illustrates the need for applied endogenous policy tool in addressing regional inequalities to development.

## Recommendations

Firstly, it is recommended that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) expand its developmental initiatives in the Bolgatanga Municipality and Garu District by enhancing partnerships with local government and non-governmental organizations. This collaboration can facilitate the scaling up of successful agricultural projects and infrastructure improvements, ensuring sustained economic growth and community resilience. Additionally, the PCG should consider implementing vocational training programs to equip local residents with skills that complement the agricultural sector, thereby further reducing unemployment and promoting diversified economic opportunities.

Also, in light of the substantial enhancement of agricultural productivity achieved through the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's (PCG) initiatives, it is recommended that the church further strengthen and expand its collaborative farmer groups by incorporating additional training programs focused on sustainable agricultural practices and innovative farming techniques. This could involve partnering with agricultural experts and local universities to provide workshops and resources that equip farmers with the knowledge to optimize yields while preserving the environment. Additionally, the PCG should explore opportunities to establish stronger linkages with local and national markets, facilitating direct access for farmers to sell their produce and ensuring better pricing and profitability.

Furthermore, given the profound impact of savings and loans associations in empowering women and enhancing their economic independence, it is recommended that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) expand these initiatives by integrating financial literacy and business

development training into the program. Providing women with essential skills in budget management, savings strategies, and investment planning will further enhance their ability to make informed financial decisions and maximize the benefits of these financial services. Additionally, the PCG should consider establishing mentorship programs that connect women with successful entrepreneurs and financial advisors, fostering a supportive network that encourages knowledge sharing and collaboration. To sustain and scale these efforts, the PCG could explore partnerships with microfinance institutions and other development organizations to secure additional funding and resources.

Moreover, to address the significant economic challenges identified in the study, it is recommended that the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) advocate for comprehensive infrastructure development in the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality, particularly focusing on improving road conditions to enhance market access. Collaborating with local government and other stakeholders, the PCG can play a pivotal role in lobbying for government investment in infrastructure projects that facilitate the transportation of goods and improve connectivity for rural communities. Additionally, establishing partnerships with microfinance institutions could enhance access to credit for small-scale entrepreneurs and farmers, empowering them to expand their businesses and boost productivity.

Finally, to ensure the sustainability of developmental projects, the PCG should implement capacity-building programs that foster local ownership and management skills within the communities. This can be achieved through training workshops that equip community leaders and project managers with the necessary tools to sustain initiatives over the long term. Furthermore, creating

job opportunities tailored for youth in the region is essential to curb migration. This can be facilitated by launching vocational training programs that align with local market demands, thereby equipping young people with skills relevant to the local economy. By addressing these interconnected challenges, the PCG can help foster a more resilient and self-sufficient community, ultimately contributing to sustained economic development.

### **Contribution to Knowledge and the literature**

Firstly, this study contributes significantly to theoretical advancement by enhancing our understanding of faith-based organizations as catalysts for social change. By examining the church's initiatives in education, health, and community empowerment, the research challenges traditional development theories that often overlook the influence of religious institutions in shaping local socio-economic landscapes. This study offers a new framework that integrates religious social capital into the discourse on development, illustrating how the church's moral authority and community networks facilitate collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including government agencies and NGOs. Furthermore, by contextualizing these findings within the unique cultural and historical backdrop of the Upper East Region, the research enriches existing theoretical models of community development with insights on the interplay between religion and socio-economic progress.

In addition, the study contributes to methodological innovations by employing a mixed methods approach that effectively captures the complexities of social dynamics in these communities. By integrating qualitative and quantitative research techniques, the study allows for a comprehensive

exploration of the church's impact on local development while also providing robust statistical validation of its findings. This methodological framework not only enhances the richness of qualitative data but also ensures that quantitative measures, such as surveys assessing community perceptions, are systematically analysed. Furthermore, the use of participatory research techniques encourages community engagement and stakeholder involvement, fostering a deeper understanding of the local context and enhancing the reliability of the data collected. This innovative approach sets a precedent for future research in similar contexts, demonstrating how methodological flexibility can yield nuanced insights into the role of faith-based organizations in development processes. Ultimately, the study provides a valuable blueprint for researchers seeking to explore the intersections of religion, community, and socio-economic change in diverse settings.

Moreover, the study offers valuable interdisciplinary insights by integrating perspectives from sociology, religious studies, and development economics. By examining how religious beliefs and practices influence community dynamics and development outcomes, the research bridges gaps between these fields, illustrating the complex interplay between faith, social cohesion, and economic progress. This interdisciplinary approach reveals how the church not only serves as a source of spiritual guidance but also as a catalyst for social capital, facilitating collaboration among diverse community stakeholders and enhancing local governance structures. Furthermore, the study's findings contribute to development economics by demonstrating how faith-based initiatives can address critical issues such as poverty alleviation, education, and health care access, thereby enriching existing economic models

with insights into the social dimensions of development. By fostering dialogue between disciplines, this research not only broadens the academic discourse but also encourages practitioners to consider multifaceted strategies that leverage religious institutions for holistic community development.

Finally, this study on the role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in regional development within the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality makes significant contributions to practical applications by providing actionable insights for community leaders, policymakers, and development practitioners. By highlighting the church's successful initiatives in areas such as education, health care, and social welfare, the research offers a replicable model for leveraging religious organizations to address local challenges effectively. The findings underscore the importance of collaborative partnerships between the church, local government, and non-governmental organizations, suggesting that such alliances can enhance resource mobilization and amplify the impact of development interventions. Furthermore, the study identifies specific strategies employed by the church that have proven effective in fostering community engagement and participation, which can be adapted to similar contexts across the region. By translating theoretical insights into practical recommendations, this research not only empowers local stakeholders to harness the church's potential in promoting sustainable development but also contributes to a broader understanding of how faith-based initiatives can play a transformative role in community resilience and socio-economic advancement.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

The research findings on the developmental projects initiated by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) in Bolgatanga Municipal and Garu Districts provide invaluable insights into the spatial distribution, economic impact, social development, and community perceptions of these initiatives. While the study has successfully demonstrated the positive contributions of these projects to regional development, it also reveals several areas requiring further exploration to ensure the long-term sustainability and inclusivity of such interventions, including:

- Longitudinal Studies on the Sustained Impact of Developmental Projects;
- Building capacity: Climate Change, adaptation and resilience;
- Comparative Studies on the Role of Religious Institutions in Development;
- Enhancing Inclusivity and Equity in Developmental Interventions; and
- Exploring the Underlying Causes of Regional Disparities.



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**APPENDIX****QUESTIONNAIRE****PH.D. (Doctoral Thesis) Research Study: Field Work****DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND REGIONAL PLANNING.  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

Dear respondent, I am a student at the University of Cape Coast researching the topic “Role of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in regional development: The Case of Upper East Region of Ghana.” Please note that this is purely for academic purposes and as such objectivity is a predominant factor in this study and all information given will be conducted with utmost anonymity and confidentiality. You will therefore be contributing significantly towards the success of this study as one of the few chosen participants. Thank you for your participation.

PLEASE TICK ONLY ONE ANSWER WHERE APPROPRIATE.

**SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS.**

1	<b>Gender of the respondent.</b>	
	Male [   ]	Female [   ]
2	<b>Age of respondent.</b>	
	19 years – 29 years [   ]	30 years – 39 years [   ]
	40 years – 49 years [   ]	50 years -59 [   ] 60 years and above [   ]
3	<b>Educational Level of Respondents</b>	
	Primary School [   ]	Vocational School [   ]
	Junior Secondary School [   ]	Tertiary [   ]
	Senior Secondary School [   ]	None of the above [   ]
4	<b>Indicate your religious affiliation or denomination</b>	
	Presbyterian Church [   ]	African Traditional Religion [   ]
	Other Christian Denomination [   ]	Other (specify) [   ]
	Moslem [   ]	
5	<b>Are you a native of the Upper East Region?</b>	
	Yes [   ]	No [   ]

6	<p><b>How long have you been living in Upper East Region?</b></p> <p>0years – 5years    [   ]    16years – 20years [   ]</p> <p>6years – 10years   [   ]     21years – 30years [   ]</p> <p>11years – 15years [   ]     31 &amp; Above              [   ]</p>
7	<p><b>Occupation.....</b></p> <p>Farmer [   ]    Civil servant [   ]</p> <p>Businessperson [   ]     Self-employed [   ]</p> <p>Student [   ]     Unemployed [   ]</p> <p>Other [   ], (specify.....)</p>

## B. ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS BY THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA

8. Are you aware of any development project undertaken by the Presbyterian church in your area in the past 30years?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

Explain your answer .....

9. If yes, please specify the projects by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in your area within the last 30years?

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. Have you ever benefited from any of the projects carried out by the Services of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the last 30years?

YES..... NO.....

Explain your answer .....

If Yes, specify the name of the project.....

11. Have these projects been evenly distributed within your area?

Yes [ ☐ ]

No [ ☐ ]

Not sure [ ☐ ]

12. Can development of your community be linked to the activities/projects of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana in the last 30years?

YES..... NO.....

Explain your answer .....

13. Using the scale of 1-5, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how have the developmental projects initiated by the Presbyterian church contributed to general development in this area?

Development Intervention	Rate
Health Service	
Education	
Agricultural Development	
Community Development and Participation	
Economic improvement	
Reduction in gender inequality	
Public Policy	

14. Does the activities/projects of the Church involve promotion of entire community well -being and facilitate participatory development?

Yes..... No.....

Explain your answer .....

### **C. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

15.Can you please indicate any activity or project carried out by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana that relate (s) to economic development in your area?

- i.....
- ii.....
- iii.....
- iv.....
- v.....

16. Allocate rating values (1-5) with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how have the developmental projects initiated by the Presbyterian church contributed to economic development in your area.

ACTIVITIES TO STUMULATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	RATING
Improved job opportunities	
Increased income generation	
Enhanced local businesses	
Infrastructure development (roads, markets, etc)	
Improved gender equality	
Increased Skills training	
Improved human resource empowerment	
Provided financial support system	
Increased livelihood diversification	
Reduced poverty rates	
Improved asset ownership	

17. Please rate the impact of these development projects on economic development on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very low impact and 5 being very high impact.....

18. Can the church further complement the economic development of this area?

Yes.....No.....

Explain your answer .....

If Yes, please explain.....

19. With 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, rate the following sectors that can be effectively complemented for economic development.

SECTOR	RANKING
Agriculture Development	
Tourism	
Gender and Development	
Skills Training	
Human Resource Development Programmes	
Local Economic Development by State	

20. Do you agree that partnership and participatory role of the Church can facilitate economic development?

Strong disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strong agree

21. Can you mention hindrances to economic development in your community?

i.....

ii.....

iii.....

iv.....

v.....

vi.....

#### **D. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

22. Can you please indicate any activity or project carried out by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana that relate (s) to **social development** in your area?

i.....

ii.....

- iii.....
- iv.....
- v.....

23. In your opinion, rating from 1-5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how have the development projects initiated by the Presbyterian church contributed to social development in this area?

ACTIVITIES TO STUMULATE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	RATING
Improved access to healthcare	
Enhanced educational facilities	
Increased gender equality/development	
Ensured community empowerment	
Facilitated the implementation of social policy	
Ensured care for the needy	
Increased school enrolment rate	
Improved health promotion	
Reduced infant mortality	
Increased life expectancy	
Reduced unemployment rates	
Promoted adequate housing	
Improved access to water and sanitation	

24. Can you please indicate any sector for Church Partnership to stimulate Social development?

- i.....
- ii.....
- iii.....
- iv.....
- v.....

25. Can the church complement the social development of your community?

Yes.....No.....

Explain your answer .....

26. On 1-5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, rate how each of the following sector that can be effectively complemented for holistic development.

SECTOR	RATING
Health Promotion	
Education	
Gender and development	
Skills Training	
Care for the needy and poor	
Local Economic Development by State	

27. Please rate the impact of these development projects on social development on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very low impact and 5 being very high impact.....

28. Do you agree that partnership and participatory role of the Church can facilitate Social development?

Yes.....No.....

Explain your answer .....

29. Can you mention hindrances to social development in your community?

i.....

ii.....

iii.....

iv.....

v.....

vi.....

#### **E. PERCEPTION OF PCG AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

30. Do you agree with the assertion that Regional Development of the Upper East Region is related to the role and activities of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana?

Yes.....No.....

Explain your answer .....



31. To what level do you describe the role of the Presbyterian church has positively influenced the development of the Upper East Region.

Not sure [ ]

Not significant [ ]

Somewhat significant [ ]

Very significant [ ]

32. Do you perceive the Church as a major stakeholder for regional development in your community?

Yes.....No.....

Explain your answer .....

33. In your candid opinion, experience and projections, what ranking value (1-3) 1 being the lowest and 3 being the highest, how would you allocate to each of the development actors in each of their activities below in the region?

INTERVENTION	GOVT/STATE	PCG	ALL NGOs	Other churches/ Religions
1.Agriculture and Development				
2.Food Security				
3.Disaster Management				
4.Access to Education				
5.Access to Health				
6. Access to Credit				
7.Gender Development				
8.Access to farm Inputs				
9.Peace and Security				
10.Ecological Balance				
11.Workings with marginalised				
12.Livelihood Support				
13.Resilience to Climate Change				

34. Can you name some challenges to effective collaboration with the Church for development?

- i.....
- ii.....
- iii.....
- iv.....
- v.....

35. In your own assessment can you indicate any new area that the Church should consider for further development?

.....

.....

.....

36. Using the ranking order of 1-5 with 1, being the lowest, rate the challenges faced by development interventions in the area?

CHALLENGES TO DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVENTIONS	RATING
Socio-cultural	
Political influence	
Peace and Security	
Lack of education	
Physical Environment	
Uncoordinated Institutional Systems	

37. Using the rating of 1-5, with 1, being the lowest and 5 being the highest, rate the challenges faced by Projects/Programmes run by the Presbyterian Church of Ghana?

CONSTRAINTS TO CHURCH DEVELOPMENTS	RANKING
Weak community support	
Socio-cultural factors	
Uncoordinated institutional factors	
Environmental challenges	
Human Resource Challenge	
Peace and Security	

38. Does developmental intervention/ service provided by the Church run in agreeable to the needs in this community?

Yes.....No.....

Explain your answer .....

39 Enumerate some activities or interventions you would like the Presbytery to implement towards Regional Development.

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.
- v.
- vi.
- vii.
- viii.

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STAKEHOLDERS (CHIEFS, PASTORS AND PLANNERS)

##### **Background characteristics of participants**

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and your association with the Presbyterian church in the study area?
2. How long have you been involved with the Presbyterian church and its activities in the region?
3. Could you provide some insight into the overall goals and objectives of the Presbyterian church's developmental projects in the Garu District and Bolgatanga Municipality?

##### **Objective 1: Mapping the spatial distribution of developmental projects:**

4. Which specific developmental projects has the Presbyterian church undertaken in the study area over the years?

5. Can you describe the geographic locations or areas where these projects have been implemented?
6. How were the areas or communities selected for these projects?
7. Were there any particular criteria or factors considered while choosing the locations for these projects?

**Objective 2: Contribution of development projects to economic development:**

8. In your opinion, how have the developmental projects implemented by the Presbyterian church contributed to economic development in the study area?
9. Can you provide any specific examples of how these projects have positively impacted the local economy?
10. Have there been any challenges or limitations faced in terms of economic development through these projects?

**Objective 3: Contribution of development projects to social development:**

11. How have the developmental projects implemented by the Presbyterian church contributed to social development in the study area?
12. Can you give examples of social development initiatives or programs undertaken by the church?
13. Have there been any noticeable improvements in the quality of life, education, healthcare, or other social aspects due to these projects?
14. Have there been any challenges or limitations faced in terms of social development through these projects?

**Objective 4: Residents' perception of the Presbyterian church in regional development:**

15. How do the residents in the study area perceive the role of the Presbyterian church in regional development?
16. Have you conducted any surveys or assessments to gauge the perception of the local community regarding the church's contribution?
17. What are some common feedback or opinions have you received from the residents?
18. Do you have any additional information to support this study?