

## Influence of Dipo Rite Performance on the Girl Child's Education and the People of Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo

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### ABSTRACTS

This paper investigates the impact of the Dipo rite performance on the education of Ghana's Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo girls and their communities. The Dipo rite is a Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo tradition that entails the initiation of girls into womanhood. It is deeply rooted in their culture. It has been discovered, however, that the practise has detrimental effects on the education, health, and economic well-being of females and their families, frequently leading to early marriage and school dropout. Using social learning theory as a theoretical framework, this paper investigates how cultural practises such as the Dipo rite performance are learned and transmitted across generations, as well as the potential for behaviour modification through modelling and reinforcement. The paper examines empirical studies that examined the attitudes of parents, community leaders, and the larger society towards the Dipo rite performance and its effect on girls' education. The findings suggest that interventions that promote positive attitudes towards girls' education and discourage detrimental traditional practises could result in behaviour modification among parents, community leaders, and the larger society. In its conclusion, the paper suggests a multifaceted approach to addressing the issue, including community sensitization, the involvement of local leaders, and government policies that support girls' education.

**Keywords-** Dipo rite, Girl child education, Yilo Krobo, Manya Krobo, Traditional practices.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental human right with the capacity to empower individuals and advance socioeconomic development in communities. In many parts of the globe, access to education, particularly for girls, has been hampered by a number of factors. In Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo, Ghana, the performance of the Dipo rite, a traditional Krobo puberty rite, has been identified as a potential obstacle to the education of females in the community. During this ritual, young females are isolated for several weeks and instructed in traditional values and skills. The Dipo rite has been linked to lower educational attainment among Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo district females, according to a study by Amoako (2019). Girls who participated in the ritual were

more likely to drop out of school or perform poorly on exams than their peers who did not participate in the rite, according to the study. Similarly, Plan International's 2018 report highlights the detrimental effects of the Dipo rite on the education and well-being of community females.

Despite the detrimental effects of the Dipo rite on girls' education, it is profoundly ingrained in the Krobo culture and tradition. Therefore, any attempts to resolve this issue must consider the ritual's cultural significance. Several organisations and initiatives, including the Girls' Education Unit of the Ghana Education Service and the Krobo Girls' Education Fund, have been established to address the barriers to education that Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo district girls confront. This study seeks to investigate the impact of the Dipo ceremonial

performance on the education of Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo's women and people. The study utilises the works of Amoako (2019) and Plan International (2018) to provide an in-depth analysis of the effect of the rite on the education of females in the community. In addition, the essay describes the efforts made by various organisations and initiatives to resolve the obstacles to education faced by girls in the region.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Theoretical Frameworks

The study was based on Albert Bandura's (1977) theory of social learning. According to Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, individuals learn from their social environment through observation, imitation, and modelling. In this instance, the Dipo rite performance is a centuries-old custom that is profoundly ingrained in the Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo cultures. Children are socialised into the norms, values, and practices of their culture, including the Dipo rite performance, through social learning. However, the social learning theory also suggests that behaviour can be modified via modelling and reinforcement. In the context of the influence of Dipo rite performance on the girl child's education, this implies that interventions that promote positive attitudes towards girls' education and discourage harmful traditional practices such as early marriage could result in a change of behaviour among parents, community leaders, and the larger society. Using social learning theory as a theoretical framework for this topic is relevant because it serves to explain how cultural practices such as the Dipo rite performance are learned and passed down through generations. It also provides insight into the potential for behaviour change through modelling and reinforcement, which has implications for interventions designed to promote girls' education in the Ghanaian districts of Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo. By understanding the role of social learning in shaping attitudes towards education and traditional practices, it is possible to design interventions that target the underlying causes of the problem and foster lasting change.

### 2.2. Empirical Review

Agbeko (2017) carried out research in the Yilo Krobo traditional area to investigate the impact that Dipo rites have on the educational opportunities available to young women. According to the findings, the Dipo rituals had a detrimental effect on the education of females, as evidenced by the fact that a significant number of girls stopped attending school after participating in the rites.

Ampomah (2020) carried out a case study in Yilo Krobo, Ghana, to investigate the influence of traditional rituals, in particular the Dipo rite, on the educational opportunities available to young women there. According to the findings of the study, the Dipo ritual had a detrimental effect on the education of girls since it frequently resulted in high dropout rates and low academic performance.

Appiah-Kubi and Adei (2021) undertook a study to investigate the effect that Dipo ceremonies have on the educational opportunities available to young women in Ghana's Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo Districts. According to the findings of the study, the Dipo rites had a detrimental effect on the educational opportunities available to girls, particularly in terms of the high dropout rates and poor academic performance.

A study was carried out by Danso and Osei-Asibey (2019) with the purpose of investigating the impact that cultural traditions, specifically the Dipo ritual, have on females' educational opportunities in Ghana. According to the findings of the study, the Dipo ritual had a detrimental effect on the education of girls since it frequently resulted in high dropout rates and low academic performance.

An investigation into the influence that Dipo rites have on the educational opportunities available to young women in the Yilo Krobo Municipality was carried out by Gakpetor and Bediako (2019). According to the findings of the study, the Dipo rites had a detrimental effect on the educational opportunities available to girls, particularly in terms of the high dropout rates and poor academic performance.

In their research, Addai and Amankwaa (2018) investigated the connection between the performance of Dipo rites and the educational opportunities available to young women in the Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo districts of Ghana. They discovered that the practice of the Dipo rite, which involves the initiation of girls into womanhood, can have a negative impact on their education because it frequently leads to early marriage and early school dropout, both of which are detrimental to a girl's chances of completing her formal education. The authors recommend that efforts be made to raise awareness among parents and community leaders about the importance of education for girls, and to encourage them to prioritise their daughters' schooling over traditional practices like the Dipo rite. Specifically, the authors recommend that efforts be made to raise awareness among parents and community leaders about the importance of education for girls.

Otoo and Neequaye (2019) conducted a study in the Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo regions of Ghana to evaluate the opinions of parents and community leaders about the performance of the Dipo ritual and its impact on the education of the girl child. The authors discovered that a significant number of parents and community leaders, despite the fact that many of them were aware of the detrimental effects of the Dipo rite on girls' educational opportunities, continued to adhere to the belief that the ritual was an essential part of the culture and ought to be maintained. The authors suggest that interventions should involve interacting with community leaders and parents, as well as utilising communication tactics that are culturally relevant, in order to shift attitudes and support the education of girls.

The significance of the execution of the Dipo rite to the people of Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo was investigated in a study that was carried out by Abledu and Alhassan (2016). The authors came to the conclusion that despite the fact that the practice was seen as a significant part of the communities' history, it had detrimental impacts on the education, health, and economic well-being of the girls as well as their families. The authors advocate for a multi-pronged strategy to solve the problem, one that includes the sensitization of the community, the participation of local leaders, and the implementation of government policies that support the education of girls.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a case study in two schools in the two municipalities. These schools are *Klo-Agogo* Senior High school in the *Yilo Krobo* Municipality and *Obelemanya* M/A Junior High School in the *Man ya Krobo* Municipality. These schools were chosen because they are in the typical areas of these municipalities and to help discover the effects of the *Dipo* rite on the girl child's education at both the Junior High School (JHS) and at the Senior High School (SHS) levels.

The informants were selected from among teachers, traditional dipo priests, chiefs, Queen mothers, Educationists, students, young ladies who dropped out from school and pastors from the two municipalities. The informants chosen to have adequate knowledge and experience on the *Dipo* rite performance to help come out with concrete information for the study. Their educational backgrounds ranged from basic to tertiary levels except for the aged who were illiterate. Their ages were between 15-85 years. The occupations for the non-students' informants were teaching, trading, farming, and pastoring. Few were, however, unemployed.

The researcher purposively selected two schools in the two municipalities for the data collection. The schools so selected are *Klo-Agogo* Senior High School in the *Yilo Krobo* Municipality and *Obelemanya* M/A Basic Schools for the *Manya Krobo* Municipality for the interview. The reasons for selecting these two schools was informed by the idea that, these schools were located in the indigenous Krobo communities and are capable of giving answers that would truly reflect the research questions as well as for the purpose of the study. The sample distribution is shown in table 1

**Table 1: Sample distributions**

PARTICIPANTS	YILO		LOWER MANYA		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	
Traditional Priests	2	2	2	2	8
Chiefs	2	-	2	-	4
Queen Mothers	-	2	-	2	4
Teachers	2	2	2	2	8
Pastors	2	-	2	-	4
Educationists	2	2	2	2	8
The Aged	2	3	2	3	10
School Dropouts		2		2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>50</b>

In all, 50 informants were used to elicit information on the topic under study.

The study employed multiple methods for data collection. The instruments used for the data collection were participant observation, interview, documentation, and native speaker's intuition.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Effects of Dipo rite on the Girl-Child's Education

The third objective of this study is to examine the effect of puberty rite performed among the *Yilo* and *Lower Manya Krobo* people on the Girl Child Education.

#### 4.2. Lack of focus for education

Lack of focus results in inefficiencies in life. Children need to focus on their lives and to set their minds and everything on school education in order to become responsible adults and citizens of the nation. Focusing and

continuing their education, will enable them to realize their potentials and their future career path they should pursue.

The data have however, shown that, the girl child no longer focuses her attention on education as soon as they are taken through the *Dipo* puberty rite. She no longer thinks of going to school as soon as they are taken through the *Dipo* rite ceremony because of some of the things they are told after the rite was performed that you are now a Krobo woman and the sex door is opened for you. After these utterances, they see themselves as marriage materials at the expense of continuing their education. Most of our children rather think of having sexual intercourse with boys instead of thinking and focusing on their education for a better future.

#### 4.3. Prolonged period of education

The data indicated that the prolonged period of education for the girl child negatively affects the *Dipo* rite

performance in the *Yilo Krobo* area. The period of basic education in Ghana is six years of primary education and three years of Junior High school education. This period was to prepare the girl child physically, mentally, and socially for the senior high school education and then to further her education at the tertiary education such as Colleges of Education, Nursing Colleges, Polytechnics and University levels. Any child who is able to follow this educational structure could complete the tertiary education level between the ages twenty-two and twenty-three and would have been gainfully employed. This structure did not allow them to participate in the *Dipo* rite at an appropriate age because, a girl child who completes university, might not want to go through the *Dipo* rite where up to now, initiates appear half naked. In cases where the child had to go through the *dipo* rite after the basic education, it becomes very difficult for the *dipo* graduates to continue with their formal education. Some of the *dipo* graduates prefer to travel to places like Accra, Kumasi, and even Cote d'Ivoire soon after the *Dipo* rites were performed to engage in petty economic activities like trading at the expense of their education. Those of them who wanted to go back to school had to continue from where they left off which prolongs their period of stay in school.

An informant revealed that some relatives even take the girls to Ivory Coast to stay and work for people under the pretense of educating them. When these girls get to their teen ages, they are sometimes introduced to the commercial sex business, and they eventually contract HIV/AIDS and die.

**4.4. Non-pursuit of University Education**

The analysis of the data gathered for this study has shown that a non-pursuit of university education by most of the girls in the *Yilo Krobo* area was another effect of changes in the *Dipo* rite ceremony. University education is the education given to young adults after their secondary education. This education provides opportunities to individuals to be equipped with knowledge, skills attitudes that will enable them to effectively solve their personal problems and that of the society. It also enables individuals to be prepared for the job industry and to choose the career path.

It has to be noted that majority of girl children in the *Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo* areas are not able to pursue higher education as far as tertiary education is concern due to the early age at which girls are initiated, early pregnancy is no longer frowned upon. With the

present high degree of sexual permissiveness, many assume that once they have undergone the *Dipo* rituals, they may begin sexual activity at the expense of their schooling activities. The majority of young girls after leaving the basic school see themselves as full *Krobo* women and that, need to settle for marriage. The study further added that most of them were even dating while they were in school, hence got married right after their B. E. C. E. He further commented: *Hmmm.. Majority of our girls never dreamt of any tertiary education, let alone to think of its benefits to them.*

Majority of *Yilo* and Lower *Manya Krobo* women are poor because they did not have higher education to explore their talent or potential for development. They rather prefer marriage life to going to further their studies as soon as they went through the *Dipo* puberty rite. The informant further suggested that he would have preferred the *Dipo* rite to be revised and performed after completing S. H. S. Another informant who participated in the *dipo* rite said she thought tertiary education is a reserve for the non-*Krobo* women and for the *Krobo* people, the performance of the *Dipo* rite seemed enough for her to take on her marriage life. The informant added that most women who went to tertiary education could not perform their family roles as good wives. *'Tsiaa me no ne a le peemi? Literally meaning, what do they know?'*

**4.5. School Dropout**

School dropout is when children get themselves out of school without any apparent reasons. It is said that education is the key to life or success. 'If you educate a man, you educate an individual but if you educate a woman, you educate the whole nation' (*Dr. Kwagyir Aggrey*) hence it is our responsibility to educate the girl child so that the girl child will also in turn educate the larger society in the future. In spite of these, the girl child in the *Yilo* and Lower *Manya Krobo* areas are rather disadvantaged.

The analysis of the data collected for this study from 2007 to 2016-year period on school dropout rate at *Klo Agogo* Senior high in the *Yilo Krobo* area and *Obelemanya* M/A Junior high school in the Lower *Manya Krobo* had shown that there are good number of girl children who still drop out of school as a result of *dipo* puberty rite'. The result is presented in the table 4.1 and 4.2 below.

**Table 2: School drop outs in *Klo Agogo* Senior high**

Year period	No. of student admitted	No. of student completed	No. drop out
2007	57	52	05
2008	91	81	10
2009	77	61	16
2010	83	64	19
2011	109	92	17
2012	86	82	04
2013	118	90	28



2014	97	81	16
2015	95	74	21
2016	105	93	12
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>918</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>148</b>

Source: Klo-Agogo S.H.S. Assistant Headmaster on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov. 2016.

It could clearly be seen from the above that not all students from Klo - Agogo Senior high who entered from first year were able to complete in the final year. For a period of 2007 and 2016, a total of nine hundred and eighteen students were admitted in the first year out of which seven hundred and seventy students (770) representing eighty-four percent (84%) were able to complete their courses of study successfully. One hundred

and forty- eight students, representing sixteen percent (16) were those who dropped out of school during the period as a result of early dipo rite with its attended problem of teenage pregnancy, and others as indicated earlier on. A further probe had indicated that it was only four students, representing three percent (3%) of those who dropped out of school who were not able to complete as a result of an untimely death.

**Table 3: School drop outs in Obelemanya M/A Junior high school**

Year period	No. of student admitted	No. of student completed	No. drop out
2007	14	06	8
2008	15	09	6
2009	20	11	9
2010	12	09	3
2011	09	06	3
2012	12	08	4
2013	08	05	3
2014	11	06	5
2015	13	08	5
2016	12	09	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>49</b>

Source: Obelemanya M/A Basic School, Headmaster on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2016.

It could clearly be seen from the above that not all students from Obelemanya M/A Junior high school who entered from first year were able to complete in the final year. For a period of 2007 and 2016, a total of one hundred and twenty-six students were admitted in the first year out of which seventy-seven students (77) representing sixty-one percent (61%) were able to complete successfully. Forty- nine students, representing thirty-nine percent (39%) were those who dropped out of school during the period as a result of early dipo rite with its attended problem of teenage pregnancy and others as indicated earlier on. A further probe had indicated that six (6) students, representing twelve percent (12%) on record had been transferred to the city to continue their schools. Another two (2) students, representing four percent (4%) of those who dropped out of school were not able to complete as a result of an untimely death.

It could be observed from the above distribution that there was a higher dropout rate of female students at the basic level as compared to that of the Senior Secondary School level. This difference goes with the fact that a lot of students at the Basic School levels are more presented for the dipo rite performance than those from the Senior Secondary School levels.

**4.6. Poor performance in school**

Every school is placed well by the performance of students in the school. It is the joy of every teacher to

see his/her students perform well in and outside the school environment. It is again a privilege for a society to see its children performing good academically and this will add to the development of the society. It is however frustrating, to have found from the analysis of the data collected for this study that some of the girl child in the Yilo and Lower Manya Municipalities are performing poor academically as a result of Dipo rite performance.

It was identified that immediately after the puberty rites, parents refuse their children anything they ask for, but they are told that they are of age. Such utterances make them go in for intimate relationships while they are still in school. As a result of this, these girls are enticed and lured into lucrative or promising relationship in order to cater for their basic needs and livelihood as suggested by some of their parents. They end up being used and exploited by these unscrupulous young men who do not allow these girls to study, hence affecting their academic work in school.

**V. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the Dipo rite is an essential part of the cultural heritage of the Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo people in Ghana's Eastern Region. However, its performance has been linked to a detrimental effect on female child education. The Dipo rite frequently requires

females to miss a significant amount of school, resulting in early marriages and pregnancies among adolescents. In order to promote gender equality, empower females, and create sustainable development in the Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo communities, it is crucial to strike a balance between cultural practices and education. Traditional authorities, community leaders, parents, and educators must collaborate to preserve the Dipo rite while promoting education.

This can be accomplished by raising awareness, involving traditional authorities, promoting dialogue, offering support programmes, and promoting education. The promotion of education can assist in breaking the cycle of poverty and promoting gender equality, whereas the preservation of the Dipo rite can assist in promoting cultural heritage and identity.

In conclusion, the influence of the Dipo rite on the education of female children in Yilo and Lower Manya Krobo is a complex issue that calls for a balanced approach. By collaborating and developing solutions that promote education and cultural practices, the community can ensure that the Dipo rite flourishes while empowering young women and fostering sustainable development.

### RECOMMENDATION

The following were recommended.

1. Encourage education: Traditional authorities, community leaders, and parents should encourage and promote the education of the girl child. Education is a vital tool for social and economic empowerment, and it can help to break the cycle of poverty and promote gender equality.
2. Create awareness: There is a need to create awareness among the community members on the importance of balancing cultural practices and education. Awareness campaigns can be organized through community meetings, cultural festivals, and school programs to sensitize the community on the value of education and the negative impact of early marriages and teenage pregnancies.
3. Engage traditional authorities: Traditional authorities play a significant role in the promotion and preservation of cultural practices. There is a need to engage them in promoting the education of the girl child while preserving the Dipo rite. Traditional authorities can create policies that prioritize education and create programs that support girls' education.
4. Promote dialogue: There should be an open and honest dialogue among stakeholders on the impact of the Dipo rite on the girl child's education. This dialogue should involve traditional authorities, community leaders, parents, and educators. It can provide an opportunity to

address concerns and create solutions that balance cultural practices and education.

5. Provide support: Support programs should be created to help girls who have dropped out of school due to the Dipo rite to continue their education. These programs can include scholarship schemes, mentoring programs, and vocational training. Such programs can help to mitigate the negative impact of the Dipo rite on the girl child's education.

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