

Experiences of Women in Higher Education: A Study of Women Faculty and
Administrators in Selected Public Universities in Ghana

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This dissertation titled
Experiences of Women in Higher Education: A Study of Women Faculty and
Administrators in Selected Public Universities in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

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Recent research on women's experiences in higher education in Ghana is limited. These few studies have been insufficient, therefore, to serve as a basis for rectifying the ongoing gender imbalances in higher education. Higher education is the portal to enhancing the status of women, especially in developing societies such as Ghana. Increasing the numbers of women in higher education is not the only answer to obtaining gender equality. Pragmatic solutions are needed to improve gender equality.

This study sought to examine the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana by considering the challenges that women face as faculty and administrators. It explored factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior positions within the universities and further investigated the policies that have been adopted to influence gender equity.

Postcolonial feminist theory, which asserts that women were doubly colonized by imperial and patriarchal ideologies, offers a reasonable way to understand the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana. Twenty faculty members and administrators representing three public universities were selected for this study.

Interviews were adopted to highlight the importance of the women's individual voices on issues that affect them.

Research findings from in-depth interviews and document analysis showed that women faculty and administrators were highly underrepresented. The majority of respondents cited conflicts in managing their multiple roles as mothers, wives and workers, interrupted careers, impact of family dynamics, lack of mentoring and networks, and the power of the "old boys" network as key issues. The results showed a mixed perception of the prioritization of gender issues within the structures of the institutions. It further revealed that two of the universities in the study have instituted Gender Units to focus on gender issues. Additionally, there is a provision for externally funded opportunities for female faculty and administrators at the universities. However, the patriarchal culture of the universities serves to undermine women's authority and frames their identity in subordinated paradigms. The participants of the study exhibited attributes such as perseverance, ability to plan, and the determination to succeed as pivotal characteristics that aided them in their struggle to advance.

Approved: _____

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*I wish to dedicate this Work to my parents, Fred and Christiana Ampofo-Tawiah,
my dearest husband Albert Karikari Adusah and
my children, Afia Dakoa and Akua Obenewa Adusah-Karikari*

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

On a bright Friday afternoon in September 1994, a young woman embarked on a journey to pursue a college degree at one of Ghana's universities. The atmosphere was most exciting since it was the opening day of the university. She had gained admission to obtain an undergraduate bachelor's degree in Secretaryship (Business Management). It was no surprise that the program had been labeled a "female program," since there were 23 women and 8 men enrolled; the statistics were similar for the previous graduating classes.

Throughout her primary and high school education, the young woman was taught predominantly by women. She had a female mentor who played a critical role in her high school education. Since she had benefited tremendously from this mentor-protégé relationship, she decided to look for a female mentor while in college. Her mentor in high school had encouraged her, nurtured and supported her in pursuit of her dream to obtain a college degree. In her adolescent years, this young woman had developed an idealized conception of becoming a successful woman in the future. She knew obtaining a college degree would set the foundation to her success in life. Growing up in a culture where marriage and motherhood were emphasized as the primary goals in life, it was important to have an older female mentor who personified academic achievement. Her aim was to choose a mentor from among the faculty members who taught her.

In her first semester, she enrolled in four classes but to her surprise there were no female faculty members who taught her at the university. She hoped that this would

change the following semester, but to her disappointment, the situation was still the same.

“Where are the women among the faculty?” No one could give her any answers.

“Perhaps they teach in other departments,” she consoled herself. She asked her colleagues in other departments if they had women teaching them and a few people mentioned they had been taught by one or two women. Most of their faculty members, however, were men. In her senior year, just when she had lost all hope of ever having a female teacher, the young woman finally had a class with a female faculty member. She tried her best to nurture a relationship with this female faculty member with the hope of asking her to be her mentor. Unfortunately for her, the female faculty member was expecting a baby and could not commit her time and energy to develop a fruitful relationship. Though her desire of having a female mentor in college never materialized, the young woman found solace in the fact that she had been taught by at least one female faculty member. Through determination and hard work, she completed her college degree with honors. Nevertheless, she still felt that a piece of the puzzle — her female mentor — was missing from her college experience.

This is my story as a young woman enrolled at a university in Ghana. I believe my colleagues and other women have had similar experiences. This observation and personal experience during my undergraduate study left me with more thought-provoking questions. In my mind, I have always struggled to find out why there are few women who are faculty and administrators in Ghana’s universities. As I pursued my doctoral studies, I developed a passion to understand the reasons behind the underrepresentation of women as faculty and administrators in Ghanaian universities. As I pursued my journey to

selected public universities in Ghana for my research, my objective was to find answers to the questions that have always baffled me.

Although awareness about improving the status of women can be found in all spheres of society, especially in the media, political arena, and in education, the change has been slow, as shown by Prah (2002) and Kweisiga (2002). The status of women in higher education in Ghana is of major concern, however. Data provided by the National Council on Tertiary Education (2006) reveals that in the 2000/2001 academic year, there were only 12% women in the faculty of six public universities in Ghana; in 2005/2006, the number had increased to only 13.8%. Prah (2002) reveals that most issues regarding tertiary education that are discussed in Ghana deal with financing higher education and making universities economically independent. Gender issues do not feature in the innovations in higher education in Ghana. Therefore, there is the need to create awareness in decision-making bodies in Ghana's public universities of the urgent need to bring gender issues to the table for discussion and policy formulation.

In order to formulate effective policies on women's issues in Ghana's institutions of higher education, it is important to hear, in their own words, the challenges and obstacles faced by these women. This research seeks to challenge the silence and subordination imposed by cultural norms by revealing the experiences of women as faculty and administrators in Ghana's universities. In the words of Namuddu (1992):

Beginning to transform the university should begin by defining the problem in such a way that gender inequality acquires substance as a social problem. This is

because the definition of the problem is the cornerstone of any intervention and has far-reaching consequences for the way it is tackled. (p.35)

In referring to the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, it is important to take note of the dialectic relationship between gender and colonization. The status of women in Ghana is framed by cultural/societal norms and the legacy of colonization. To buttress the point of how colonization and societal patriarchy perpetuate the gender inequality in education, Aidoo (1995) writes:

Most women are now not equipped educationally and technically to play prominent roles in Ghana's industrialization process. The colonial system saw to it that women were either excluded from schools or else were given a fifth rate imitation of the education of the poor in Europe On their part African men exploited their traditions to support the colonial system which kept women in their place. (p. 217)

In Ghana, girls' socialization stresses marriage and motherhood as the primary goal in life, a goal that is deeply ingrained by the time they reach adulthood. Kuenyehia (1995) reveals that life in Ghanaian society is organized around an unwritten social contract, the gender contract. "Within the gender contract, women assume the build of family care and domestic functions while men are ascribed the primary responsibility for the family's economic or financial well being" (p. 91). This contract, however, conflicts with the realities of this modern world where women are also expected to work not only to support the family but also to improve themselves. As Kuenyehia (1995) puts it, "despite the reallocation of employment responsibilities, the gender contract remains relatively

static, thus entailing women having to adjust their own lives to cope with conflicting employment and family roles” (p. 91).

Although disparities in gender issues exist in almost all institutions, one expects this occurrence least in higher education. Education, and for that matter higher education, serves as the portal to the improvement of the status of women in Ghanaian society. Nguyen (2000) contends that higher education supplies the best resources for the labor force; it influences current leaders and prepares future leaders. Thus, a careful examination of the values and the resulting assumptions governing the behavior of women and men in society should be an essential goal within the comprehensive planning efforts of institutions of higher learning. Privileging the voices of women in higher education, enabling them to share their experiences, would shed light on how they negotiate the “gender contract.”

As Prah (2002) puts it, “it is necessary to examine tertiary institutions with women’s needs in mind and determine what other interventions are required to improve the situation of the women who are already in them” (p.14). This emphasizes the need for research on the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana so as to have a basis for policy formulation on higher education gender issues.

Kuenyehia (1995) reveals that in 1970s and 1980s, women’s issues were largely defined in terms of discrimination, and the key concern was to eliminate overt discrimination. Despite antidiscrimination legislation designed to remove gender barriers and to increase women’s participation in the labor market, the problem persisted. Kuenyehia (1995) cautions that gender-based inequalities are systemic in nature and

therefore a systemic solution is needed. “The solution seems to lie in using an integrated approach to institutional change aimed at addressing some, if not all, the contradictions and tensions generated at the interface between the household, community and employment structures” (p. 90). Manuh (1995) argues that more research is needed to explore gender relations more deeply in order to explain the ideological and material basis for women’s continuing subordination. Conducting research in women’s issues would unearth real problems so that adequate solutions or strategies could be fashioned. This will avoid the use of perceptions and generalizations as the basis for law reform.

The Task Force on Higher Education and Society (2000) reveals that, since the 1980s, many national and international donors have assigned higher education as the priority. Economic analysis contributed to the view that public investment in universities and colleges brings meager returns compared with the investment in primary and secondary schools (Task Force on Higher Education and Society, 2000). Higher education benefits society (which includes women) in diverse ways, generating enlightened leaders, promoting social mobility, and providing essential skills. Among other things, higher education is essential for a democratic society and as a gateway for a better life.

In recent times, many international and national development programs have recognized the importance of gender issues. According to Rathgeber (2003), in many countries in Africa, there is concern about how to better integrate women into social and economic development processes. Despite an increased emphasis on gender issues, the actual progress made by African women over the past two decades is still small in terms

of equity, access to power, and prestige in their societies. “At a global level, the proportion of women enrolled in institutions of higher education grew from 44 percent in 1980 to 47 percent in 1995” (Rathgeber, 2003, p. 84). However, in most African countries, female participation is still considerably below the global level (Rathgeber, 2003). Luke (2001) contends that women are the social and emotional glue of any society. In support of this point, I quote the influential 20th- century educator in Ghana, Dr. J. K. Aggrey, who said that “if you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a nation.” I agree with Luke (2001) who argues that to deny women the structural and ideological support they need to enable them to obtain full support and equal access, participation, and share of the rewards in the professions of their choice is to deny and impoverish society as a whole. The Task Force on Higher Education and Society (2000) reveals that disadvantaged groups, whether they are racial, linguistic, or religious groups in specific societies, or women almost everywhere, find it difficult to compete in higher education. They have usually received inadequate primary and secondary schooling making further progress in the educational system much harder to achieve.

According to Morley (2005), the transcripts of women experiencing higher education, both as students and staff in the Commonwealth, remain relatively hidden. Similarly, there is a lack of published literature in low-income countries. Salo (2003) argues that although lack of literature does not imply lack of activity or lack of cultural capital, it can reflect the power relations and gendered and racialized gate-keeping practices embedded in publication and research awards.

Luke (2001) contends that given the more urgent health, employment, and educational issues facing rural and working-class girls and women, the limited research on academic women is not surprising. Salo (2003) reveals that in 1993, the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) undertook a comprehensive study of the working conditions of women academics at institutions in Western, Eastern, and Southern Africa. Salo (2003) found that across regional, cultural, and national divides, women were underrepresented at all levels in African universities and were concentrated in traditionally female fields such as education. The study also found that the limited involvement of women in fields outside the traditional female disciplines was associated with a low prioritization of gender in policy formulation. The situation was exacerbated when governments and educational institutions were hostile to include gender in their work. Generally, the dominant perception within these institutions was that women's work should focus primarily on family responsibilities. This attitude undermined African women's progress in the areas of policy formulation and educational leadership. The study concluded that few documentation centers exist on the continent compiling publications devoted to women's and girls' experiences in Africa (Salo, 2003).

The status of women in sub-Saharan African universities is a reflection of women's position in society. Women are underrepresented in sub-Saharan African universities and those who are able to pursue higher education concentrate on traditional female fields, such as education, arts and humanities, and social sciences. In almost all sub-Saharan African countries, female teaching staff are few in number and comprise less than 10% of the faculty at the senior professorial level (Rathgeber, 2003). Females

downplay their skills and are discouraged from entering fields dominated by men. When they graduate, women often confront poor employment prospects, receive lower salaries, and have fewer opportunities to advance.

Manuh (2002) reveals that higher education has often played a pivotal role in critiquing the structure of social inequalities with major ethical and policy implications. It has also contributed to public debates around various forms of discrimination and has produced a wealth of gender experts working transnationally. Morley (2005) asserts that although there have been some equity gains in higher education, particularly in relation to women's access as students, universal patriarchal power appears hard to neutralize in elite professions. In support of this, Fraser (1997) contends that women's underrepresentation in senior and decision making roles is not just symbolic. It is a structure of status inquiry which represents both cultural stereotyping and material and intellectual oppression. The extent to which the imbalance in the global experiences of men and women in higher education contributes to discrimination among university-level staff should be of great concern to institutions of higher learning.

In Ghana, the rate of transition from primary to tertiary education decreases as students move up the academic ladder. Indeed, Ghana's educational system resembles a pyramid. As one ascends the academic ladder, the numbers decrease. Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) instituted by the government of Ghana ensures that the majority of Ghanaian children attend school. At the primary level, most children attend school and there is little disparity between males and females. Like the typical pattern in sub-Saharan Africa, dropout rates beyond the primary level of schooling tend

to be higher for females than for males, a trend that has been attributed to various economic and sociocultural factors (Sackey, 2005). In explaining low female participation in education, Manuh (2002) contends this is the result of the attitude about educating females, who are commonly perceived to need only the necessary skills to prepare them for marriage and childbearing.

Table 1 shows the gross enrollment rate, which is the number of pupils enrolled in a given level of education regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the theoretical age group for that level of education. In 2002-2003, 39% of males and 32% of females were enrolled in secondary education.

Table 1

Enrollment at Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education in Ghana (%)

	<u>1990/91</u>		<u>1998/99</u>		<u>2000/1</u>		<u>2002/3</u>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Primary	79	66	81	73	82	75	81	77
Secondary	42	27	41	32	39	32	39	32
Tertiary	2	0	-	-	5	2	5	2

Source: UNESCO, 2005

5 % of males were enrolled in tertiary education and 2% of females were enrolled in tertiary education. Those who have received little primary or secondary education are

clearly far less likely to progress to higher education. A study conducted by Dubgazah (2002) revealed that the combined effect of socioeconomic and cultural variables helped to deny girls access to the universities and other institutions of higher education.

In the year 2001, in response to the perceived need for improving the provision of education in the country, the government of Ghana established an Education Trust Fund, also known as the GETFund. To finance this fund, an amount equivalent to 20% of the prevailing rate of the value-added tax collected into the GETFund for educational purposes (GETFund Act, 2000). The fund is intended to:

Supplement the provision of education at all levels by government to develop and maintain educational infrastructure, to provide supplementary funding for the granting of scholarships to gifted but needy students and of loans to students, and to offer grants for research and for the training of exceptional students to become teachers. (Ghana Education Trust Fund 2000, Act 581)

The GETFund act also promotes female education in Ghana. In the establishment of the accounts and proportions of money for levels of education, the act details that the board should take into consideration the advancement of female education, Section 8, subsection 3 (a). The GETFund Act is a major landmark in the history of education in Ghana and with time, the nation will witness the provision of education for all.

Rathgeber (2003) contends that the number and proportion of women as consumers of higher education is increasing, but the number of women as providers of higher education remains low at the senior level and in certain disciplines. The Task Force on Higher Education and Society (2000) affirms that even if attitudes towards

disadvantaged groups have changed, their members still face systemic discrimination. This means that the faculty is likely to be unrepresentative of disadvantaged groups, and there are major problems of institutional discrimination.

Higher education in Ghana needs to be equitable and democratic for several reasons. Digeorgio-Lutz (2002) affirms that institutions of higher education have come to be viewed as essential for a democratic society and as a gateway to the good life. Institutions of higher learning are viewed as promoting the social good, not only for individuals who attend, but also for society at large. Miller and Miller (2002) contend:

The academy can provide individuals with the opportunities, resources and the impetus to reach their professional and personal potential. It is the responsibility of institutions of higher education to ensure that these opportunities and resources are available and that impediments to growth are minimized. (p. 104)

To support the importance of higher education, Malcolm Gullis, president of Rice University, cited in The Task Force on Higher Education and Society (2000) notes that:

Today, more than ever before in human history, the wealth – or poverty – of nations depends on the quality of higher education. Those with a larger repertoire of skills and a greater capacity for learning can look forward to lifetimes of unprecedented economic fulfillment. But in the coming decades, the poorly educated face little better than the dreary prospects of lives of quiet desperation. (p. 15)

One can conclude that in order to be employed and to have access to high-income jobs in the market economy, both male and female workers need higher education and

technological knowledge as well as, professional skills. Although women are entering the academy as students, institutions of higher learning are slow to change in terms of equity for staff, including faculty and administrative positions.

Higher education is expanding internationally both in response to state investment in the knowledge economy and as a consequence of new private and offshore providers. Task Force on Higher Education and Society (2000) emphasizes that knowledge is a springboard for economic growth and development, making the promotion of a culture that supports its creation and dissemination an essential task. If any society is to succeed in this globalized economy, then a collective contribution from and participation of all citizens is a prerequisite. Many international communities have recognized the importance of gender issues. Gender issues are not only a matter of social justice but good economies as well. In general, although the gender gap is narrowing globally, more women than men remain illiterate; in developing countries, in particular, women tend to be less educated, work longer hours, and are paid less. Women make up one-half of the world's population, perform two-thirds of the world's work hours, yet everywhere they have fewer resources and are poorly represented in decision-making positions (Kolářová, 2006). Research indicates that in most developing countries, women are left behind in educational training, scientific knowledge, and technological literacy and are therefore at a disadvantage.

Higher education is repeatedly positioned by the international community, that is, the World Bank, The Africa Commission, and UNESCO, as a central site for facilitating skills, disseminating knowledge and providing expertise, all essential to economic and

social development in low-income countries (World Bank, 2005). All over the world, there is growing concern that women continue to experience discriminatory practices and exclusions within higher education. Gender along with socio-economic background, ethnicity, and poverty, still constrict higher educational opportunities in Ghana. Llop (2006) states that there is no doubt that in a future characterized by globalization, information, and the knowledge society, countries need a critical mass of people with solid higher education backgrounds. If this is the case, then all members of society, females and males, should be given access to equal participation in higher education.

Oyewumi (2003) makes the claim that African women's mobilization and self-assertion are not represented adequately in published literature and society as a whole and that this can be traced back, in part, to colonial forces and practices. She argues that much of the emphasis has been on the voiceless African woman. Ogundipe-Leslie (1993) associates the lack of representation of African women's voices with a refusal by scholars to search for African voices in the right places.

Statement of the Problem

From my observation and personal experience, the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, especially at the faculty and administrative levels are almost absent in both published literature and in society at large. There is limited research on women's experiences in higher education in Ghana and as a result, there exists insufficient data to serve as a basis for rectifying the chronic gender imbalances in higher education. Morley (2005) contends that gender, higher education, and development have rarely been intersected, leading to a void in terms of policy, literature, and research. The

scarcity of published literature does not imply a lack of activity of women in higher education in Ghana. The problem is that answers are limited as it pertains to why there is underrepresentation of women in senior positions, both in academics and administration; and we also need to examine access, the absence of women from specific disciplines and professions, and the factors in pre-tertiary education contributing to the low representation of women at the university level. Manuh (1995) strongly argues that more women's experiences, in their own words, are needed to get at women's constructions of their identities and self-images. It is therefore necessary to develop a better conceptual framework for addressing this important issue in hopes of developing potential strategies that might remedy the problem. Some aspects of higher education, particularly cost, quality, and efficiency, have been investigated by scholars. It is time to examine the experiences of women and study gender equity in Ghana's educational system, both crucial avenues for women's development. This arduous task requires that policymakers and scholars critically examine the real-life situation of women in higher education and in modern society so as to obtain equity.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine and offer an understanding of the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, specifically faculty and administrators in selected public universities, and using their own voices. This purpose of the study was to:

- Assess the early experiences of females that impact their career paths;

- Explore the factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior positions in faculty and administration;
- Examine the obstacles and challenges that women experience as faculty and administrators;
- Investigate the policies that have been adopted by the universities that have an impact on gender equity; and
- Determine the characteristics and attributes common among the women who have succeeded in higher education teaching and administration

Research Questions

On the basis of the issues raised, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the early experiences of females that impact their career paths?
2. What are the factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior faculty and administrative positions?
3. What are the obstacles, challenges, and successes that women experience as faculty and administrators?
4. What written and unwritten policies have been adopted by universities that influence gender equity?
5. What are the attributes and strategies common among women who have succeeded in higher education teaching and administration?

Significance of the Study

Examining the experiences of women as faculty and administrators provides an important framework for understanding the ongoing chronic gender imbalances in higher education in Ghana. My interest in this study stems from the paucity in literature on women in higher education in Ghana. Morley (2005) contends that the “West has produced a sizeable amount of published quantitative and qualitative data and critical literatures on gender, whereas lower-income countries have had to rely on some gender-disaggregated statistics and quantitative studies often funded by international organizations” (p. 210). While statistics may be revealing, understanding the experiences of women in higher education goes beyond citing figures. A qualitative research study is needed to bring insight into and understanding of the experiences of women in higher education. The current study may be the first of its kind as policy and research attention has tended to focus on the experiences of women in basic education.

This research seeks to contribute more in-depth and specific information to Ghana’s educational policymakers, particularly the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs and the National Council for Tertiary Education, two bodies responsible for designing effective and efficient reforms for integrating the gender equity dimension in the formulation of policy. The Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs is responsible for ensuring equal status for women; enforcing the rights of children and women; and promoting the survival, development, protection; and increased participation of both women and children in the development process. Through this study, the ministry will be able to identify the barriers faced by women in higher education, including continuing

persistence of the sex-preferential education of children, and use that as a justification for policy formulation.

My research will, I hope, contribute in many ways to the current discussions about women in higher education in Ghana; my recommendations may be used by universities to implement policies and programs that promote gender issues at the university level. This research could also be cited by women faculty and administrators as evidence of their discrimination and as justification for advocating gender equity principles in the university community.

In addition, this research could also be used by advocacy groups, such as Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), which has expertise and political influence, to articulate for and contribute to women's interests in society in general. Finally, this study will add to the existing body of knowledge on the understanding of the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The focus of this study is limited to the selected women who serve as faculty and administrators in three Ghanaian public universities – University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and University of Education at Winneba. The emphasis of the study is on how their identity as women defines their experiences as faculty and administrators in higher education. The findings of this study relate to women in higher education in Ghana and the three traditional public universities specifically.

A limitation to this study is one that is found in all qualitative projects. The results are applicable only to the group under study; and therefore, broad generalizations cannot be made. However, since an in-depth understanding will be gained from the phenomenon under study it would be informative for researchers and practitioners interested in gaining insight into the status of women in higher education. While the scope of this study is on women in higher education in Ghana, the library search for literature on women in higher education in Ghana has revealed very little. Therefore the present study refers to similar studies in Africa and other parts of the world as background. An additional limitation is that as the sole researcher, I will be the only data collection person and data analyst.

Definition of Terms

Academe — Used in this context, it refers to as institution of higher learning and/or the university community.

Colonization — Refers to the act if being colonialized. Ghana was under colonial rule of the British until it gained independence on March 6, 1957.

Developed Countries — Means advanced societies in Europe and in North America.

Developing Countries — Refers to Nations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Gender — As used here, it encompasses not only sex but also the social and cultural meanings attributed to being male or female. Gender is the social construction of sex (Hilke & Conway Gerhardt, 1994, p.1).

Higher Education — Refers to postsecondary education, including but not limited to universities, and including colleges and technical training institutions. In Ghana, it is

commonly referred to as tertiary education where it applies to teacher training colleges, and polytechnics.

Patriarchal Society — Means a society that is dominated by men in both public and private affairs.

Secondary Education — This is the term used for high school in Ghana.

Sub-Saharan Africa — Refers to the African nations South of the Sahara Desert. These are mainly countries in West, East and Southern Africa.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Discussion of Results, Conclusions and Recommendations. Chapter 1 provides a background to the study. It also focuses on the problem statement, research questions, significance of the study and, delimitations and limitations of study.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of previous research and literature concerning the experiences of women in higher education in the developed and developing countries, particularly Africa. The chapter also focuses on other topics relevant to the study, such as background of women in Ghana, women and higher education in Ghana, and the theoretical framework for the study.

The methodology of the research is presented in chapter 3. The chapter provides a detailed description of the research design, selection of participants, sources of data, data collection procedure, and data analysis employed in the study.

The results of the study are discussed in chapter 4, and chapter 5 presents summary, conclusions, and suggestions for addressing the issues identified.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will review the literature concerning experiences of women in higher education in the developed and developing countries, particularly Africa. I will address the current state of women faculty and administrators and some of challenges women face in higher education in developed countries and discuss the theoretical frameworks informing this study — post colonial theory and postcolonial feminism.

Although the importance of an all-inclusive participation in higher education has been highlighted by many researchers (Teferra & Altbach, 2003; Morley, 2005; Rathegeber, 2003; Salo, 2003; Luke, 2001), gender equity remains problematic both in developed and developing countries. Considerable effort has been made to highlight the experiences of women in higher education in developed countries rather than in developing countries. According to Morley (2005), research on women's experiences in higher education in developed countries examines the complexities of structural, attitudinal, and psychological impediments to gender equity in patriarchal organizations. To buttress this point, Luke (2001) indicates that “a range of structural-institutional, social and cultural factors and ideologies have been identified as glass-ceiling barriers to women's academic career advancements” (p. vii).

Morely (2005) contends that the literature on higher education in the developing world tends to be characterized by a gender-neutral approach. Gender appears as a category of analysis in relation to access and quantitative representation. Thus, the qualitative experiences of women once they are enrolled at the university level remain largely unresearched. Luke (2001) argues that although feminism has emphasized the

importance of local, situated analyses, there is hardly any research on the cultural politics of advantages and disadvantages mediating women's academic career paths in higher education in non-Western countries.

Experiences of Women in Higher Education in Developed Countries

To better understand the experiences of women in any given category, it is important to briefly discuss the meaning of gender. Biklen and Pollard (1993) assert that "being male or female carries few meanings in and of itself; its most potent meanings come from social and cultural meanings attributed to it. "These meanings we call gender, the social construction of sex" (p. 1). Gender, then, refers to socially constructed roles and socially learned behaviors and expectations associated with females and males (World Bank, 2001). The World Bank (2001) reports that like race, ethnicity, and class, gender is a social category that largely establishes one's life chances, shaping one's participation in society and in the economy. Morley (2005) contends furthermore that gender has a significant impact on academic and professional identity formation. Gendered power relations symbolically and materially construct and regulate women's everyday experiences of higher education.

The 2001 World Bank report explains that all cultures interpret and elaborate the biological differences between men and women into a set of social expectations about what behaviors and activities are appropriate and what rights, resources, and power women and men possess. For example nearly all societies give the primary responsibility for the care of infants and young children to women and girls and assign military service and national defense to men (World Bank, 2001). Biklen and Pollard (1993) indicate that

what we have come to identify as belonging to men's or women's behaviors, attitudes, presentation, of self and so on, is produced by social relationships and continually negotiated and maintained within cultures. Through many years of research on women's roles in development, we know that policies based on gender norms greatly restrict women's access to productive resources such as land, income, education, and credit (Gupta, 2004).

Morley (2005) contends that the university is seen by many equity theorists as an institution of contradictions, one that is complicit with social divisions at the same time that it offers mobility and opportunity. To buttress this point, Digeorgio-Lutz (2002) maintains that institutions of higher education have come to be viewed as essential for a democratic society and as a gateway to the good life. In the same vein, Miller and Miller (2000) assert that:

The academy can provide individuals with the opportunities, resources and the impetus to reach their professional and personal potential. It is the responsibility of institutions of higher education to ensure that these opportunities and resources are available and that impediments to growth are minimized. (p. 104)

Universities have been seen as liberal institutions, a perception still held today, but they have only just begun to grasp the notion that certain groups face discrimination within higher education (Henry, 1994). Although a liberal image of the university has been projected in many areas of research, there is still a strong sense that the foundation on which the university was based has contributed to unbalanced experiences of men and women.

Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) reveal that although universities are often perceived as ideal and neutral organizations where men and women can both on their merits, this is not the case of most universities, including Ghanaian universities. Morley (2005) contends that higher education at the university level has often played a pivotal role in helping to highlight structures of social inequalities, their ethical issues, and policy. It has also contributed to public debates around various forms of discrimination, producing as a consequence and has produced a wealth of gender scholars working transnationally. However, few universities have scrutinized their own practices of reproducing or challenging existing social inequalities and forms of discrimination among staff and students (Morley, 2005).

Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) state that universities have historically been recognized as male institutions into which females have been admitted; later, female academics were hired. Henry (1994) asserts that universities were founded upon elitist values that have flourished, along with patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism. These institutions, according to Henry (1994), “soon became associated with the image of ivory towers as it depicts a place where prestigious groups of wise, usually white, men pontificated about society away from the pressure and harsh realities of life” (p.42). Itzin and Newman (1995) contend that university cultures around the world value and reproduce the concepts of career, academic achievement, and institutional and intellectual work based on male life trajectories; and the pathways to success are structured on traditional male traits and characteristics. Usually, gendered male power and control

extend deeply into structures of the university, its committees, staffing patterns, and informal lobbying groups.

Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) note that the most valued activities in universities are those that reflect male patterns of socialization, individualist rather than collective, competitive rather than cooperative, are based on power differentials, rather than egalitarian principles, and are linked to expert authority, rather than collegial support. The authors maintain that universities, despite being widely perceived as neutral are gendered organizations. Acker (1990) writes:

To say that an organization is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not an addition to ongoing processes, conceived as gender neutral. Rather it is an integral part of those processes that cannot properly be understood without an analysis of gender. (p. 146)

Therefore, it is evident that the gendering of organizations draws from wider social norms concerning the proper relations between men and women. Similarly, Morley (2005) argues that gender inequality is a feature of social relations in most societies. It is linked to poverty, violence, the labor market, health, housing, and education. It structures the relations of production and reproduction and is inextricably linked with knowledge construction and dissemination.

Currie and Newson (1998) contend that the more competitive environment ushered in by globalization practices makes the position of women in universities even

more tenuous. Since the majority of women are at the bottom of the hierarchy, they are negatively affected by the neoliberal reforms bringing universities closer to market forces. Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) note that economic globalization has created a situation in which the most valued activities reflect individualist, rather than collective values, and competitive, rather than cooperative practices. Scholars are thus competing against each other in a culture that tends to benefit men more than women. This competitive atmosphere reduces the sense of community within institutions and is likely to emphasize those aspects of male culture that are seen as most hostile to women (Currie & Newson, 1998). From this review, one can conclude that the university has contributed to and promoted the discriminatory practices that women experience in higher education today.

Although women have increased their numbers in higher educational institutions (Howie & Tauchert, 2002; Luke, 2001; Morley, 2005), the largest increases have been in junior, untenured, and part-time positions, where they often outnumber men (Luke, 2001). The underrepresentation of women, particularly at the higher levels of the academic occupational ladder, has been a well-documented, persistent phenomenon for many years (Bagihole, 2002; DeGeorgio-Lutz, 2002; Luke, 2001; Morley, 2005). DiGeorgio-Lutz (2002) asserts that despite the fact that women constitute the majority in a numerical sense, women in higher education still remain a relatively voiceless minority population when it comes to defining values, goals, and ever-evolving mission statements.

In recounting the experiences of women in higher education in developed countries, Luke (2001) writes:

Too often, new female recruits end up ghettoized in a department's contract mill of tutors, course developers or technicians and junior lecturers. Moreover finishing a Ph.D. and beginning a first academic job often coincides with women's biological age where they are likely to start a family. A junior position coupled with the time and labor intensive tasks of rearing young children makes research productivity and the building of a sustained and uninterrupted research profile more difficult for women and can also make part-time work more attractive. (pp. 6-7)

Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) assert that the burden of being both a mother and wife is becoming unendurable as globalized economies develop even more aggressively masculine work cultures. The authors further state that the often circuitous pathways of women's careers; the geographical locations and institutional contexts of their educational work histories; and their generation, family circumstances, and personal identity all shape their experiences in higher education, theoretical and methodological choices, and political take on the life around them in the academy. This case is not different in developing countries. In fact, the situation is aggravated in Africa where most societies are patriarchal and women are expected to bear demanding domestic responsibilities, with little or no help from their husbands. Thus, it is very difficult for women to leave their families to further their studies abroad. The task of combining motherhood with the demands of an academic life is a challenging one for most women

and militates against their career development, in the higher education context which defines relevant experience and merit in way that favors male career trajectories (Bagihole, 2002).

Leonard and Malina (1994) indicate that although statistics are hard to find, Blackstone and Fulton's early study on academic women noted that while men find it easy and socially acceptable to combine family and career, many academic women in the past have chosen not to marry or marry and not bear children. Simone (1987) noted that compared with men, academic women are significantly more likely to never marry, to be divorced, to report less-stable marriages, to have fewer children, and to see their families as detriments to their careers. Those academic women who are married are more likely to be working or studying part-time, to hold lower-level positions, to be unemployed, or to be in a job unrelated to their training. Because African society promotes universal marriage as the norm, the lives of women, including academic women, are particularly shaped by this requirement. According to Kwesiga (2002), many educated women still consider childbearing and childcare to be their major contribution to society.

A study conducted by Bagihole (1993), *British Women Academics' Experiences*, noted that the difficulty of combining women's conventional role with the expectations of a successful academics demonstrates that a woman who is accepted as a successful academic becomes an honorary man. Yet, Leonard and Malina (1994) reveal that being a mother in academic life is a predominantly silent experience. "The facts of this motherhood — the personal individual struggles, compromises and solutions to the daily problem of attempting to combine being a good mother and a competent, productive

academic — are largely unvoiced at work” (p. 30). Hoschchild (1989) refers to this as “the cultural cover-up”, promoting the idea that it is perfectly feasible to easily combine a career with having children. Mothers find themselves already suspect in the academy, their seriousness questioned, and compelled to exclude references to their personal lives. Academic women are thus struggling to perform within the traditional male model, which is predicated on the assumption that someone is at home, taking care of any problems related by childcare. In Africa where there is an increase in working mothers, this is beginning to occur, as well.

Ramsden (1996) reveals that recent Australian research that determined that women academics typically begin and or finish their doctoral qualifications later and are more likely to work part-time for a period throughout their careers; they tend to have more career interruptions than male academics, a pattern directly related to childbearing and women’s greater responsibility for childrearing. In addition, family-related career breaks not only delay academic women launching or progressing in their careers but often also lead to difficulties ascending the academic ladder. Women in Africa experience similar circumstances. After completing college, women are expected to get married and any attempt to further their studies without marrying or having children is frowned upon in society. The prevailing belief that waiting until completing further studies reduces a woman’s chance of finding a marriage partner causes anxiety to both girls and parents. Thus, most African women who are married find it challenging to continue their studies and therefore settle for jobs that require only a first degree, obviously restricting their movement up to the academic ladder.

Women are seen as outsiders in academia. They are disadvantaged by a system in which differing values and interests are seen to be little or of no importance, according to Davies, Lubelska and Quinn (1994). These authors emphasize that, traditionally, men have had more access to research, and publishing networks, more domestic support to facilitate research and better promotional prospects; but women have been directed into caring, helping pastoral roles within the university which provides little time or opportunity for self-advancement. Statistical evidence shows that women have an unequal chance when attempting to enter the academic profession, and when they arrive they are promoted more slowly than men and more likely to leave (Bagihole, 2002).

Similarly, Luke (2001) indicates that the initial appointment of women to lower classification levels puts them at a structural disadvantage by increasing the time needed to ascend academic ladders and by reducing their access to influential committees, to senior researchers with whom they might network and collaborate, and to other women who could serve as role models or support and mentor them.

The Independent Review of Higher Education Pay Conditions, a government commission assessing university staff, made particular mention of the fact that women academics remain underrepresented and underpaid in British universities (Bagihole, 2002). Bagihole (2002) reveals that a 1999 report by the Association of University Teachers showed that inequalities exist between women and men in starting salaries, salary at renewal of fixed-term contracts, operation of promotion procedures, probationary requirements, access to pension benefits, and allocation of discretionary pay and part-time and hourly pay rates. Interestingly enough, in Africa there are no disparities

in salary between men and women. However, pay structures in universities in Ghana remain debatable and the University Teachers Association of Ghana (UTAG) has embarked on several strike actions against the government in an attempt to solicit salary increases. It is worth mentioning that in Ghana, higher education is largely funded by the government.

Bagihole (2002) reveals that research is essential for success in universities and eclipses teaching in terms of status and rewards. O'Leary and Mitchell (1990) indicate that women have particular difficulty in securing access to resource allocation and support as well as opportunities to publish. Ramsden (1996) observes that collegial networks are crucial in higher education, serving as a means of transmitting, reproducing, and reinforcing standards for professional behavior and for socialization into the profession. Similarly, networks across the globe determine what research gets funded, which journals are deemed prestigious, and what areas of research are judged to be valuable and relevant and which are not. To buttress this point, Bagihole (2002) affirms that network connections are vital ingredients for professional success and considered in decision about promotions. They bring mutual career benefits, information exchange, contacts for research resources, career planning, professional support, and encouragement and connections to influential people. If women are underrepresented in the academic arena, then they are likely to lack network connections which can greatly impede success in their careers.

In Sweden a study of the national peer review process for research funding by the government revealed that nepotism and sexism were rampant (Howie & Tauchert, 2001).

The researchers found that for a female scientist to be equally rated, she needed to be two and a half times more productive than the average male. Thus, women scientists have to work harder to be able to receive funding for research. One known challenge that faculty, both men and women, face in universities in Africa is the insufficient funds for research. Although universities are supposed to be institutes of teaching and research, in Africa, they are almost all underfinanced, and only a tiny portion of their budgets is dedicated to research.

Women in higher education carry the burden of “gender” manifested as proportionately lower pay for equivalent work, poorer working conditions, greater instability of employment, institutional sexism, overt and covert discrimination, bullying, and harassment (Howie & Tauchert, 2001). The experiences of women in higher education as highlighted in this section emphasizes the point made earlier by Morley (2005) that gender has a significant impact on academic and professional identity formation. Symbolically and materially, gendered power relations construct and regulate women’s everyday experiences in higher education. If this were not the case, then women would experience the same privileges that men enjoy. Developed countries that claim to be advanced in all spheres of life should set a good example by rectifying the gruesome experiences for women in higher education. Academics need to recognize and address the structural and cultural barriers that exist to prevent women’s full participation in higher education.

Experiences of Women in Higher Education in Africa

Research indicates that women's access to education has generally increased in Africa. However, there seems to be a reduction in the transition rates of women from primary through higher education, especially in Ghana, as illustrated in Table 1. In making reference to the experiences of women in higher education in Africa, it is important to be cognizant of the dialectic relationship between gender and colonization. Snyder and Tedesse (1995) write:

Colonial officials tended to visualize women in terms of a Victorian image of what a woman should be, instead of observing women's actual functions. From this perspective they envisioned women's responsibilities is largely limited to nurturing and conserving society, while men engaged in political and economic activities. Colonials equated 'male' with "breadwinner" and as a result, introduced technologies to men and recruited men for paying jobs. (p. 23)

Tamale and Olako-Onyango (2000) argue that women in Africa under colonial rule generally entered academia later than their male counterparts. "A systematic and deliberate colonial policy ensured that African women were excluded from the various "ivory towers" that dotted the continent" (p. 2). In affirming the impact of colonization on African women, Staudt (1981) indicates that not only did missionary education disproportionately extend educational opportunities to males, but men's education was also accorded higher priority than that of women.

Tamale and Olako-Onyango (2000) reveal that a variety of factors, including the emphasis of domestic chores, generalized conditions of poverty, and the overarching influence of patriarchy, combined to make access to academic institutions for women an impossibility for much of the colonial period. Unfortunately, the effect of colonialism in African society has affected the universities. I would argue that this legacy of colonization has left African women with a burden of having to pursue their academic interests while fulfilling their traditional or social responsibilities, a task which they she bears with little or no help from the males.

The 1993 *Women in Higher Education Management* study, conducted by UNESCO and the Commonwealth Secretariat, revealed that critical barriers to women participating in the decision-making arena are lack of access to higher education, the stress of dual family and professional roles, family attitudes, and cultural stereotyping. In discussing the social and cultural factors faced by women in developing societies, Katjavivi (1998) stresses:

Social, cultural and economic factors are the main barriers preventing women from enrolling for higher education. Social structures, especially in developing countries, pressure women to start a family ahead of professional considerations. The society expects women to bear the burden of caring for the young, elderly and the sick or disabled. The overall welfare of the family falls on women, who are expected to somehow supplement their families' income. (p.24)

Rathgeber (2003) contends that the status of women in African universities is a reflection of their situation in society. In no region of the developing world are women equal to

men in legal, social, and economic rights. Gender gaps are widespread in access to and control of resources, in economic opportunities, in power and political voice (World Bank, 2001). Tamale and Olako-Onyango (2000) note:

While the university, as we know it, is a product of Western educational and institutional developments, its transplantation into the African context has produced an amalgam of specific sociocultural conditions into which it was transplanted and the colonial dictates by which the system was formed. (p. 2)

In addition to the legacy of colonization and the power of the patriarchy, which inhibit women from going on to higher education in Africa, a 2002 UNESCO report offers a salient explanation for the dearth of women in higher positions in higher education. According to the report, three perspectives explain the continuing underrepresentation of women in senior administrative positions. The first is the person-centered perspective, which blames women's psychosocial attributes, including personality characteristics, attitudes, and behavioral skills. The second perspective is the structure-centered paradigm which maintains that it is the disadvantageous position of women in the organizational structure that shapes and defines the behavior of women. The third is the culture-centered approach, which argues that gender-based social roles irrelevant to the workplace are carried into the workplace. In the first paradigm, women's attitudes are the cause of blamed for their underrepresentation in senior positions, whilst in the structure-centered paradigm, the institutional structures are to blame, and in the cultural-centered approach, sociocultural expectations are carried into the workplace (UNESCO, 2002).

To gain insight into the impediments to higher education in Africa, it is important to consider some issues relating to women and higher education in Africa. According to Fashina (2000), in 1992, the agreement between the federal government of Nigeria and the academic staff of Nigerian universities marked out distinctly the conditions of service of academic staff. Provision was made for 12 of weeks maternity leave for women. The author further states that despite this provision, women who applied for maternity leave after the agreement were told to take annual leave in lieu of maternity leave. In a similar case, Mbow (2000) notes that at the University of Dakar there has been a continued absence of women in decision-making centers and unions. Thus far, union platforms have ignored women's specific demands. The university's statutes, for instance, make no reference to maternity leave or widow's leave (Mbow, 2000).

In Senegal, the union operating methods sometimes drive women away. According to Mbow (2000), the 1989 Congress of the Independent Union of Higher Education lasted an entire weekend, and delegates were obliged to spend the night to elect new officers. The situation was very difficult for women with children. Such challenging experiences for women do not help their careers in higher education. This means that one might have to sacrifice certain childbearing for one's career. In Nigeria universities, although a married man is given an allowance for a wife and children, a married woman not provided with an allowance even though she may share the same job description as a married man (Fashina, 2000). This case clearly shows some of the discriminatory practices that affect women in Nigerian universities.

Fashina (2000) indicates that a proposal was put forward by an existing women's studies program at a university where she taught to expand the program into an academic unit. The proposal was said to have met with stiff resistance from male counterparts. Fashina (2000) reports that when the male colleagues failed to convince everyone that the center was not necessary, they resorted to snide remarks about equality feminism and the usefulness of the center. The situation is a bit different at the University of Dakar where Mbow (2000) reveals that women's studies is completely ignored, and very few women academics are willing to apply their expertise to gender issues. The statistical data that exist indicate that female staff are still underrepresented in senior academic and management positions and that while enrollment of female undergraduates is increasing; women are under represented in science and technology subjects (Morley, Kweisga & Mwaipopo, 2005). Research in Cameroon suggests that women are far from being encouraged to study science and are frequently told that science is not a suitable area of study for them. (Rathgeber, 2003). This attitude tends to be replicated in the workplace. Relatively few African women hold senior academic positions in science-related subjects. In turn, this means that young girls who want to pursue science have few mentors and role models. Some researchers have found a relationship between social class origins and field of study. Cochran (1992) reveals that in Egypt, middle-class and upper-class women are more likely to study scientific and professional subjects, while lower-middle-class women enter humanities, social sciences, education, agriculture, and nursing.

Typically, African women have been encouraged to pursue arts and humanities and have been discouraged from pursuing science subjects, as science is perceived as a

masculine field. Even when I attended college at the University of Cape Coast, more men were enrolled in the sciences and more women pursued the social sciences and various fields in education. As Mbow (2000) points out, colonialism accentuated the marginalization of women. When colonial companies introduced cash farming and export farming, technical training to increase yield was offered to men; men were involved in cash crops and women in subsistence farming. In the same vein, Tamale and Olako-Onyango (2000) reveal that the 1935 commission on Higher Education in East Africa, chaired by the British Peer Earl de la Warr, was paternalistic to the extreme. The commission emphasized that women should be educated for homemaking, taught sewing, home economics, hygiene, domestic management, nursing, and midwifery. “Neither the technical subjects — engineering, general medical and animal sciences or agriculture — were opened up to gender parity” (p. 4).

Rathgeber (2003) reveals that in almost all African countries, female teaching staff are few in number and comprise less 10% of the faculty at the senior professorial level. According to Mabokela and Mawila (2004), a report of the National Commission on Higher Education confirmed that in 1993, women occupied 32% of the total research and teaching positions. The report further noted that the majority of these women were employed in the lowest academic ranks as junior lecturers or lecturers.

The statistics showed:

In South African universities, women comprised 100 percent of positions below junior lecturer rank, 89 percent of the junior lecturers and 45 percent of the lecturers. Within the higher ranks, women comprised less than 3 percent of

professors and about 8 percent of associate professors. (Mabokela & Mawila, 2004, p. 397)

Morley (2005) notes that many of the explanations for the gendered division of labor in the academy or women's lack of seniority stem from norm-related discourses of heterosexuality and nuclear family structure. Thus marriage, housework, and childcare continue to create barriers for many women.

Further, gendered power relations affect women's everyday experiences of higher education once they enter. They can be subjected to sexual harassment, violence, exclusion from career development opportunities, prejudices concerning their academic abilities and intellectual authority, and prejudices against them as mothers. According to Morley (2005), sexual harassment is frequently cited as a factor for women's reluctance to make themselves visible in the academy, or, in some cases, to enter in the first place, either as students or staff. Calling attention to sexual harassment remains a dangerous act for women. Rathgeber (2003) affirms that low priority is given to ensuring equity and fair treatment for female students and often seen as a nonissue when libraries, laboratories, and faculty salaries are seen to be in need of additional resources. This problem is reinforced by the fact that most senior university administrators are males and have not had the personal experience of sex-based discrimination.

The existence of male violence can sometimes regulate women. Odejide (2001), notes that managing male violence can reinforce a style of leadership that disadvantages women and argues that Nigeria's history of militarization means that leadership is linked with authoritarianism, a quality not conceptualized as feminine. Odejide (2001) observes

that the volatile nature of staff and student politics in Nigeria, which often involves physical and psychological violence, makes it easy for the community to designate university management masculine territory, further marginalizing women.

Mbow (2000) indicates that at the time of independence in most African countries, the majority of women had not progressed beyond primary leaving certificate or secondary school entrance exams. Very few reached higher education, and women students rarely exceeded 2% of the total. The presence of women researchers and teachers at universities evolved gradually and the percentage is still low. The situation of women and education in Ghana is no different.

Background: Women in Ghana

To better understand the situation of women in higher education in Ghana, it is important to provide some background information of the status of women in Ghana. According to the 2000 population census provided by the Ghana Statistical Service (2003), women constitute 51% of the Ghanaian population of 18.8 million. The majority of Ghanaians, about 66% live in the rural areas and are engaged in either agriculture, fishing. About 70% of the rural dwellers are women, and about 52% of these women work in the agriculture sector. Manuh (1995) explains that women engage in productive activities, such as farming, processing and marketing produce, and trading in local and imported commodities. Women are very much involved in the most vital areas of the economy, food production and distribution, and this is traditional. A 2003 demographic health survey revealed that most Ghanaian women are married at one time or another in their lives. Between ages 25 and 29 years, less than 5% of women have never been

married. One in four women has never been married; 52% are married and 13% are in informal unions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2004).

Despite the fact that women in Ghanaian society are valued above else for their reproductive functions, fertility levels appear to be declining. World Bank (2001) reports that total fertility rate for Ghana dropped from 6.5 births per woman in 1977 to 5.5 in 1992; by 1998, it had been reduced to 4.79. This is as a result of the combined and sustained efforts to improve literacy levels, and the availability of better healthcare, including family planning services, launched by the government in collaboration with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) both locally and internationally. It is a very common occurrence in Ghana to find women with post-high school educations marrying in their late twenties and early thirties (myself included). As elsewhere, the greater the number of education the lower the fertility levels or number of children.

Women in Ghana have low literacy levels compared with men, 65.8% compared with 42.3%, respectively. There is gap between urban and rural literacy rates, 69.6 % and 39.8% respectively. Females are more disadvantaged in rural than in urban areas as female literacy rate is 28.2% in rural areas compared with 58.9% in urban areas (Ghana Statistical Service, 2003). Ghanaian women are expected to work to contribute to household and family welfare and to meet their obligations to kin. In this way, they can means to form and enlarge social networks to increase their autonomy and it is within the informal sector that many rural women find work and attempt to meet the needs of their households. Manuh (1995) reveals that the predominance of women in the intermediate and informal sectors is in part a reflection of the sexual division of labor which consigns

all household duties and tasks to women. Thus, many women find it relatively easier within the informal sector to care for children, perform domestic chores, and engage in economic activities. Due to the fact that majority of Ghanaian women lack education and skills, they remain in trading and agriculture. As Sackey (2005) puts it:

The rise in participation in trading is not unexpected, since virtually anyone with a little start-up capital can engage in one form of retailing or another. Educational prerequisites are not too high, and at the same time there seem to be less severe “entry barriers”, if any. (p. 18)

Manuh (1995) notes that although women occupy few authority or decision-making roles in formal structures of power, they dominate the religious and cultural life of communities as priestesses, spirit mediums, healers and prophetesses. She explains that “in matrilineal communities, royal women are queen mothers and perform constitutional, political, and ritual functions. In these positions, they are held in high esteem by society and their gender is almost forgotten” (p. 97).

In June 2007, the government of Ghana appointed the first ever female chief of justice. Although this appointment has been applauded by many, Ghana still has a long way to go. In politics, women in Ghana have struggled to maintain representation. In the year 2007, there were 25 parliamentarians among 230 members and only 4 females out of the 48 ambassadors and high commissioners (Government of Ghana, 2007).

Manuh (1995) asserts that to study women in Ghana means to focus on the conditions, opportunities, and constraints those different women confront in daily living, particularly in relation to gender and class difference. I concur with Manuh’s (1995)

assessment that we must go beyond the cataloguing of the disadvantages faced by Ghanaian women in access to resources and, formal power structures and to concentrate on the variety of women's roles, relations, their dynamism and creativity. This can be achieved through more research on women's issues which will form a basis for policy reform in Ghana.

Women and Higher Education in Ghana

I now offer a brief review of women in higher education in Ghana. As stated earlier, Dr. J. K. Aggrey once proclaimed that, if you educate a man, you educate an individual; educate a woman and you educate a nation. Education is an enterprise in which women have a vital stake, as women are generally those on whom the responsibility of educating falls, whether in the home or in the school. Yet, Dr Aggrey's statement while widely used in Ghana since independence, does not reflect women's actual involvement in higher education. A study conducted on gender issues at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana revealed that women academics have low statistical and political visibility and, their concerns and needs within the workplace women are not discussed (Prah, 2002). With regards to female university students, Prah (2002) concluded that "there is anecdotal evidence about women students who were intimidated by their peers, particularly (but not exclusively) men, when they decided to stand for political office at the university" (p.41). Additionally, the university itself has no gender equity unit or special department to handle gender discrimination issues, reflecting some of the challenges that Ghanaian women face at the university.

The status of the Ghanaian women is shaped by cultural/societal norms and the legacies of colonialism for colonialists were biased in favor of boys, rather than girls, for schooling when they needed to train Africans to help them run the colonial governments. Bartels (1965) reveals that when the first school for girls was opened in Ghana, the aim of the missionaries who ran the school was to groom young women to become fit wives for the men they were training. Van Allen (1976) traces the sex differential education in Africa to colonialism. He writes:

When they needed literate Africans to form a supportive mediating structure for colonial governments, they sought young boys for schooling. Even when girls were sent to mission schools, they often were not taught the same subjects. Girls' "training homes" taught some "domestic science" and the Bible in vernacular. (p. 35)

Thus, inequality in education is rooted in colonialism and today we see the ripple effects. It has been argued by Prah (2002) that if women should excel in any profession, then it should be teaching at the universities because teaching is supposedly women's forte and universities are assumed to be meritocratic institutions. She further asserts that Ghanaian universities are male-dominated institutions and the women within them — academics, administrators, support staff and, students — face major obstacles because of lack of attention to their specific needs and problems.

According to Leney (2003), in the first year of the University College in Ghana in 1946, women accounted for just 2% of the student population, while in the year 1957, of independence, they still amounted to less than 5%. At the first phase of development of

the University of Ghana, there were four residence halls for men and one for women (Leney, 2003). Table 2 shows student enrollment at the University of Ghana until Independence in 1957.

Table 2

Student Enrollment at the University of Ghana, 1948-1958

	Preliminary & Intermediate		Bachelors		Postgraduates		Others		Total
Year	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
1948-49	88	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	90
1949-50	81	3	24	-	-	-	-	-	108
1950-51	92	5	82	1	-	-	28		208
1951-52	154	7	140	4	2		33		340
1952-53	261	11	172				29		473
1953-54	214		191		7		20		432
1954-55	104	3	204	4	7	2	34		358
1955-56	42	1	211	6	7	1	42		310
1956-57	23	1	239		15		39		317
1957-58	57		405		12		48		519

Source: Leney (2003), p. 163.

These enrollment figures show that women's participation in higher education has been low since the establishment of the university in Ghana and the disparities continue as shown in Table 2. Leney (2003) contends that women have suffered disproportionately from the lack of a sound secondary education and even if they managed to gain places as undergraduates, their prospects for professional employment were poor.

At independence (1957), Leney (2003) notes that “there were 120 students of Arts (5 of whom were women), 76 of Science (3 of whom were women), 26 studying for a Social Studies Certificate (2 of whom were women), 45 studying at the Institute of Education (7 of whom were women)” (p. 163.). The problem of the “wastage of womanpower” was one of the concerns of the (post-independence) 1961 Commission on University Education, appointed to review the position of the soon-to-be-independent University of Ghana. This international commission noted that women had to abandon education without completing their qualifications and that women were underrepresented even in professions such as nursing, teaching, and social work traditionally considered the province of women (Leney, 2003). Leney (2003) contends that employment conditions in the early years of independence were fairly liberal, reflecting the international commission's stipulation that the terms of employment remain more or less untouched. The conditions even provided some encouragement for women academics. Florence Dolphyne returned to Legon in 1965 as lecturer in linguistics and later rose to be pro-vice chancellor (1996-1997). This is the highest office in any Ghanaian university held by a woman.

Like other institutions, the universities in Ghana perpetuate a sexual division of labor. Men hold the majority of senior and high positions, and women predominate in lower-paid, insecure jobs. Typically, these gendered patterns occur also in other aspects of the university, its committees, staffing patterns, and informal lobbying groups.

Throughout my four years of higher education in Ghana, there was only one woman who held the highest administrative position, as registrar, at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. Nowhere have women held the position of vice chancellor (president). Although there are a few women as senior lecturers and deans of academic colleges, not very much information is known about the experiences of these women at the universities in Ghana.

Kuenyehia (1995) states that as far as gender analysis is concerned, both in teaching and research in Ghana, we are traveling an uncharted course. Although she raises concern about whether it is appropriate to use methodologies and theories developed in the west for gender analysis in Ghana, I argue that a starting point is necessary. Adequate research will offer a solid basis to promote law reforms that will benefit women and society in general.

Although patriarchy existed in the early Ghanaian society, colonialism reinforced an already existing phenomenon and legitimized it in the new social order developed during and after colonialism. Feminists have suggested that patriarchy dominates postcolonial much as it dominated colonial everyday life (Rosser, 2007). Although the end of colonial rule created high hopes for a proper postcolonial era, the extent to which the West had not relinquished control quickly became clear. Two frameworks — post

colonial and postcolonial feminist theory — offer a reasonable place from which to understand the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana. Next, I outline the core assumptions of each theory.

Theoretical Framework

Because this study examines the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, an exploration of theories that deal with experiences of women in postcolonial societies is appropriate. Postcolonial and postcolonial feminist theory provides the theoretical framework for this study.

In order to understand postcolonial feminism, it is important to briefly explain postcolonial theory as it has had a powerful bearing on postcolonial feminism. Postcolonial refers to the time period after colonial rule; but in some instances, it refers to the literature that has been written in opposition to colonialism. According to Carlson and Dimitriadis (2003):

Post colonialism is about reading colonial texts alongside text written from the perspective and standpoint of former colonial and subjugated people. For these peoples to free themselves of the colonial mind-set, and to actively resist subjugation, they must engage in the process of representing themselves, in telling their own stories, in regaining control over their own representation in popular culture. (p. 8)

Thus, a goal of postcolonial theory is to give voice to unacknowledged voices recovering from decades of colonial rule and oppression. This theory has been chosen as one of the

models for this study as its principles advocate giving a voice to the marginalized in society, women in this case.

According to Narayan and Harding (2000) post colonial theory is shaped by its origins in imperialism and challenges the notion of “independence” in formerly colonized countries by highlighting the lingering consequences of colonialism (Narayan & Harding, 2000). Dirlik (1996) notes that the label “postcolonial theory,” in its various usages, carries a multiplicity of meanings which he distinguished for analytical purposes. He acknowledges three uses of the term: (a) as a literary description of conditions in former colonial societies; (b) as a description of a global condition after the period of colonialism; and, (c) as a description of discourses concerning the above-named conditions that are informed by the epistemological and psychic orientations that are products of the above conditions. Hence, postcolonial theory can be seen as a theory that digs into the past and trace problems that are associated with colonialism and subsequent neocolonialism. When postcolonial theory focuses on colonialism, it acknowledges that this form of oppression distorted, disfigured, and destroyed the past of the oppressed people (Fanon, 1994).

One purpose of postcolonial theory has been to examine the condition of the postcolonial woman. Postcolonial feminism has centered generally around issues of cultural identity, language, nationalism, and the position of women in formerly colonized countries as they become nation-states (Rosser, 2007). Within postcolonial feminism it is important to understand the notion of double colonization, a theory formulated in the 1980s that describes women in former colonized societies. This theory explains that

women were double colonized by imperial and patriarchal ideologies (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1995). According to Kim (2007) postcolonial feminists “typically rely on a rigorously historical and dialectal approach to understand the imbrications of gender, nations, class, caste, races, culture and sexualities in the different but historically specific contexts of women’s lives” (p.112). Feminists have suggested that patriarchy still dominates post colonial life as much as it dominated colonial, everyday life. Thus, women continue to remain in subordinate positions.

Feminist postcolonial work shares many similarities with postcolonial theory. Kim (2007) reveals that these theories offer gendered conceptualization of colonialism and post colonialism. Both theories engage themselves in the politics of racial relations and in the struggle against injustice and injustice. Additionally, they reject established patriarchal systems and challenge the supremacy of hegemonic masculine authority and power. Postcolonial and post colonial-feminist discourses center on the “other.”

Rosser (2007) and McClintock (1994) both acknowledged that the decolonization of the formerly colonized states led to a disparity in the advancements between men and women. Rosser (2007) reveals that, “as new nation-states are constructed, women in formerly colonized countries experience discrimination along race, class and gender lines due to the entanglement of patriarchy with colonialism” (p. 244). In affirmation of this observation, McClintock (1994) articulates that ,“in a world where women do two-thirds of the world’s work, earn 10% of the world’s income, and own less than 1% of the world’s property, the promise of ‘post-colonialism’ has been a history of hopes postponed” (p. 298).

Postcolonial feminism in my research is employed to give silenced others a voice. By interviewing women in higher education in Ghana, I sought to highlight the importance of women's individual voices on issues that affect them by paying specific attention to the language used by participants in expressing their experiences. Feminist scholars argue that research practices should seek to reveal the voices of the silenced and marginalized, particularly those who have been used to oppress certain groups (hooks, 2000).

Howry and Wood (2001) note that feminism brings women's experiences into existence, offers a premise for understanding and articulating women's experiences, and provides a means of healing. These values can only be achieved when a space for subjectivity among the marginalized is created and facilitated through a search for the marginalized voice. Kim (1997) states that as Spivak and other post colonial feminists have revealed, third world women are often perceived and represented as victims or members of a minority, both authorially and politically and are allowed to speak only to give evidence of Third World Difference. Thus, in discursive representations, subaltern women are excluded from having their voice and subjectivity (Kim, 1997). The issue of voice is an important component in ensuring that marginalized experiences are able to surface. African women's mobilization and self-assertion are not represented adequately in feminist theorizing and this can be traced, in part, to colonial forces and practices (Oyewumi, 2005). Although Oyewumi (2005) contends that much of the emphasis has been on the voiceless African woman, Kolawole (1997) opposed such distorted forms of representations. Kolawole (1997) emphatically points out that African women are not only speaking out but are also actively engaged in work that deconstructs misrepresentations or distorted images

of African women. In support of this assertion, Rosser (2007) reveals that some women from African countries have extended definitions of motherhood beyond the biological to the communal. “Including community and culture and providing new models of femininity independent of patriarchal and western definitions, makes these women exemplify the survival and integrity of their culture and people” (p.244).

Spivak (2001) articulates that like feminists, postcolonial critics want to give silenced “others” a voice. But Spivak worries that even the most benevolent effort merely repeats the very silencing it aims to combat. Spivak (2001) reveals that the British outlawing of *sati*, the Hindu practice of burning a widow on her husband’s funeral pyre, saved some women’s lives and may have given women a modicum of free choice, but it also served to secure British power in India and to underscore the asserted difference between British “civilization” and Indian “barbarism.” Hindu culture was driven underground, written out of law and denied any legitimacy (Spivak, 2001). In articulating women’s voices, caution needs to be taken to ensure that traditions and cultures are not condemned, but, rather a platform must be established to see if collaboration can occur. Spivak (1990) theorizes about the possibilities of border crossings and addresses the tensions and the contradictions across the academic-non academic divide. According to Kim (2007), Spivak’s and other postcolonial feminist theorists’ strategies of intervention are enabling as they advocate for an analytical shift away from the difference impasse and move beyond the binary hierarchy and across various borders to forge a dialogue among women.

Postcolonial theory has been criticized as an intellectual project that is produced by scholars from developing countries based in the West (Appiah, 1992; Williams, 1997). Coincidentally, most of the scholars cited in this chapter are based in the West (e.g., Spivak, Ogunjide-Leslie and Kolawole). Appiah (1992) articulates that postcoloniality “is the condition that we might ungenerously call a comprador intelligentsia: of a small, Western-style, Western trained group of writers and thinkers who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalist at the periphery” (p. 432).

Spivak (2001) sees postcolonial studies as a new opportunity to liberate and enable the “other” to experience and articulate those parts of itself that fall outside what the dominant discourse has constituted as its subjecthood. She asks whether such work can succeed. She asks: “Can — with or without the intervention of well-intentioned intellectuals — the subaltern speak?” (p. 2195). Her blunt answer is no. Spivak rejects the alternatives of letting subalterns speak for themselves. Spivak’s idea of the subaltern can be traced to Gramsci, who conceptualized the subaltern classes as having no history of their own. These classes were unrecognized by official historical documents; the subaltern was instead integrated into the master narratives of the powerful (Williams, 1997). Spivak (2001) makes a valid point by stating:

The subaltern is not similarly privileged, and does not speak in a vocabulary that will get a hearing in institutional locations of power. The subaltern enters official and intellectual discourse only rarely and usually through the mediating commentary of someone more at home in those discourses. (p. 2195)

From Gramsci's point of view, the "subaltern" cannot be conceived apart from the totality of social relations at any given historical period (Juan, 1999). The subaltern project thus gives voice to the voiceless and visibility to the invisible.

As articulated in this chapter, my standpoint is informed by postcolonial feminist and postcolonial theories. The coupling of these perspectives provides a theoretically sensible place from which to understand the experience of women in higher education in Ghana. As I engaged in fieldwork, I paid particular attention to issues of voice and how women narrate their experience. I embarked on this journey with the goal of working with participants to make sense of the experiences of women in higher education.

The literature reviewed reveals that even women in higher education in developed countries face challenges. Universities have been considered as patriarchal institutions and have, one way or the other, contributed to the gender imbalances that occur in higher education today. Research findings reveal that in developed countries, there is evidence of disparities in salaries as well as in the award of research grants and promotions. In Africa, the effect of colonialism and patriarchal society impacts the experiences of women in higher education. Women's childbearing and childrearing roles directly affect their freedom to operate in and articulate issues that affect them in the academy. Clearly absent from the literature review were the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, yet research is needed to understand the experiences of Ghanaian women and to identify challenges they face so as to answer the question about women's underrepresentation as faculty and administrators in higher education.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents and discusses the overall methodology that was employed in the study. It comprises a description of the rationale for the methodology, site selection, the researcher's role, and the data collection procedures.

Research Design

The research methods selected say much about the views on what qualifies as valuable knowledge and the perspective on the nature of reality. The choice of qualitative methods for my research was primarily to understand the “voice of interest from the participants' perspective,” and not just from the researcher's. Patton (1985) defines qualitative research as an:

Effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting — what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting. (p.1)

This study adopted the phenomenological approach, which seeks to elucidate the meaning of the lived experience of a phenomenon of a group of people. Patton (2002) notes that a phenomenological study is one that focuses on descriptions of what people experience and how it is that they experience what they experience. This research sought to make a contribution that challenges the silence and subordination to cultural norms of African women by revealing the experiences of women faculty and administrators in

institutions of higher education in Ghana. A dimension of phenomenological approach is the assumption that there is an essence or essences to shared experience. Eichelbeger (1989) asserts that in a phenomenological study, there is the need to conduct an analysis of the experience so that the basic elements of the experience that are common to members of a specific society can be identified. In similar vein, Van Manen (1990) adds that phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the everyday experiences of a group of people, women faculty and administrators in this case.

By conducting this study, I attempted to understand how cultural and social histories circumscribe gender hierarchies and women's education, employment opportunities, career development and advancement, and the challenges these women encountered in their careers in higher education. A phenomenological study requires an investigator to derive research questions that explore the meaning of that experience for individuals and ask them to describe their everyday lived experiences (Creswell, 1998). This according to Creswell (1998) is done through interviews with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. My aim in this research was to give a voice to the silenced group of women faculty and administrators who were the core of this research project. Thus, through in-depth interviews I was able to derive from selected participants their lived experiences.

Site Selection

The University of Ghana (UG), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), and the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) were the research sites. The UG was the first university established in the country and it was a

pioneer in the introduction of women as faculty. It also offers courses in the social sciences and arts and sciences. UEW primarily offers mainly runs courses in education, whereas KNUST, as the name suggests, mainly offers programs in engineering, technology and sciences. The UG and KNUST were founded in 1948 and 1951 (before colonization), respectively, and UEW attained university status in 1992. The UG is located in Accra the capital of Ghana, KNUST is located at Kumasi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, and UEW is located at Winneba in the Central Region. The main objective for selecting these public universities was to obtain varied perspectives and a broader picture from women in these three universities on their experiences as women who are faculty and administrators.

The present research took place at UEW, KNUST, and UG for a two-month period from November 2006 to January 2007. Having been educated at the University of Cape-Coast in the Central Region of Ghana, I have substantial networking capabilities with colleagues working at UEW, KNUST, and the UG. This gave me easy access to a wide variety of professors and administrators. Ohio University has a memorandum of understanding with UEW, promoting a free flow of information between the two universities. Also, my previous experience as public relations officer at Ghana Airways Limited offered me access to faculty and administrators at the UG and KNUST, who sought funding to travel for research and conference purposes.

Selection of Participants

Participants were selected through purposeful sampling, which is dominant strategy in qualitative research. Patton (2002) asserts that the logic and power of

purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. In this study, the main focus was to understand the experiences of women in higher education thus, a selection of women who teach and work as administrators in the three public universities identified were selected for the interview. “Information rich-cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of inquiry” (Patton, 2002, p. 230). The women involved in this study grew up in the Ghanaian context and therefore related their experiences growing up and working in higher education.

In total 14 faculty members and 6 administrators from the three universities were interviewed. The 20 women were identified for interviewing through snow ball sampling, an approach for locating information-rich key informants or critical cases (Patton, 2002, p. 237). In each of the three universities, I had a contact person who introduced me to a woman faculty member and/or administrator and as I interviewed, other women were recommended. In some cases, these women set up interviews with additional women faculty and administrators as I progressed through the field.

Data Sources and Collection Procedures

Data Sources

Qualitative enquiry, which focuses on meaning in context, requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data. Patton (2002) reveals that qualitative findings grow out of three kinds of data collection: in-depth, open-ended interviews, direct observation, and written

documents. Glesne (2005) also affirms that the use of multiple data collection methods contributes to the trustworthiness of data.

I employed the concept of triangulation in my data collection. Patton (2002) notes that triangulation within a qualitative inquiry strategy can be obtained by combining both interviewing and observation. For the purposes of this research, I used data triangulation, which is the use of a variety of data sources in a study (Denzin, 1978). Berg (1995) asserts that the purpose of triangulation is not the simple combination of different kinds of data, but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) summarize the fundamental methods relied on by qualitative researchers for gathering information as participation in the setting, direct observation, in-depth interviewing, and document review. These methods formed the core of the research. To address these issues and answer the research questions, an in-depth, open ended interview-based study of 20 women faculty and administrators at the UG, UEW and KNUST was conducted. The primary sources were the interviews and participant observations. The interview data were supplemented by government documents which would be the secondary source of data.

To support the use of in-depth, open-ended interviews, observations, and documents for my research, I cite Patton (2002), who asserts that “studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method than studies that use multiple methods in which different types of data provide cross-data validity checks” (p.248).

Interviewing

Patton (2002) contends that qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowledgeable, and should be able to be made explicit. According to Rapley (2004), interviews, are by their very nature, social encounters where speakers collaborate in producing retrospective (and prospective) accounts or versions of their past (future) actions, experiences, feelings, and thoughts.

An interview is a purposeful conversation, usually between two people, although sometimes involving more, that is directed by someone in order to get information from the other (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). In qualitative research, interviews may be used in two ways. They may be the dominant strategy for data collection, or they may be employed in conjunction with participant observation, document analysis, or other techniques (Rapley, 2004). In all these situations, the interview is used to gather descriptive data, in the subjects' own words, so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world.

Patton (2002) categorizes interviews into three general types: the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide approach, and the standardized open-ended interview. Two different sets of general questionnaires were used to guide the interviews of faculty and administrators at UG, UEW, and KNUST. The face-to-face interview is presented as enabling a "special insight" into subjectivity, voice and lived experience (Rapley, 2004). In this study, these were designed to elicit a profile of each woman's career path and the goals she holds, the obstacles she encounters, and the achievements she has earned.

Before I embarked on this research journey, I submitted my research objectives to the Ohio University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and received an IRB submission approval (see Appendix A). Prior to this approval, I participated in online research training and received certification to conduct research. To ensure that ethical issues were not violated, before each interview, I briefly talked about the purpose of the interview and gave an overview of the research being conducted. I asked participants to give their consent by reading and signing the consent form approved by the IRB. Throughout my research, I followed through with all the guidelines and regulations stipulated by the IRB. I also sought permission from interviewees to record the interviews and to take notes and assured them of anonymity and the fact that the tapes and notes would be destroyed as soon as the research is over. One of the limitations of the interviewing that I encountered was that some participants were reluctant to provide enough information for fear of retaliation. At the beginning and throughout the interview, I stressed the importance of confidentiality to the participants and that made them feel at ease to talk to me in confidence.

I used an interview protocol (Appendix B and C) for faculty and administrators to guide me through the interview. I recorded the interview using a digital recorder. Patton (2002) advises that “no matter what style of interviewing you use and no matter how carefully you word questions, it all comes to naught if you fail to capture the actual words of the person being interviewed” (p.380). Although, the interview was recorded, I also took notes for Patton (2002) recommends that that note taking allows the research “to

concentrate on taking strategic and focused notes rather than attempting verbatim notes” (p.383).

Participant Observation and Documents

Observation as an ongoing qualitative research technique is important since helps presents the whole picture, captures context or process, and illustrates informs about the influence of the physical environment (Nisbett, 1977). Participant observation refers to situations in which an observer gains firsthand knowledge by being in or around the social setting that is being investigated. Long and involved personal interaction with the subjects of the research is the prime advantage of participant observation (Zikmund, 1991). I observed faculty members while they monitored examinations. The was to discover the interactions, as well as patterns of behavior and relationships among women faculty and their peers and women administrators and their peers. KNUST in particular has a large lecture hall which seats about 400 students. There were about six faculty members assigned to supervise these students while they took their final examinations. I also observed faculty and administrators during their lunch hours and as they interacted with each other in the staff common rooms.

The use of government documents, mostly from the Ghana National Tertiary Education Council, and the Universities’ Human Resource Department, intended primarily was to mainly collect data on the various statistics on women as faculty and administrators. Additionally, the UG and the UEW gave me two copies of their newsletters which contained information about gender issues and faculty and administrative data, all useful to my research. As Patton (2002) advises, “learning to use,

study and understand documents and files is part of the repertoire of skills needed for qualitative inquiry” (p.295).

Member Checking

The interviews were all conducted in English with the some expressions made in the Ghanaian local language, *Akan*. I personally transcribed all the interviews since the Ghanaian English accent is different and I wanted to ensure that data would be transcribed verbatim. Patton (2002) affirms that “doing all or some of your own interview transcriptions (instead of having them done by a transcriber), for example, provides an opportunity to get immersed in the data, an experience that usually generates emergent insights” (p. 441).

Glesne (2005) defines member checking as sharing interview transcripts, analytical thoughts, and/or drafts of the final report with research participants to make sure they and their ideas are being represented accurately. I began the transcription of the data while I was in Ghana; thus I was able to seek clarification and confirmation on issues and themes that emerged by cross-checking with some of the interviewees as I interviewed them. Patton (2002) notes that “on occasion, gaps and ambiguities found during analysis cry out for more data collection so where possible, interviewees may be recontacted to clarify or deepened responses” (p. 437). Since I began the interpretation when I came back to the United States, I have had to contact two faculty members to clarify the absence of a maternity leave policy for women faculty members.

Interpretation of Data

Bogdan and Biklen (2003) define qualitative data analysis as “working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what you will tell others” (p. 54). Patton (2002) notes that analysis of any kind of data refers to its systematic examination to determine its parts, the relationship among the parts, and their relationship to the whole. Glesne and Peskin (1992) maintain that qualitative data analysis involves organizing what one has seen, heard, and read so that one can make sense out of what he/she has learned in the field. According to Bell (1993), “a hundred separate pieces of interesting information will mean nothing to a reader unless they have been placed into categories groupings, patterns and items of particular significance” (p.127).

In interpreting data, inductive analysis, a process aimed at uncovering embedded information and making explicit (Hoepfl, 1997) was used. As Bogdan and Biklen (2003) also note, this qualitative analysis helps themes and categories to emerge during three phases. The first phase, discovery, is when the researcher identifies themes and develops concepts as research progresses. The second phase, coding, occurs after the data collection, focusing on refining the understanding of the subject matter. The final phase is interpretation in which the researcher attempts to understand the data. This research utilized the tools available through the adopted research design — phenomenological study — which proceeds through the methodology of reduction, the analysis of specific statements and themes and a search for all possible meanings (Creswell, 1998). The data

collected at the end of the study were voluminous. The data reduction was done through coding and memoing.

The data consisted of personal notes on observation, digital recording of interviews, and institutional documents. Qualitative researchers need to maximize external validity to ensure that our interpretations connect with people's life experiences and minimize the impact of the researcher.

The Researcher

My postcolonial feminist standpoint was useful in examining how I project myself as a researcher. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) reveal that in qualitative research, the role of the researcher as the primary data collection instrument necessitates the identification of personal values, assumptions, and biases at the outset of the study. I am a Ghanaian born and raised in Ghana where I was educated from primary school through college. It was advantageous for me to conduct research in universities in Ghana is because I am very familiar with the system from a student's perspective. Secondly, through the four years that I attended college in Ghana, I was taught by only one woman. This experience motivated me to pursue a doctoral-level education. As an insider, I am also passionate about revealing the voices of these women and to work with them to make sense of their experiences.

However, my postcolonial feminist standpoint could also be seen as setting me up as an outsider. As a student I have been exposed to various forms of knowledge and my ideas have been transformed by these experiences. My reflexivity has been influenced as a result of relocation from the context in which I grew up, and my scholarly interactions

are influenced by various perspectives at an intellectual level. However, as Rosser (2007) argued, this outsider perspective may be useful as it may facilitate a critical perspective. Reflexivity is part of the researcher's role in qualitative study in order to ensure credibility and trustworthiness. Patton (2002) defines reflexivity as "a way of emphasizing self-awareness, and political/cultural self-consciousness, and ownership of one's perspective" (p. 64). Due to my experiences as a student, I brought with me certain biases into this study, which definitely shaped the way I view and understand the data gathered from the field. As a researcher, I played the role of the interviewer, listener and observer.

The core of the research is the methodology. This is important because it is the strategy that was used to collect and analyze the data. The questions asked in the interview sought to understand the experiences of women faculty and administrators. Data were mainly collected through in-depth interviewing of faculty and administrators from the UG, KNUST, and UEW participant observation of faculty and administrators' meetings and review of government documents. Data analysis was done through generating themes, categories, and patterns. With the help of the research questions and the theory, which informed my study, I identified and recognizing concepts and themes as the data analysis progressed.

Reflections from the Field

Ghanaians are generally very hospitable, open-minded and flexible. The willingness of these women to share their experiences with me was remarkable, and they appreciated the fact I had chosen a topic critical in an era in which women's issues are

gradually gaining credence nationally. I interviewed most of the participants in their offices. Three of the participants offered to let me interview them in their homes. My participants did not see me as an outsider; they knew that their voices were very important to my research and for improving the lives of Ghanaian women working at the universities. During the interviews, participants noticed that I was eager to learn from them and their stories were very important for my research. Some of the women, especially the experienced women I interviewed, shared their personal stories including the challenges they faced growing up as women in a traditional Ghanaian society. Lykes and Coquillon (2007) urge researchers to situate themselves as facilitators of the voices of the participants by creating opportunities through which they are enabled to tell their stories and where there is a public to both hear these stories and be held accountable to storytellers. The participants were also anxious to know if their experiences were the same in the other universities where I had interviewed. My participants requested that I send them a copy of my dissertation after the research is completed.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results obtained from the review of documents, observations, and interviews conducted in order to answer the research questions posed in this study. The objective of this study was to examine and offer an understanding of the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, specifically women faculty and administrators in selected public universities. The research questions provide a framework for this study. To provide a quick reference, the research questions enquire specifically about:

- (1) Early experiences of females that impact their career paths;
- (2) Factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior posts and faculty;
- (3) Challenges, opportunities and successes that women experience as faculty and administrators;
- (4) Policies, written or unwritten that have been adopted by the universities that influence gender equity; and
- (5) Attributes and strategies that are common among women who have succeeded in higher education teaching and administration

This chapter presents the themes and concepts that emerged from interviews, the background of the sample of the population, and the statistical visibility of female faculty members at the UG, KNUST and UEW. Also, I will describe and analyze the data that

emerged from the documents and, observations as well as the interviews I conducted, and relate the themes to the research questions. Finally, this chapter will provide a detailed description of the themes and concepts that emerged from the interviews with the faculty and administrators and present an analysis that focuses on the experiences of these women and their perspectives on gender issues in higher education in Ghana.

In addition to the observations and the document analysis, the research is based on the perspectives of two distinct groups — faculty and administrators. In coding the voluminous data, I found that several themes and patterns emerged. The dominant themes that recurred are the conflict in and juggling the multiple roles as a mother, wife and worker and the effect of sociocultural practices, particularly the socialization of girls and economic factors affecting girls' education. Also, the women faculty, rather than the administrators, highlighted a myriad of challenges and invisible barriers that they experienced at work. In particular, they talked about lack of statistical visibility of women in the top echelon of the university administration, the lack of role models, the gender assignment of roles, and the “old boys” network. There was a mixed perspective on opportunities for career advancement and the support of the institution.

Background of Sample

I interviewed 14 women faculty members who were at different ranks and from various disciplines in UG, KNUST and UEW and 6 female administrators, who served in different capacities in the universities' administration. These women were represented by pseudonyms. Care is taken to ensure that the names adopted are used consistently to

represent the particular participant in question. Therefore wherever the name appears more than once, then it is the same person echoing her views about different issues.

To be a full-time academic member, one needs to obtain at least a masters' degree with a thesis option although the preference was for a doctoral degree. In the same vein, to be qualified as an assistant registrar, one needs at minimum, to hold a post graduate degree. The post graduate degree is a one-year program after the undergraduate bachelor's degree. It is not equivalent to a Master's degree.

Table 3 is a summary of the academic degrees of the faculty members and administrators I interviewed:

Table 3

Academic Qualifications of Faculty and Administrators Interviewed

Position	Doctorate	Masters	Post Graduate Diploma
Faculty	4	10	0
Administrators	0	5	1

In Ghana's universities, the faculty ranking system is as follows: the first step is a lecturer position (this is differentiated by levels of a scale; thus a lecturer with a Ph.D. is placed on a higher scale in the lecturer grade than a master's degree holder). The second is the senior lecturer, the third, associate professor, and the fourth and final step is the full professor. For this study, one professor, four senior lecturers, and nine lecturers were interviewed.

Within Ghana's higher education system, the registrar is the chief administrative officer supported by a deputy registrars, senior assistant registrars and assistant registrars. I interviewed 3 senior assistant registrars and 3 assistant registrars.

Out of the 14 faculty members I interviewed, 12 were married with children, 1 was a divorced with children and 1 was a widow with children. Four of the administrators were married with children and 2 were single. The sample of my participants was made up of two different generations. Five of the participants had worked for more than 15 years at the university and had some of their high school education during and after the period of colonization. These groups of women were older and had very rich experiences. Most of the younger cohort of faculty members regarded these women as their mentors. In addition to their ranks, these women assumed a leadership role in their department. One of the administrators was the college registrar for the School of Natural Sciences, and one of the faculty members was head of the Community Health Department. The rest of my participants have spent between 2 and 10 years working at the university. These women were younger and, again looked up to the 'senior members' as role models.

The older women had parents who were not educated and were more concerned with the traditional role of women as wife and mother. Other people advocated these girls to be educated, much to the chagrin of their parents. The younger women I interviewed had parents who were educated; thus education was a key factor for their children. The participants who had taught at the university for over 15 years at the university were educated (high school through college) between 1960 and 1979, and those who were younger were educated from 1979 through 2000.

This qualitative research focused on the experiences of women as faculty and administrators in selected public universities in Ghana. As stated in a brief discussion in chapter 1, the goal in this study was to examine and offer an understanding of the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, by using the voices of faculty and administrators in selected public universities. Lykes and Coquillon (2007) affirm that qualitative research methods are more designed to encourage the preservation of participants' individual input and particular context — their voices, lived experiences indigenous knowledge, perception, and words. The next part of the analysis focuses on the specific of these women under study.

The Early Experiences of Girls that Impact their Career Paths

This section addresses the first research question of the study: the early experiences of girls that impact their career paths. In answering this question, it was important to understand how the experiences of these women growing up shaped their future. According to the participants who grew up in the 1960s sex differential in education coupled with socio-cultural factors were very rife and this can be revealed in the responses that were given by the participants. This study found that there were divergent experiences between those who grew up in the 1960s to 1979 (20%) and after 1979 (75%) with respect to family attitudes on female education. Thus, the analysis of the responses for theme 2 under research question 1 will be organized in generations. The first generation indicates participants who grew up in 1960s to 1979 and the second generation shows participants who grew up after 1979. For the first generation, education was a privilege because of the sex differential in education that existed during that period.

In contrast to those who grew up from 1975 onwards, they had parents who did not differentiate between gender. Education for these participants was a given. Two important themes emerged: socialization of girls in the Ghanaian society and the influence of family members.

Sociocultural factors

Ghanaian society has traditions deeply rooted in the past, including such notions as the “woman’s place is in the kitchen,” and these affect girls as they grow up. Thus girls’ education in Ghana is highly affected by sociocultural factors. In addition, preference is given to males’ education. The women interviewed recounted some of their experiences which were both challenging and rewarding. Ama, a first generation KNUST administrator noted:

Hmm! It is very challenging growing up as a woman in a Ghanaian society. A friend once said, you start as a little girl and it is like you can never play outside. You always have to be by mom learning how to cook and be responsible. You grow up as a woman and you become a mother and you are still responsible, you go through childbirth and go through all those difficulties and when you think you are an old lady and would want to rest they start bringing your grandchildren to you to take care of.

The expression of the sigh “Hmm!” is indicative of strong sentiments about the account of this faculty member. Irrespective of whatever career a woman chooses, the duties and expectations of a mother and a wife are stressed as primary goals. This societal expectation of women is what Kuenyehia (1995) refers to as the gender contract in which

women assume family care and domestic functions in spite of the reallocation of employment responsibilities. Consequently, women have to adjust their own lives to cope with conflicting employment and family roles. A society's view about women reflects the values of that society and shapes the attitudes, values, and self-images of its girls.

According to Kweisiga (2002), family structures which also reflect societal values then determine women's roles, responsibilities, and degree of independence, along with their general status and employment opportunities.

Traditional societal expectations of women, coupled with the institutionalization of gender-based discrimination produced by colonialism, cause sex differentials in education. This notion is articulated by postcolonial and postcolonial feminist theories which have been adopted by this study. African women were doubly colonized by imperial and patriarchal ideologies. Educational opportunities were not equitably distributed when the colonizers came to Africa. Boys' education was attended to first; girls' access to formal education was a second thought (Kweisiga, 2002). Men were encouraged to attend school but females had to forgo education, especially when the family had financial constraints. A first generation UEW faculty (Akua) explained:

I grew up in a larger family, an extended family system. It was not that easy. We were many in the family. Those days they were encouraging our older brothers to be in school. I had opportunity to pass the common entrance examination, but I could not continue because my parents said we should allow our brothers to go to secondary school first. There was also not enough financial resource for all of us.

Eventually, when I got the opportunity to enroll in a secondary school I had to wait for some time before entering the university.

This experience of parents giving preference to male education over female education resonates well with a study conducted by Twumasi (1986), who linked parents' emphasis on male education with their financial position and suggested that priority was usually given to male education, especially when a family's resources were insufficient to cover all the children's school expenses. As girls grow up, they are burdened with the duty of performing household chores and going to school at the same time. Another first generation KNUST faculty member (Adjoa) recounts:

As a girl, you had to go through a lot because even though you were in school with others, your parents would expect you to do housework and do everything, all the chores, and help your older sisters care for their children. And so if you are not careful it really becomes too much for you and you can't study. You come home in the evening and you are tired and you have to pound *fufu* (local food made from cassava) while the boys sit around doing nothing. Eventually, I got over it because if you are girl, like they say, your place is in the kitchen. I had to do the kitchen work alongside my academic work.

Esi, a first generation faculty member from the UG stated:

My childhood experience was interesting. I always tell my students to appreciate the privileges they have now. My father died when I was ten years old and I was the first girl and third born of eight children. Although I was fortunate to be enrolled in school, I had to help my mother sell food by the roadside in the

evening so that we could support my older brothers who were in school. In the morning, my other two sisters and I had to fetch water before going to school. It was a miracle that I am where I am today.

This observation validates Oppong's (1987) assertion that girls are more likely to be used as labor at home because of the traditional view that whatever the level of education, a woman's place is in the kitchen. Men were considered to be future breadwinners; thus it was a priority for males to be sent to school.

The interviews revealed that the societal expectations have a great influence on females growing up. All the first generation faculty members grew up in the country side and that is the area where traditions are strongly emphasized and encouraged. As indicated in the literature review 66% of Ghanaians live in the rural areas and 70% of rural dwellers are women. These could imply that majority of women may still be facing these same challenges that the first generation participants faced. This observation validates Dubgazah's study (2002) which revealed that the combined effect of socioeconomic and cultural variables helped to deny girls access to the universities and other institutions of higher education.

Although the system is gradually changing and men are contributing to household tasks, women still have to perform their roles at home. It takes a lot of determination and commitment to go against the odds to achieve a dream. The burden of performing household chores, coupled with the fact that more value is placed on education for males than females, could discourage girls from pursuing education. As Sackey (2005) states this is the typical pattern in sub-Saharan Africa, and dropout rates beyond the primary

level of schooling tend to be relatively higher for females than for males, a trend that has been attributed to various economic and sociocultural factors.

Influence/Attitude of Family Members in Girls' Education

In general, the participants believed that although education should be a right for every child, it is a privilege in most societies in Ghana. For some of these women, their career paths were chartered for them and their duty was simply to prove themselves through studies. Their parents not only valued education but they also provided opportunities. However, for a majority of these participants, it took determination and the support of a family member or an outsider to attain a high level of education, particularly for the first generation faculty women who were educated during the 1960s and 1970s. In a study on rural attitudes towards female education Mensah (1992) noted that a correlation was made between level of education and attitudes towards girls' education. It was found that parents with little or no education failed to appreciate the importance of schooling. A conversation with Adjoa again, a first generation KNUST faculty member about her experiences growing up revealed that her father did not value female education; therefore, without the support of a nun, she would not have attended school. In her interview, she recounted:

My father was a chief, and as a typical man who was deeply rooted in tradition, female education was the least of his priorities. To him, females were only useful as wives, mothers and homemakers. My father sent my brothers to well-known universities in Oxford and Cambridge in the United Kingdom. He blatantly refused to send any of his daughters to high school. I struck up an acquaintance

with some American Catholic nuns at church who became very fond of me. When they realized that I had completed primary school and had not yet pursued my high school education, they had some serious discussions with my mum about enrolling me in secondary school. I studied very diligently during high school and made sure that I always got good grades. I was determined to prove a point to my father that I was not only useful at home but I was good academically. As a result of my good grades and with the help of the nuns, I gained a scholarship to study nutrition and dietetics at a university in the United States.

The decision to enroll a child and to keep him or her in school is made at the family level by parents. Their perception of the costs and benefits of education are very important; but although finances are clearly important, so too are parental aspirations and inclinations. This is a factor that runs through many research findings on sex bias in education. According to Kweisiga (2002) a report submitted to Malawi's Ministry of Education and Culture revealed that although 85% of the girls who dropped out of school attributed this to lack of school fees, it was really the parents' methods of prioritizing the finances. Oppong (1987) posits that some parents place lower value on educating for girls, with the view that girls will eventually get married and become dependent on their husbands. Parents see education as an investment, thus educating a girl for a man to marry is not worthwhile.

In shedding light on a similar experience about the importance of girls' education, Akua, a first generation UEW faculty said:

Growing up in the 1960s was a challenge. After my primary school education, my grandfather made it clear to me that he was not going to enroll me in the secondary school. I remember his exact words to me and I quote, “to me financing you in high school will be a waste of my resources knowing very well that someone will marry you soon.” My grandmother consistently argued with my grandfather that those days were long gone when the women’s role was a mother, wife, and home maker. Reluctantly, my grandfather gave in but warned me that if I failed any of my exams, he would withdraw from school. If it had not been for the intervention of my grandmother, I would not be here today.

Some parents see the preference for a male child’s education as an investment. In other words, when the boy completes school, he gets a job and then there is a financial return to the family. They assert that for the girls they marry and the return on the investment goes to their husbands. Hyde (1993) concludes that given the costs associated with schooling and the lower monetary return of girls’ education versus boys, if a choice is to be made it is usually made in favor of boys.

In contrast, the second generation faculty members had the support of their parents and other family members and thus it was a given that they would pursue a career in life. Also some of the participants had parents who although, may not have been well educated, knew the value of education and were willing to support them in their education.

This section presents the account of the women who had a privileged educational experience growing up. Baaba, a second generation UG administrator said:

Growing up as a woman, I think I had a privileged childhood because my father was a diplomat. My family lived abroad till I was ten years old which was when we moved to Ghana. My father died two years later but he always ingrained in us the value of education. Although, my mother was a single parent for the rest of my life, she sacrificed her widow's mite to ensure that the dreams and aspirations of my father were attained.

Aba, a second generation KNUST faculty member stated:

It is interesting to me when I see people fight because they are women. I had a different experience because my dad gave both males and females equal opportunity. In my family, the women are even more educated. I think that my dad encouraged us a lot. Made sure we went to school. (Faculty, KNUST)

In sharing a similar experience Aseye, another second generation KNUST administrator disclosed,

To me life has been okay. It has not been too difficult. My parents have always paid for my education. I had an easy childhood. I am an only child of my mother but my father has other children. I lived with my parents till I was 12 years old when I went to a boarding school. I always had in mind that it is education that can help one make it, so I have always taken my education seriously. I wanted to start from the top, so I made it a point to attain my master's degree before I began work.

Afia, a second generation female academic at UG in affirming her father's support for her education recalled:

We were all girls in my family. My father always told us, "Be the best you can be, choose careers that you want and so long as I am alive, I will work to support you to become who and whatever you want to become."

The experiences shared by these participants reveal that sometimes the belief systems of parents or family members can potentially impact a girl in the pursuit of her career. In one way or the other, these women have demonstrated that the support of family members plays a significant role in the lives of women. This shift in generational attitude is certainly a step in the right direction but more needs to be done to tackle the root causes of these socio-cultural mental sets. It is important to note that a majority of second generation respondents had supportive parents. It is clear then that sociocultural practices, belief systems, and support of family members impact girls' career paths.

Contributing factors to the Underrepresentation of Women in Senior Faculty and Administrative positions

Having gained an understanding of the early experiences of these women, I will now attempt to shed light on the phenomenon of the underrepresentation of women in senior faculty and administrative positions. During the interviews, there were recurring intriguing themes. These included the multiple roles of women, challenge of career development, and undermining of the woman's role. These recurring themes provide the framework for understanding the underrepresentation of women and to a large extent, are captured in the voices of my participants.

“Managing” multiple roles of women: mother, wife, and worker

One condition of the post colonial theory has been to examine the post colonial woman, particularly, their struggles. Ghanaian women in the academy carry a dual burden. In addition to their academic pursuits, they also have to meet traditional obligations such as childbearing and child rearing, cooking, and other household chores or their supervision. In patriarchal societies such as Ghana, these roles and expectations are inevitable. A much-theorized explanation for women’s underrepresentation in senior faculty and administrative positions relates to women’s responsibilities in the private domain. These women in academe have to keep negotiating their way around social prescriptions. There appears to be a basic contradiction between discourses of the successful academic and the good mother. The mother has to be nurturing and concerned with relationships, while the academic has to be productive and independent. These expectations are equally demanding, time consuming, and require a lot of sacrifices, unfortunately, one at the expense of the other.

Many participants commented on how academic life is incompatible with motherhood and other domestic responsibilities. Rising to the top as an administrator means that one has to work very hard to prove one’s worth at the expense of one’s family. An academic must serve on committees, write and submit publications, and present at conferences in order to be promoted. All these require sacrifices that the women have to make. The roles that these women have to take on are time consuming as well.

In revealing some of their experiences of multiple roles, Aku, one faculty member at KNUST had this to say:

Yes, teaching, managing the home, and taking care of children is not an easy task. If you do it well, it is a full-time job. The early part of my career was cyclical — going to teach, come home, perform household chores, including helping the children with homework, preparing my lesson notes and marking, sleepless nights, waking up to start a new day. There was nothing like rest, let alone, time for socialization. I did not have anyone to help until after six years of marriage then I had support of house help.

Kukuua, another faculty member at UEW intimated that:

I try as much as possible to put my priorities right. Once I come to work, it is all work and when I get home it is whatever is at home that needs to be done. I can do very little at home. When I take work from the office home, I am not able to handle it. I pack everything back to work the following morning so once I come to work, I make sure I concentrate at work, do everything I have to do here; and, when I go home make sure I am doing what I have to as well. That aside, I try as much as possible; I try to get one or two people to help if need be. I do not mind paying for someone do something for me so I will be able to get things done on time and get it done well. It is not easy combining. I do not think it is easy as a career woman at all. We are managing.

The task of combining motherhood with the demands of academic life is a difficult one. Professional married women are expected to work long hours and still be loving wives

and mothers with quality time for their families. The sense that women academics were caught between two greedy institutions, the family and the university (Currie, Thiele & Lewis, 2002) was a recurring theme. Baaba, an administrator at UG noted that:

It is not easy combining so many roles, but we manage. For instance, when we have meetings, especially the academic board meeting, the preparation and the meeting itself is intense. There is much work to do so one has to be here to supervise the staff to make sure that everything is ready to go out by a certain time. Sometimes when I have to work during the weekends, I bring the children here. They bring their homework to do while I also work. In the same way, if I have a meeting that will be late in the evening, I usually pick them up after school. Last week, I had an evening meeting and unfortunately, my husband had an evening appointment. I picked up the children from school and brought them here and there were other colleagues who were also working late. I had a colleague who was in charge of exams so she had to wait until the last exam was over. She therefore helped with the babysitting while I attended the meeting.

It appears that those who rise to the top in the universities are those who can put in long hours. This obviously will be at the expense of one's family, which Ghanaian society frowns upon. The patriarchal society in which most Ghanaian women find themselves expects women to adjust their lives to cope with conflicting employment and family roles. At the end of the day, most women will have to sacrifice their careers for their families; therefore fewer women are found moving up the career ladder. Indeed,

women indeed have difficult choices to make. This is what Kukuua a female academic at UEW had to say:

Well, when I sit down now and I look back I realize that maybe if I had not settled in marriage and had children right from the beginning, I would have completed my Ph.D. long ago but the thought of pursuing further studies was not a priority to me.

In managing the multiple roles of women, an issue that arose was the concept of what Hoschchild (1989) terms cultural cover-up, promoting the idea that it is perfectly feasible to easily combine being a good mother and a competent, productive academic. If women dare to speak of the role conflict they experience, this simply confirms prejudices about the unsuitability of women for organizational life (Gatenby & Humphries, 1999). These women have to make sure that they perform their duties expected of them. Aseye, a female administrator at KNUST recounted that:

For fear of victimization from my colleagues, I always made sure that I never used my pregnancy as an excuse for not meeting my deadlines. If I had to stay late in the office to ensure the completion of a project, I did that. During my pregnancy, sometimes I used to close after 6 pm. During the period of appointments and review of promotions, as an assistant registrar of this college, I had to make sure that all documents were compiled and ready for the committee by 8 am each morning. The issue is that I did not want to give anyone the chance to fault my work. What I hated to hear is the generalizations some people make that pregnant women are lazy.

This assertion is validated by an experience shared by dean of faculty of Educational Studies at UEW in an interview with the university's Gender Newsletter (2006, p.16).

She commented that:

In 1994 when I was appointed as a head of the department, some of the men questioned why a woman was made a head of department. I decided to work hard to prove my worth on the job and also to establish a good working relationship with them. Due to stereotyping and societal expectations about women, one is forced to go the extra mile and to prove one's worth on the job. It is not easy combining academic work with personal responsibilities, especially caring for my children. It can be stressful at times.

Women in academia have to work diligently and to the best of their abilities to avoid any question about their ability. They have to find a way of combining the multiple roles of being a mother, wife, and worker. As mentioned by Malina and Leonard (1994):

Any traces of stress or need for compromise are kept underground and children are rarely given by women as reasons why deadlines are not met or meetings are unattended. Mothers already find themselves already suspect in the academy, their seriousness questioned. (p. 30)

These women strive to be incredibly conscientious and dedicated, sometimes putting pressure on themselves. In managing the demands of work at the expense of the family, Afia a faculty member at UG described her frustration and the sacrifice of a colleague:

The class sizes are huge and the faculty is small. I think last year I supervised 40 undergraduates. You have to grade 700 scripts by the beginning of the next

semester. By the time you are done, the vacation is over. To find the time to do other things is difficult. I know of a woman who, when it is time to grade, has to go away to a beach resort for a week and leave the husband and the kids to take care of themselves.

Adjoa, a KNUST faculty member remarked that:

In the university system, to rise up to the very top involves your teaching, research and service to community. The trend I have observed is that when young female faculty members are starting families, it is so difficult to forge ahead because the average women is confronted with how to effectively combine family life with academia life. If you really want to research and publish, we really have to go the extra mile. It calls for a lot of work and sacrifice on your time.

These accounts indicate that to make it to the top of the administrative or academic ladder, these women have to sacrifice find extra time to publish, do research, or further their education. Holding a pivotal position in the family, they are put in the untenable position of having to frequently a choice between family and career with consequences either way. These findings confirm Bagihole's (2002) assertion that the careers and responsibilities for family, which women are more likely than men to undertake, militate against their career development, in the higher education context which defines experience and merit in way that favor men's career trajectories. In a patriarchal society, such as Ghana, where women are expected to perform their wifely and motherly duties with little or no help from their husbands, it is difficult for women to find the time and commitment to progress in their careers. Kraus (2002), in a study of

women in German universities concludes that the lack of senior women is frequently explained in terms of subjectively justifiable decisions to prioritize family over career.

Impact of Family Dynamics on Career

To be able to progress in Ghana's institutions, one's publications, research, and service to the community are considered. Although obtaining a Ph.D. is not a requirement to be promoted, it is now highly encouraged. However, there are exceptions to this rule for certain positions. For instance, one needs to be a Ph.D. holder to be eligible to apply for the vice chancellor (president) of a university in Ghana. An academic can move from lecturer to senior lecturer based on the number of publications and research undertaken, in addition to teaching. In as much as obtaining a Ph.D. is not required for promotion, it gives one an added advantage. Ten of the faculty members I interviewed have yet to pursue their Ph.D. Although they are strong desire to pursue their Ph.D.'s, certain challenges hinder them from tackling that goal immediately. Their societal responsibilities put a stumbling block in their ability to research and publish. The implication, therefore, is that, they are stuck at their present ranks till they cross that bridge. The family's influence plays a crucial role in the woman's decision to further her studies. In many instances, a married woman, irrespective of her level of education, would want her husband to endorse her decision to pursue her Ph.D. In a conversation with Afia, a faculty member at UG she said that:

To be able to progress in your career, you have to have relationship with a man who will actually give you the space and the room to develop. It is either you are married to someone professional who is not threatened by your degree or they

knew you or you knew them before you decided to take on a demanding profession like a lecturer. In that case, they married you and watched you progress. I can count three women off the top of my head, myself included, who are married to men who have Ph.D. or M.D. so in their own stead, and they do not feel threatened. The crux of the matter is you need to have a supportive husband who is also flexible. He should be willing to allow you to progress in your career that is, attending conferences outside the country, attending committee meetings, and doing research work. If you are fortunate to marry someone who is committed to the idea of supporting your career as a lecturer, then you will definitely have the peace of mind to progress. I think from my perspective, and based on my relationship and what I know of some few others, support from your husband is what makes the difference. You need a family unit that is supportive; otherwise, it will be incredibly difficult to survive in academia. You can become stagnant and all you will do is to teach and have nothing to show on your CV.

In recounting how her husband supported her, Aba, a KNUST faculty member stated:

I was very reluctant to pursue the Ph.D. When I had a baby, I thought that was good excuse not to further my studies. Surprisingly, when I got my admission letter, my husband insisted that I should start preparation for my journey abroad. I thought of leaving my three-month-old baby but he offered to take care of the baby. His policy was time and tide waits for no man. If I deferred the admission to the following year I could lose the scholarship that I was being offered. I started school with much reluctance

but I am thankful to God that my husband was very firm. I left my baby at three months for the United Kingdom to pursue my Ph.D. and that is the support I got from my husband. When women are struggling with these issues, sometimes, I also think there are good stories about men. That is my experience.

The husband's influence can sometimes play a pivotal role in the choice of career a married woman has to make. Ayeyi, an UEW faculty member revealed that she had to change her major so that she would not have to travel outside of the country to do her research. She disclosed:

I applied to pursue a Ph.D. in chemistry at one of our universities but I had to change my major to chemistry education. It was a requirement of chemistry option to travel abroad for about a year to conduct research. I knew it would be difficult to leave my family for a year and more importantly, I knew very well that my husband may not compromise. With chemistry education, you are not required to travel abroad so for the sake of my family; I figured that would be more feasible for me.

In addition, some women who were mothers felt guilty about the fact that they spend little time at home and would rather sacrifice for their children at the expense of their careers. Abena, a faculty member at UG described the experience of a colleague:

I have a friend who was telling me that her daughter was singing a song, "I want to see you my mother" because she hardly ever sees her mother. She sang that

song when she was asked to sing at school. The teacher called her mother and told her. She felt very bad because she does not have time for her daughter.

Kukuua, an UEW academic related how it was difficult to leave her 15-month-old baby to further her studies even though her husband was supportive.

In 1993, after 13 years of teaching after completing my undergrad, I believed it was time to pursue my master's. My husband was very supportive of the idea but as a mother, it was very difficult to leave my fifteen-month-old son. It was one of the most difficult choices I had to make at the time. I could not live with the thought of me not being around my son as he grew up. I said to myself, "Am I being a bad mother?" I gathered courage and traveled to the United Kingdom for a year to pursue my master's degree. The interesting thing is that the year passed by so quickly. I thank God He took care of my son.

In recounting how she had to forego an opportunity to further her studies due to family commitments, Aseye, a KNUST administrator revealed:

I had an opportunity to pursue a two-year master's program in the United States but I had to painfully turn it down. If it was for a shorter period, I would have considered, it but for two years, no way. I had to weigh a lot of options. It was mainly due to family commitments. First of all, I have two sisters who are already in the United States. I am the only one taking care of my mother here at home. I thought of my children too. Their father works in another city about four hours away and only comes home every other weekend. Taking up that opportunity would have been at the expense of my family.

An interview with the university librarian of UEW, which appeared in the UEW Gender Newsletter (2006, p.16.) affirmed the sacrifices women make where children are involved. She stated:

I am convinced that if I were a man, I would have climbed the ladder faster. For instance, there were opportunities to travel abroad for career development training, but I could not benefit from the opportunity because my children were much younger at the time.

A support system is vitally important in helping a women advance in her career. Since marriage and motherhood are stressed as primary goals in life, it gives men the upper hand in certain decisions women have to make. Morley, Kwesiga and Mwaipopo (2005) posit that women's education has always been resisted by patriarchal societies as it can offer women financial independence, empowerment, and the possibility of alternative lifestyles that are threaten to male domination. A mother's decision whether to accept a position, or to pursue further higher education has to be made in consideration of family dynamics. In Ghanaian society, women are embedded in traditional gender roles and are sometimes seen as a threat to men if they attain a status in society by virtue of their careers. As Currie, Thiele, and Harris (2002) rightly put it, the often circuitous pathways of a women's career, her generation, family circumstances, and personal identity shape her experiences in higher education.

Interrupted Careers/Career Breaks

The reproductive role of Ghanaian women cause careers interruptions. Once a woman marries in Ghanaian society, there is an expectation that she will give birth within

the first two years. On the average, an educated woman marries after her bachelor's degree for it is a negative view that waiting until completing further studies reduces a woman's chance of finding a marriage partner, and this causes anxiety to both girls and parents. Thus, women who progress further in their education are caught in child bearing at the same time. Family-related career breaks not only delay academic women starting or progressing their careers but often lead to their movement down the academic ladder. In sharing how it took a long time to complete her masters' degree, Nhyira, a KNUST academic remarked,

I completed my B.Sc. in agriculture and majored in horticulture and then went ahead to do my master's in landscape studies, which I took a long time to complete because I got married along the line and gave birth to my children and came back. I finally completed and got my appointment here as a lecturer after four years in the master's program.

In the same vein, Kukuua, a UEW faculty member revealed:

We all start with the men in entry positions in academia. Women break in their careers to give birth and raise their young children. You tend to slow down with publications and research. The men do not wait for you. By the time you come back, the men are long gone up the academic ladder.

This position resonates well with Ramsden's (1996) study of academic women, which revealed that women tend to have more career interruptions than male academic, a pattern directly related to childbearing and women's greater responsibility for childrearing. This is intensified in Ghanaian society where there is a traditional and

societal expectation for women to marry and give birth to children. If you are a woman and you attain multiple degrees and not settled in marriage, you are labeled “book long” which means you are too immersed in education to be of use. Books are synonymous with education in Ghanaian society. It is unusual for any mature person to remain unmarried because marriage gives a social identity. Spinsters and bachelors are sometimes not respected members of society. Boys and girls grow up knowing that marriage is the ultimate duty and a destiny for girls. In a similar vein, childbearing is important in Ghanaian society regardless of whether one is educated or not. Women have to sacrifice their careers and set aside time to bear and raise children. As the traditional Ghanaian saying goes, “A woman’s glory is her husband and children.” Therefore, to happily fit in the society, a woman must fulfill societal expectations — marry and give birth. There is always a subtle pressure to do so.

The reflections of these women show that to be successful academics, mothers and wives are time consuming; women are burdened with wider social roles and responsibilities which affect their careers. The views express the incredible juggling act required to manage the tasks, commitments, and costs. Currie, Thiele and Lewis (2002) acknowledge that “home and family responsibilities still isn’t evenly shared and that women unlike men have to deal with the conflict between a home or family responsibility and the academic pursuit” (p. 126).

Challenges and Opportunities that Women experience as Faculty and Administrators

This section addresses the third research question of this study: the challenges, opportunities and successes women experience as faculty and administrators. Three

themes emerged, namely, women academics as a minority, mentoring and networks and undermining the authority of women and the perception the woman as a mother. The participant observations conducted in this study will also be discussed in this section.

Women Academics as Minority

The participant observation I undertook during the lunch hours in the staff common room and during the supervision of the examinations, indicated clearly that the men outnumbered the women even in those settings. This observation is a reflection of the bigger picture of male female ratio in higher education in Ghana. There seemed to be a cordial relationship between the male and female faculty and administrators. The patterns of behavior and interactions were professional in nature. In one instance, a male faculty member told a female faculty member to be seated in front of the class whilst he did the walk through of the examination hall. I could clearly observe that faculty members shared jokes. A female faculty member shared that outwardly the male faculty have a cheery disposition especially when there is an outsider. However, inwardly, there seems to be a unified and competitive attitude amongst the men when issues that lead to professional development and advancement are at stake.

Despite the fact that women constitute the majority in a numerical sense in Ghana, women in higher education still remain a relatively silent population when it comes to defining goals, values, and decision-making processes within higher education. The majority of the participants interviewed, especially the women faculty, believed that they are disadvantaged because of their statistical invisibility in their departments.

The statement by Akos, a KNUST faculty member reflects this:

It has not been easy. When you take my unit, I am the only woman and for the department as a whole, there are only 2 women and 19 men. Sometimes you go to meetings and there are positions vacant where you have to compete to be nominated your name will come round and no one for will vote you. You are competing against men and no one will vote for you as the majority are men. It goes against you as a woman.

A woman's opportunity to serve on a committee could sometimes be hindered by her inability to win elections for a position. If there is no representation of women on committees, their voices and interests may not be heard in the right places. Most women find themselves in fragile positions relative to most men in the academy. Itzin and Newman (1995) affirm that usually gendered male power and control go much deeper into the structures of the university, into committees, staffing patterns, and informal lobbying groups. An analogy is made by Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002), who contend that historically, universities have long been recognized as male institutions into which females have been admitted. Women can sometimes be seen as outsiders in the academy and more often than not will have to push their way through to ensure that things are done correctly in academia.

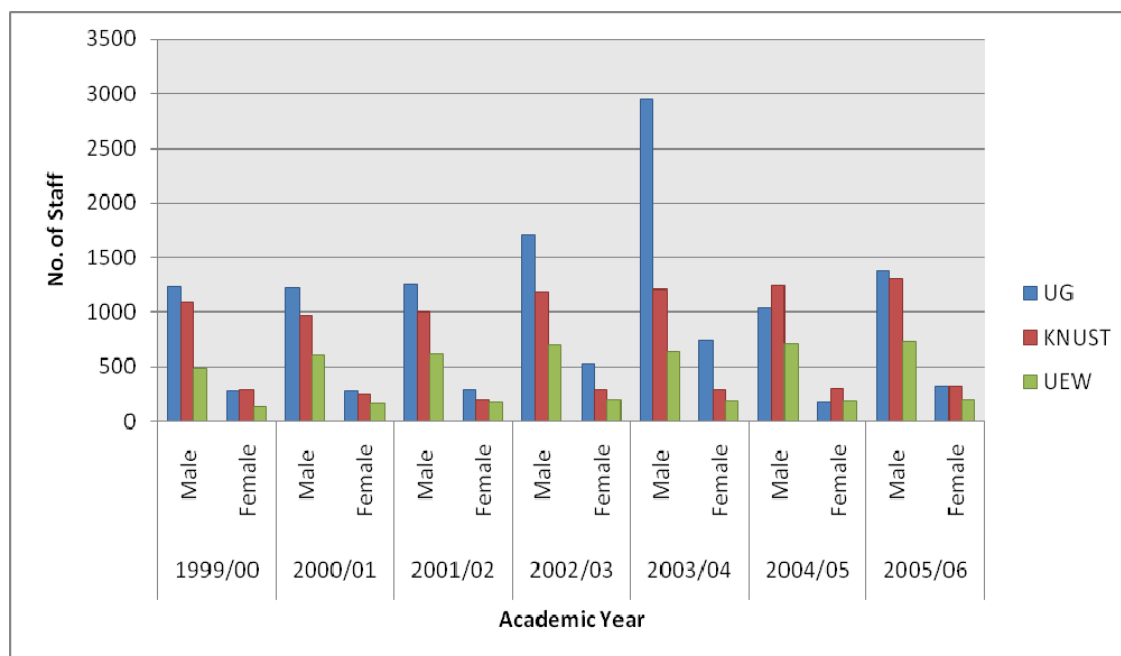
In sharing her challenges, Adjoa, a KNUST faculty member disclosed:

When I joined this department, one of the first noticeable fact was that I was the only woman. Initially, it was a bit intimidating. I wanted to see some more girls admitted to the medical school. I wrote letters and proposals for the admissions committee to reconsider its policies but they were always turned down. I had no

one to support my proposal. I had the opportunity to present my proposal at a board meeting, but because I was the only woman, no one voted on the motion presented. I decided to fight and challenge the powers that be until I was finally appointed to the admissions committee.

Women are disadvantaged by a system where their differing values and interests seem to be of little or no importance. The experiences of these women only confirms Currie, Thiele and Harris's (2000) conception of universities as patriarchal institutions imbued over time with hierarchical structures and male dominance.

A general overview of the statistics of faculty and administrators in the three public universities reveal that men outnumber women in both faculty and administrative positions. Women are a minority in terms of statistical visibility at the university, both as administrators and faculty. Figure 1 depicts the variation in male and female administrators in the three public universities under study. Clearly, there is a low statistical visibility of female administrators. Figure 1 also shows a slight increase in the number of women; however increase cannot be compared to the increase of their male counterparts. Evidently in the graph, there was a spike in 2003/4 academic year but there was no explanation given when I inquired about the unusual increase in administrative staff for that year.



Source: National Council for Tertiary Education, Ghana (2006)

Figure 1: Administrative staff of UG, KNUST and UEW from 1999-2006

Undoubtedly, UG has the highest number of administrative staff. This may be due to the fact that it is Ghana's premier university located in the capital. In addition, there are more women employed in this university as compared with UEW and KNUST. UEW is the youngest university under study. In the three universities, men are numerically more visible than women, which show a clear gender disparity. Thus women are the minority, in terms of statistical visibility.

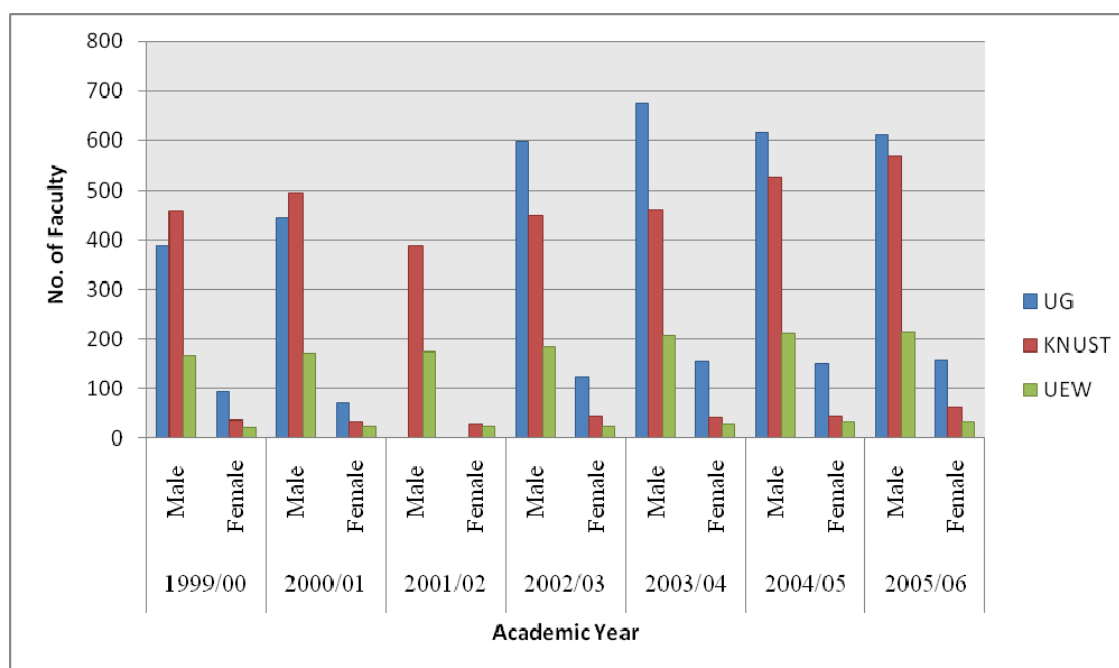
In support of this statistics, the vice chancellor of UEW revealed in an interview published in the institution's Gender Newsletter (2006):

The university recognizes that the participation of women in higher education brings great benefits to the individual, the family and society as a whole;

however, not much progress has been made to improve the visibility of women in various areas of the university, namely staffing, student's enrolment and governance. There are serious gender gaps in enrolment of females in academic programs, especially in science, technology and mathematics. In addition, there are relatively fewer women in academic and administrative positions.

The situation is even worse different for faculty in the three universities under study.

Figure 2 shows that men have a greater numerical strength than women at the faculty level.



Source: National Council for Tertiary Education, Ghana (2006)

Figure 2: Faculty of UG, KNUST and UEW from 1999-2006.

In the academic year 2000/01, the numbers for male and female faculty, respectively, were 446 and 79 for UG, 495 and 33 for UST and 172 and 24. For the year 2005/6, the numbers for male and female, faculty respectively, were 611 and 156 for UG, 569 and 62 for KNUST, and 215 and 33 for UEW. Although there has been an increase in the both male and female faculty, the rate of increase is equal the same for men and women.

The numbers for the women faculty have increased slightly from the 2002/03 academic year to date. The slight improvement in female representation, especially in UEW, is a result of the university's effort to attract experienced female professors from other institutions to support work at the school of graduate studies (UEW, 2006). The figures 1 and 2 confirm that women are in the minority, whether as faculty members or administrators, in the university system as a whole.

The general low numerical strength for women as faculty and administrators could have implications for political visibility, for, the few women who occupy policymaking positions in the university. Academics of high rank, mostly men have often the opportunity to sit on the influential policymaking boards. Prah (2002) argues that the low statistical visibility of a group indicates that they have few power resources. They may not feel confident speaking up at academic board meetings on issues concerning women because there are no women to support them. Groups with high statistical visibility may perceive those with low statistical visibility as weak, unimportant, and lacking in status.

Some of the participants expressed concern about the fact that their male counterparts were not interested in equity issues because most of their wives were not faculty members. They either work outside of the university or work as administrators where they are covered by maternity leave. One of participants indicated that once during a faculty meeting, the issue of maternity leave arose and the men stated that if women advocated maternity leave, they would also push for paternity leave. The issue was not brought up again. Women faculty have to plan their pregnancies in such a way that it they do not conflict with academic calendars. Akos, a KNUST faculty member disclosed:

In this university, there is nothing like maternity leave. You have to arrange it such that if it falls within the semester system, then you should find a way around it because you cannot say that because you have given birth, you cannot come in to teach. There is nothing like that. I remember, two weeks after giving birth, I was called to come back to work because no arrangement had been made for my absence.

Kanter (1977) provides a framework for discussing the difficulties of women who are tokens or are in small minorities. Women experience discrimination problems and isolation, characteristics of minority groups in similar positions. According to Kanter (1977), women who find themselves as minorities are less able to negotiate for their needs and experience performance pressures and marginality. Sometimes women find it difficult to negotiate for their needs. The numerical strength of the male faculty can mean, as one woman notes that when issues are brought to the tables to be discussed and a vote has to be cast to determine a consensus on the issues, if the issue is not in the

interest of the men, and is favor of the women, the motion is voted down. In a similar instance, Mbow (2000) reveals at the University of Dakar there has been continued absence of women in decision-making centers and unions. Thus far, union platforms have ignored women's specific demands. The university's statutes, for instance, make no reference to maternity leave or widow's leave (Mbow, 2000). The experience of being in a minority, coupled with the difficulties of integrating successfully into a male working environment, could influence women's academic perception of themselves and could affect their careers.

Mentoring and Networks

Many of the participants expressed concern about lack of female role models and their inability to form networks. They indicated that to be promoted in the academy one's publications, presentations and research were key. These women report greater isolation than men and are less integrated into the university department which results in low statistical visibility. Afia, a UG faculty member summed it up:

There is an 'old boys' network that the women are not a part of. They meet in the Senior Common Room and different places on campus where you can have a drink. There are some men there where you know to find them every evening. You do not have similar things happening with the women although there are few women who go there, but it is not a tradition. If you are not the one cooking, you have to go home to make sure that the food is cooked and the children get fed. The husbands go to these gatherings because they know that their wives are taking care of the household. It is there that a lot of discussions take place,

professional/career and personal issues. I find out issues from a male friend who goes there and hangs out and I ask him, “How do you know this?” and he will say “we were talking about it last evening.”

This account reveals that discussions about research, publications and other important information go in these informal gatherings which women are not a part of. The role of these meeting in terms of networking and role models cannot be overemphasized. As Bagihole (1995) rightly puts it, success in the academic market place requires a high level of educational attainment, but moving up the system of rewards and status requires knowing colleagues who can provide guidance, support, and advocacy to the apprentice. Because there are few women in the top echelon of the academic ladder, women have little access to female role models and networks, which works to their disadvantage.

Women are frequently not admitted into the all-male informal networks. Nhyira, a KNUST faculty member, in revealed how her male counterparts have sometimes not included women n the networks, remarked:

Women have not had a lot of encouragement from the men because already, they do not even want you there one way or the other. Women, in their bid to do it once or twice, have not had it easy and because other things are demanding their attention and time, we tend to resign. In academia it is either you publish or you perish. Your research work and publications carry a lot of weight that can push you to the top. The men form cliques when it comes to conducting research and publications, shunning their female counterparts. Sometimes, in the whole

department there is just one woman, so it becomes difficult for the person to do any publication or research with a colleague.

As revealed in these accounts, women are faced with difficult responsibilities, but the provision of general support and mentoring can sometimes encourage women to forge ahead. O'Leary and Mitchell (1990) indicate that women have particular difficulties securing access to the colleague system that allocates resources, research support, and opportunities to publish. Being in a large majority, the men are likely to have easy access to support systems, and they team up with women to work. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. This resonates with Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) affirmation who state that the most valued activities in universities are those that reflect male patterns of socialization — individualist rather than collective, competitive rather than cooperative, based on power differentials, rather than egalitarian, and linked to expert authority, rather than collegial support.

Within the academic profession, women suffer from a lack of role models and informal support systems, both of which play a major role in enhancing reputations and status and inducting academics into the reward system. A small minority of women in the study had turned to women-friendly solutions and called for positive action for women academics. These women are beginning to develop a new informal support system of their own. In relating to how her relationship with a senior female faculty member helped her secure a publication in a journal, this was what Afia, a UG faculty member explained:

I thought of working with the female faculty in African Studies. Initially, I visited them informally in their offices and had a chat with them. In doing so, I

developed a working relationship with the faculty member. One of the associate professors put me in contact with the University of Maryland where they were doing a book project on the meaning of work among women of color. This project clearly fit my research interests. If it had not been for her, I would not have known that project existed. She put me in contact with that and we ended up going to Italy two years ago on this Ford Foundation grant. I had the opportunity to write a book chapter. When we got to Delagio, Italy, I met another woman who was writing another book on globalization and its effect on women, and she also asked me to write another chapter. So I have done two publications as a result of knowing this female associate professor who put me into contact with the right people.

The importance of networking cannot be overemphasized. Women with professional information can help others network by introducing them to colleagues and peers within the same discipline, opening up opportunities for advancement. Aseye, a KNUST administrator revealed:

There was a deputy registrar who just retired and she was very supportive. She tried to find conferences for the few women in the system to attend. She really helped me in my professional development. Sometimes, knowing the right people can give you certain advantages.

Most of these women acknowledged that academic women in the universities have not achieved either professional or organizational authority to the same extent as men. Bagihole (2002) affirms that network connections are crucial ingredients for

professional career success and assessed decisions about promotions. They bring mutual career benefits, information exchange, contacts for research resources, career planning, professional support and encouragement, and connections to influential people.

In relation to mentoring, some of the female faculty members noted that they mentor some of their students. Although there is no formal mentoring system, they have decided to groom more students, especially women. Ayeyi, an UEW faculty member said:

I have taken it upon myself to mentor a female student who has joined our department. I am now sure that I have done a good work I have pushed her to write and when she has written, I have taken a look at it and given her comments. Hopefully, she can submit it for publication.

Akos, another KNUST faculty member recounted:

Apart from imparting academic knowledge to these students, we are there to be a guide and mentor them in all other areas, but the large number of students takes away the rapport and relationship we need to build with the students. I have tried to mentor at least two of my students. I have helped them choose the right career paths and have encouraged them to pursue their master's degrees. We meet about once a month. I would have wished to mentor more students but I cannot commit to the time.

Ramsden (1996) observes that collegial networks are crucial in higher education, acting as means of transmitting, reproducing and reinforcing standards for professional behavior and socialization. These women are trying their best to find mentors and protégés. Some have been successful; others have not. In either case, they are faced with

the lack of general availability of networks accessible to women or with finding the time to commit to mentoring their students. Mentoring and networking can still be a valuable resource to women. As Bagihole (1994), states women with organization influence can provide guidance, consultation, advice, and advocacy for navigating the institution.

Perception of the Woman as a Mother

Participants underscored that the perception of the woman as a mother is translated to the workplace. Once you are a woman, you are automatically a mother as most interviews revealed. In combating their dual roles as mother and worker, the woman also has to struggle with her identity as a mother, regardless of whether she is a faculty member or an administrator, regardless of whether she has given birth or not. In the participant observation I undertook, I heard one male faculty member calling a female faculty member ‘Leslie maame’ which literally means Leslie’s mother, in the presence of some students. This female faculty member was offended and when she confronted the male faculty member about the statement and all he could say was, “but are you not the mother of Leslie?” Individuals have names and they are identified by their names. Why should a woman be identified only in reference to her child? It is the pervasive idea that a woman’s status is determined first as a mother that permits such behaviors. Colleagues in the academe are expected to accord each other some level of professional respect. If male faculty members are not good role models, the students are likely to follow suit. This observation validates the response given by Afia, one of faculty members of UG. Most of the participants revealed how they have to live their identities as mother.

In recounting her frustration, Afia explained:

You have the situation where all the students call you mum; even the ones who are much older than you refer you mum and they spell it “mum.” Usually when someone refers to me as mother, I would say that I am not your mother and I do not want to be your mother. My son is only five months old. Thank you. Even before I had a child or became a mother, I was being referred to as mum.

Nhyira, A KNUST faculty member disclosed:

What I do not understand is that when the students send you an e-mail for a favor you did for them, for instance, if you write a letter of reference, they write, “Thank you mum.” When they send e-mails to the male faculty, they do not write “Thank you, Dad. That becomes thank you, “Doc” or “Prof” but when you are female your ‘Dr.’ title is subdued under you mother title.

The sociocultural role of a woman transcends into her workplace. This is embodied in the account of these women. Women are responsible for childbearing and rearing; thus, almost every woman is called a mother. Currie, Thiele and Lewis (2002) make a salient argument in stating that a hallmark principle of male culture is the complete failure to connect fathers with children. In stressing this point, Abena a UG female academic noted:

You go to chair a seminar and you are introduced as a wife and mother before they even mention your academic qualifications and your professional experience. What baffles my mind is that you are chosen to chair the functions because of your academic qualifications and experience, not your role as a mother or wife.

When the male counterparts are introduced, their roles as husbands and fathers are silent.

There is ample evidence from these accounts that married men do not hold the same status as women. The image of the woman as a mother and wife transcends her duty as an academic or administrator. Women have to work hard to survive in the university and it is unfair if not irrelevant, to refer to their reproductive roles. As Selorm an UEW Administrator puts it, “The image of the woman as a mother is actually ingrained in their minds. You just have to develop a thick skin, I guess.”

Undermining Women’s Ability/Authority

A majority of the study participants attested to the fact that their male colleagues undermined their authority and abilities. These women believed that, some of the men felt threatened by a woman’s ability or felt that they had to be in control. In addition to dealing with male faculty members on issues of control, a few of the faculty members revealed that they sometimes have problems with male students who do not accept their status or authority as academics. The men’s attitude of is synonymous with the patriarchal nature of Ghanaian society and the university as a whole. Afia, a UG faculty member gave an account of her experience:

During a student’s thesis proposal, I asked him to make a lot of changes because his work was simply unacceptable. It was clear that he had prepared his work and was not prepared to change it. Two weeks later, a colleague saw me and said that the student had reported me to another colleague and complained that I had disgraced him. That colleague came to me for verification. I just could not believe

it. I told him that you were being very sexist. The student was being ridiculous.

The only reason the student had a problem with the constructive criticism I gave him was that I am a female and the student happened to be a district chief executive. He just could not countenance a woman criticizing a male authority.

The way I see it, if a student has a male faculty member as a friend who he can report me to, then he should have shown his proposal to him before coming to the defense to disgrace himself. One does not expect to present a shoddy work and expect us to approve and when we don't, the student goes to report us to another faculty member. I have had situations where students will come to me and complain about other faculty members and I just tell them to do as they are told. I try not to undermine the authority of my male colleagues and therefore I do not see why they should undermine mine. Now the students claim I am an "iron lady."

Framed in her role as a nurturing woman, any contrary action on her part marks her as being tough. Undermining a female faculty's decision or authority perpetuates the assumption that the male faculty member has the final word. As stated earlier, this reflects the conception of universities as patriarchal institutions imbued over time with structures of hierarchy and male dominance (Currie, Thiele & Harris, 2002). In relationship to dominance, some of the men feel they must always have to be in control and tend to struggle with the idea that a woman is in control.

Aba, a KNUST faculty member disclosed:

Because of my upbringing in a home where male and females are treated equally, I am suppressed as a woman. I am frank and honest with my statements. The men in my department find it very difficult to come to terms with that. When I was an examination officer, I worked strictly according to the rules. Exams start at 8.30 am so as a faculty member you have to be there at least 10 minutes before. I realized that some faculty members were not time sensitive in the least. When I queried them, the men, especially, could not accept the fact a woman was addressing their tardiness. The issue is that the men considered me as a woman who has to be submissive to a man and not an examination officer. I made it clear to them that it was my duty to ensure that faculty members were punctual to administer the examination, period! After my term as exam officer ended, the faculty, who are men, for the most part, connived to relieve me of the position. Surprisingly, when the new examination officer was appointed, almost every one wished I was still the examination officer. Every single blessed day, students started their exams late because the faculty member was late in bringing their examination papers.

The experiences shared by these women confirm Currie, Thiele and Harris's (2002) assertion that the university is "gendered." According to these authors, to say that an organization is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control are patterned between male and female. Aseye, a KNUST administrator vented her frustration on how her abilities are underestimated:

Some men have the perception that I am not as efficient as the male counterpart. When I came here, I realized that with the provost especially, that was his thinking. There were certain things which I felt were in my domain and I should be doing. He seems to find it more comfortable working with the accountant who is a male.

The challenge these women faced was dealing with male dominance. Some of the women said they always felt that they had to be in control as the men were. The women faculty and administrators said that the men felt threatened by the women. Akos, a KNUST faculty remarked:

The men are threatened by the women, and for some of the men, by their by their cultural perspective — the woman must always be in the background and be submissive. Sincerely, the women in the department do work hard and excel, and I think the men cannot take it. They put impediments in our way here and there. When opportunities arise for conference presentations, they discretely work behind closed doors without informing us.

Ayeyi, another UEW faculty member reiterated:

Let me start with my department. There are a lot of women here in my department but the problem is that the men always think that the women should be pushed to the back and they should always be on top. Surprisingly, the women end up doing the job that the men are supposed to do and we always sit back and laugh at them. We know they are very loud, but they are never able to deliver as much as the

women do. At the faculty level we make up a very few percentage. I am talking in terms of the women.

One would expect that men and women would work hand- in-hand to achieve organizational goals, but societal expectations are transferred to the workplace by the men. It is evident that the gendering of organizations draws from wider social norms concerning the proper relations between men and women. The men always work hard to make it the top, leaving the women behind to make it on their own. In the competitive nature of the university, it is the “survival of the fittest;” scholars are competing against each other in a culture that tends to benefit men over women. This competitive atmosphere reduces the sense of community within institutions and is likely to emphasize those aspects of the male culture that are seen as most hostile in women (Currie & Newson, 1998).

Salary and Maternity Leave

Benefits and policies are important for any worker in an organization. The views of the participants expressed here show a mixed perception of maternity leave policy offered by the university. Overall, the participants revealed that in terms of remuneration, all faculty and staff of the same rank receive equal salaries. The salaries are based on rank and not on gender. However, it was only in terms of salary that the women really felt that they were on par with their male counterparts. Adjoa, a KNUST faculty member remarked that, “all staff and faculty members earn the same salary if we are on the same rank or position. That is one good thing. We all enjoy the same salary.”

The salary model in Ghanaian universities has some merits in the sense that salary is not differentiated in terms of gender. On the contrary, research indicates that in most developed countries, especially in the United States, there is a salary differential in terms of sex. In America, sex stratification is particularly apparent in the labor force. In addition, when examining the salaries of those in higher education, it is a well established fact that women faculty earn less than their male counterparts (Petrzelka, 2005).

There were however mixed views on the issue of maternity leave and opportunities for conference participation. In all three universities, the female faculty members expressed concern that there was no provision for maternity leave. However, the female administrators indicated that there was a provision for maternity leave in their conditions of service. In recounting how supportive the university was during her postnatal period, Aseye, a KNUST administrator said that:

I have a six- month-old baby so I leave work at 1 pm. In the conditions of service, you are allowed three months of maternity leave and when you resume work, you are legally mandated to close from work at 1 pm for six months. During this period you will still be paid your full salary.

Discussions with these women revealed that while there is a clear policy on maternity leave for administrators, none existed for faculty members and each woman had to make her own personal arrangements. Akos, a KNUST faculty member expressed her view on the issue of maternity leave:

The administrative staff has personal and maternity leave. However, no provisions have been made for faculty members. So, as a faculty member, if you

give birth while school is in session, you have to make your own internal arrangements, such as finding a colleague take over your classes. If you cannot find anyone, then you will have to come and teach.

The issue of different provisions for maternity for women in different work categories raises some concerns. It reflects the ambivalent views about motherhood in academia. The absence of a provision for maternity leave for women faculty members could imply that the academy is no place to meddle with motherhood affairs, and therefore it promotes a culture of silencing women's status as mothers. To the extent that a woman has to make their own arrangements to have a course taught if she were to give birth during the semester raises questions about the academe's support for mothers. As a working mother, one must find a way to survive in the institution. Leonard and Malina (1994) affirm that mothers already find themselves suspect in the academy, with their seriousness questioned, and the feel compelled to exclude references in the workplace to their personal lives.

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in the United States was designed to “support families in their efforts to strike a workable balance between the competing demands of the workplace and the home” (Commission on Family and Medical Leave, 1996, p.xii). The FMLA requires institutions to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave (without jeopardizing one's jobs) for the birth of a child. A study conducted by Wolf-Wendel and Ward (2007) on *Work/Family Policy Perspectives from Different Institutional Types* revealed that FMLA is universally mentioned as the primary law that allows for maternity leave in most universities in the United States.

Despite their individual struggles, Ghanaian women make many compromises to survive in the academic workplace. Afia, a UG faculty member declared that she took maternity leave despite the fact there was no clear policy because she believed it was her right to do so:

Well, technically there is no maternity leave for faculty members in this university. A cursory look of the conditions of service handbook reveals an absence of a policy on maternity leave. Irrespective of that, this is a public university so that we are subject to the laws that govern the land, and this law makes provision for maternity leave. When I was due for maternity leave, I just submitted a letter from my doctor and I was granted eight weeks of maternity leave. If you do not know your right, you will always be disadvantaged by the system.

It is very clear from this account that women faculty have to negotiate their own solutions to maternity-related needs. Women faculty have two options — either to plan their pregnancies so that they give birth during vacations, or devise a plan for how to cover classes during their absences. It is a highly problematic situation for women to decide to compromise and plan their pregnancies so that births occur during breaks in order to meet the work expectations of the institution. Natural forces may not always be cooperative. The crux of the issue is becoming pregnant is a reality with which the institution has to deal with. Leonard and Malina (1994) argue that the time has come for academic women to stop colluding with a male system through their silence and compromising by finding individual solutions.

Written and Unwritten Policies Adopted by the Universities that Influence

Gender Equity

This section addresses the fourth research question. The three themes that emerged were: establishment of institutional support, access to higher education for females, and provision of funds/scholarships.

Establishment of Institutional Support

Gender issues are gradually gaining credibility in the Ghanaian society. Until recently, efforts to bring gender issues into public awareness were met with significant resistance by the patriarchal Ghanaian society. The absence of a formidable support structure in place to mitigate against the creation of gender awareness in all spheres of the Ghanaian society. University level institutions in Ghana joined in this effort, which was long overdue. Until March 2007, none of the universities had an established unit or department to deal with gender issues. Although there have always been a handful of women teaching and working at Ghana's public universities, the notion of a professoriate invoked images of faculty members and senior administrators who are typically men. Almost all the public universities in Ghana are committed in one way or the other to diversify faculty ranks, in particular, to include more women. The UG and the UEW in have established institutional departments to fully support issues of gender and to encourage more women to work as faculty and administrators.

To create a more formalized support structure in advancing gender issues, the UG, Ghana's premier university, instituted the Center for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA) in March 2006. CEGENSA was strategically set up in March, the month set

aside to celebrate women. The first of its kind in Ghanaian institutions of higher learning, CEGENSA signals the institutionalization of gender perspectives and the beginnings of activism on gender issues from the margins to the center. CEGENSA, instituted under the office of the executive head of the UG was formed to “initiate, advise, monitor, evaluate, organize and disseminate information on gender” (University of Ghana Campus Update, October 2006, p.17). The ultimate aim of CEGENSA is to complement the efforts of the Ghanaian populace on gender issues from policy to formulation. In a speech given by acting vice chancellor of UG, Professor C. N. B. Tagoe, which took place at the inauguration of the CEGENSA, he emphasized:

Although women’s studies and more recently men’s studies have both grown as respectable academic disciplines, there still remains a great deal of ignorance ambiguity, ambivalence and even downright hostility to the concept and study of gender in our context. As a university we are committed to ensuring that this cloud over our understanding is clearly lifted. The issue of gender was among the key thrusts of the strategic plan of the University of Ghana. The university plans among other things to remove male-female disparities on the academic and faculty boards and to create a mentoring system to ensure that equity in governance and management ratio of male–female lecturers and professors.”

(University of Ghana Campus Update, October 2006, pp. 17-18)

The establishment of CEGENSA signifies a major step towards the UG commitment to promote issues of gender in the university community. All the participants were

appreciative of the fact that the UG had finally set up a center to deal with issues of gender. Nneka, an administrator of UG revealed how pleased she was that the university had finally formalized its commitment to gender issues through the institution of CEGENSA:

Prior to the establishment of the CEGENSA there was nothing formal in this university to advance gender issues. It was the female senior administrators and faculty who strongly advocated on our behalf. We had a Pro-Vice Chancellor who was a woman and was very instrumental in bringing up issues that prevented women from making progress to the university's administration. An issue I would really want CEGENSA to deal with is the provision of institutional support for young working mothers in this university. Hopefully with the institution of CEGENSA, gender issues will become a priority in the university's strategic plan.

In endorsing the support of the universities commitment in the establishment, Abena, another UG faculty member intimated:

I consider CEGENSA as the gateway to promoting gender issues in this university. It is time for some of the members in this community to be educated about embracing issues of gender. We need to be a part of the global reforms where issues of gender should be a priority, especially in an institution of higher learning.

CEGENSA has become the mouthpiece for gender issues and also has set the pace in higher education in Ghana for creating an empowering and equitable working

environment. With growing need for addressing gender issues in a global world, it is important for the premier university in Ghana to take the lead in instituting a formal support system. CEGENSA has eight core functions:

- developing mentoring programs for junior female faculty and students;
- research and development;
- professional counseling;
- policy planning;
- curriculum development;
- preventing sexual assault;
- creating outreach and extension work;and
- gender advocacy. (CEGENSA, 2006)

Complementing CEGENSA, female faculty and administrators could benefit from the mentoring program of the center. Afia, a UG faculty member who was very instrumental in the establishment of CEGENSA, noted that the mentoring program for faculty and students would guide them in writing for publications, putting grant proposals, and providing other sustained formal and informal interactions to build their confidence and provide avenues for growth in the academy. She said:

I was part of the process in setting up CEGENSA. We are gradually setting up a mentoring scheme where young female faculty members will be paired with their senior counterparts, based on their interests, experiences, and personal circumstances. The institution of a formal mentoring system will compensate for the lack of general availability of networks accessible to women in this university.

I benefited from the mentoring system while I was in grad school. I was able to do consultancy work with one of the professors while I was doing my field work and this really boosted my confidence in research work.

As part of the institution's effort to support gender issues, UEW has also established a Gender Unit. Initially, it was known as a Gender Desk. UEW has taken a different approach in promoting gender issues. A conversation with the coordinator of the Gender Unit revealed that although various attempts have been made since 2002 to promote gender issues, lack of support structures worked against its success. Finally in 2005, the Gender Unit developed a different approach in promoting gender issues. The Gender Unit was set up to spearhead research intervention and policy studies on gender issues.

According to the coordinator of the Gender Unit, the university community has been educated through flyers and a study to test people's knowledge of gender issues. The unit's first newsletter was released in April 2005 to inform the academic community about the university's commitment to gender issues through the institution of the Gender Unit. A second newsletter was published in 2006, summarizing the findings on general knowledge of gender issues. Naana, the coordinator of the Gender Unit who is also an administrator explained that:

A gender action team was set up by the Vice Chancellor in 2004 to promote gender issues at UEW. As part of our action plan, we produced flyers that distinguished between sex and gender. The second flyer was about gender mainstreaming, and the third was on statistics on enrollment for students and for faculty, 1996 to 2006. In July 2004, with financial support from

the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the university commissioned a baseline study which was aimed at identifying equity issues, dialoguing with the university community on key issues so as to identify the way forward.

The Gender Unit has proved useful to the members of the university community. It has created awareness of gender issues that exist in the community. The summary of the findings of the study conducted by the Gender Action team enhanced people's knowledge and encouraged them to join in the crusade to promote issues of gender in the university (Gender Newsletter, 2006).

In endorsing the work of the Gender Unit in promoting gender issues, Selorm, an administrator of UEW recounted:

Given the opportunity, I would like to see changes in our human resources with a lot more women joining in the faculty and participating in more key decision-making processes. In this regard, I think that the Gender Unit is of relevance to this university. Though the environment is male dominated, the few women in the system have proved themselves worthy of their offices. The unit should step up its publication of flyers and newsletters, which I have found useful and believe will be of much help to several males and females in the university.

In expressing satisfaction in the work of the Gender Unit, the Vice Chancellor of UEW remarked in the foreword to the second edition, (April, 2006) of the Gender Newsletter:

Today, we celebrate another milestone in our efforts to sensitize the university community on gender equity issues. The survey study revealed very interesting findings. It gave voice to the silent people who have bottled up their discontent

about gender inequality, people whose voices have for a long time been ignored in the university. We have seen some improvement in the level of female academic and administrative staff. We remain resolved to pursue our affirmative action to increase female presence into all sectors of the university. Departments continue to be challenged to recruit more females. We shall continue to explore innovative strategies to address this issue. (p. 2)

These accounts are indicative of the difference the formal institution of the gender unit can make in supporting a worthy cause. The support of the university through establishment such units will go a long way to create knowledge, advocate policies, and evaluate interventions designed to reshape gender relations so as to ensure equity. Fullan (2001) contends that “real change represents a serious personal and collective experience characterized by ambivalence and certainty and if the change works out it can result in a sense of mastery, accomplishment and professional growth” (p.32).

Although UG and UEW have made strides in the establishment of support systems for their institutions, the same cannot be said for KNUST. At KNUST an effort was made to form a committee to deal with gender issues, but the committee was unable to commit to its vision. KNUST does not have any formalized institutional structure to support gender issues. The following collage of comments from several respondents reflects their understandings of a formal support system at KNUST:

I can say very little in this case; personally I have not seen or heard about anything.... Generally I am not aware of any support system that the university has; I think before the former vice chancellor left there was a meeting on gender

issues for this university which I attended, however for some reason the group did not survive; I do not think there is one; I am not sure.

Despite the myriad of uncertainties expressed about the absence of an institutional unit devoted to gender issues, the participants made mention of personal support that senior female faculty and administrators offer to younger women. This support is crucial, but institutional support from the university would make a critical difference. In commending the actions of a senior female member who had retired, Aku, a KNUST faculty member remarked:

The former university registrar was a woman who was very supportive.

She worked hard at promoting women in this university by encouraging us to attend conferences and work on our professional development.

She was so committed to supporting women that she could go to the extent of searching for conferences for the few women in the system to attend.

Ama, a KNUST administrator member revealed

Recently, a new female dean was appointed in my college. She is very conscious about boosting the image of women at this university. She makes women aware of the various committees and opportunities available for them to ensure their participation. She is very pro-active and I am impressed with that.

The assertions made by these women reinforce the importance of mentoring and networks. Although KNUST does not have an institutional unit to support gender issues, it is obvious that a good deal of informal networking among women in academia does occur. As Bagihole (1994) argues, women with professional information can help others

to network by introducing them to colleagues and peers within the discipline. “Women with organizational influence can provide guidance, consultation, advice and advocacy for navigating the institution” (p. 25).

In discussing the informal efforts made by the individual women faculty and administrators, women faculty members in the Department of Agriculture at KNUST have teamed up with an external agency, the Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE), to encourage and promote girls’ education and interest in the sciences. In addition, FAWE also provides funds for women in academia to conduct research. FAWE's mission is to work, together with its partners, to create positive societal attitudes, policies, and practices that promote equity for girls in terms of access, retention, performance, and educational quality, through influencing the transformation of educational systems in Africa (Federation for African Women Educationists, 2006). In revealing the partnership between KNUST and FAWE, Nyhira, a KNUST faculty member at the Department of Agriculture disclosed,

FAWE offered financial support for women in academia to write proposals. It was open to all the other universities. A group of women in the department teamed up and wrote a proposal for a research grant from FAWE and fortunately it was considered. FAWE is really committed to encouraging more women to professionally develop especially in the sciences so as to encourage more girls to be interested in the discipline. I believe a long term goal is to have mentors for these girls.

Access to Higher Education for Females

Increasing women's participation in higher education necessitates access to all levels of education. In Ghana, the creation of gender awareness in education was initiated with priority given to basic education. The Education Act of 1961 emphasized the education of all children. Successive governments have developed numerous policies to provide basic education for all children (Ministry of Education, 2000). In 1986, the government of Ghana embarked upon educational reform, which targeted equitable male/female participation at all levels of education and the abolition of gender-streamed curriculum at the basic level. When Ghana entered into constitutional rule, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana embarked on providing free, compulsory, universal basic education (fCUBE) for all children. An obstacle to government agenda of ensuring gender equity in education was that not much attention was paid to tertiary education. This reflected in the gender gap which becomes progressively wider from basic education to university level (see Table 1). In 2001, the government of Ghana established the Ministry of Girl Child Education to promote a national campaign for girls' education in Ghana. The appointment of a minister for Girls' Education reinforces the government's commitment to promote this critical component of ongoing educational reforms.

Education is not only a decisive factor but also a relevant variable that changes a woman's life. FAWE (2003) reports that it is now well documented that educating girls and women is the single most important investment yielding maximum returns for development. The infant mortality rates decrease, children have a higher probability obtaining a sound education, and, most importantly, women become income generators,

which increase the economic power base of the family. One can safely conclude that there is no doubt that education is one of the most important investments enhancing the status of women in society. The Millennium Task Force Project Report (2005) reveals that whereas education provides women with the opportunity to work and contribute equally to the formal sector, higher levels of education in particular also offers women the opportunity to become informed about good health practices.

If girls' education is crucial and has a ripple effect on society, then girls' access to education has to be a priority. The participants in this study were concerned that most females are not able to make the required grade point for admission to the university and are therefore denied admission. In order to increase the visibility of women in the academy, it is important to have more females enrolled in higher education so as to work from this base. Although the government of Ghana has established the Ministry of Girl Child Education to promote girl's education in the primary, middle, and high school, females have to compete with males for admission into the university. Adjoa, a KNUST faculty member noted:

What baffles my mind is the crusade for promoting girls' education. One would expect that girls will be considered in the admission process if they do not make the required aggregate. Admission in my department of example is still competitive. It is strictly based on aggregate. Naturally the boys come in with high aggregate of six and above. I have told the "powers that be" that they should stop advocating girls' education because they are not making any allowances for them.

Aba, a KNUST faculty member shared a similar experience:

In fact I lobby for girls to be admitted into this department. On few occasions, I have literally petitioned with higher authorities to at least give some of these girls a chance. For once we admitted some girls who did not make the required aggregate of eight. Interestingly, the girls whom we admitted with aggregate 11 and 12 did exceptionally well and many of them graduated with first-class honors and second class upper.

The accounts reveal that women are not being given any concessions when it comes to the admission processes. KNUST is located in the Ashanti Region in Ghana where cultural and traditional practices are rife so girls lag behind in education. A variety of factors, including the emphasis on domestic chores, generalized conditions of poverty, and the overarching influence of patriarchy, combined to make access and entrance to academic institutions a challenge for most of these girls.

Although all the universities have indicated their commitment to increase gender equality in admissions, a conscientious effort needs to be made to do so. The vice chancellor of UEW, in the foreword of the Gender Newsletter acknowledged this challenge by stating that “we acknowledge that there is more work to be done for the University to reach 50:50 ratio. We remain resolved to pursue our affirmative action to increase female presence in all sectors of the university” (p. 2). There are almost twice as many male students (7,992) as there are females (4,459) at UEW. At the 2007 matriculation ceremony of first year students, the vice chancellor of KNUST, Professor K.K. Adarkwa, expressed concern about the low enrollment of females. 1,991 females

were admitted as opposed 4,876 males were admitted (KNUST, 2007). The current university-wide female participation rate is about 23% but by 2015, the university hopes to increase this rate to about 40%. The University of Ghana has made encouraging progress. In 2005, 60.56% of males and 39.44% of females were enrolled. There was a slight improvement for female enrollment in the 2006 academic year: 59.43% of males were enrolled while 40.57% females were enrolled (University of Ghana, 2006). Although there is the hope that parity in female enrollment will be achieved in the near future, much needs to be done at the primary and secondary levels to ensure access to higher education.

KNUST has spearheaded the initiative to work with middle and high schools to ensure girls have access to higher education. The Department of Agriculture at KNUST and FAWE are working on a project to encourage more girls to pursue science-based courses at the university level. In a discussion with Nhyira, a KNUST faculty member, she said that:

The Department of Agriculture has agreed to work collaboratively with FAWE to encourage female students in middle and high school to opt for science-based courses. For this project, we, the female faculty in the Agriculture Department, will work with these girls in middle and high school. The aim is to continually provide workshops for these girls to enhance their interest in the sciences and have our students in the Department of Agriculture work with these students to help them in their science classes. We will keep monitoring their progress through high

school till they reach the university. Our strategic plan, with the support of FAWE, is to write a proposal to the university to give some admission concessions for these girls who will enroll in the sciences. We have organized a series of workshops and had other interactions with the girls participating in the project, and the general view is that their perception of math and science is gradually improving. I wish this project could be extended to other departments in this university, and then we could really see the impact. Girls' education is really lagging behind and I think all hands should be on deck to help salvage the situation.

Some policies instituted by universities do not favor access to education for females. The Gender Newsletter (2006) published by UEW revealed that to be eligible to be enrolled as a mature student (a nontraditional student) one has to be 30 years or older. This age is not favorable to females as in Ghana, it is a common practice for women to marry at an early age. Thus, if a woman married at the age of 24 and wanted to enroll as a mature student at UEW, she would have to wait for six years to enroll as a matured student. Males tend to marry later on in life and are more likely to follow the traditional pattern of pursuing education, from high school to university. A more flexible age limit for female applicants would be beneficial.

Provision of Fund and Scholarships

Higher education in Ghana is largely funded by the government. In recent times, however, government funds have been insufficient to meet the increased enrollments, inadequate resources, and the rise in per student cost of providing higher education. As

pressure on the demand for university education mounts and financial resources continue to dwindle, quality is likely to be compromised. Universities in Ghana have pro-actively engaged in diversifying their financial resources. Among the three universities under study, UEW, in particular, has the most established form of institutional financial support for females.

In its commitment to promote female participation in higher education, the 2003 - 2008 Corporate Strategic Plan of UEW states as part of its objective, “to attract, recruit and retain highly qualified and skilled young lecturers, professors and administrative staff, especially female, as well as experienced and reputable academics” (p.11). To achieve this objective, the UEW sought to provide attractive conditions for female staff and to organize women-only workshops on research and leadership skills. In a bid to promote gender equity in UEW, special efforts were made to find females who were qualified to pursue graduate programs with the aim of “cultivating” these women to become faculty members. With the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, 30 females have so far benefited from this financial support. Four of these women have since completed their studies and have joined the faculty of UEW. Mansa, one UEW faculty member who benefited disclosed:

The UEW/Carnegie Scholarship was a strong determining factor that encouraged me to enroll in the M.Phil program. My family asked me not to further my studies due to financial constraints. Through the Carnegie scholarship, I was able to buy a laptop and my books. I wish to commend Carnegie for the work they are doing. I hope that a lot of women will take

advantage of this package. I am proud to say that I have been appointed as a Lecturer and I could not have done this without the Carnegie scholarship.

Adom, another UEW faculty member commented:

When I gained admission to pursue a postgraduate program, I nearly deferred the program because the primary school I was teaching at refused to give me study leave with pay. Fortunately, Carnegie came to my rescue and it was indeed handy. Through the Carnegie support, I had the opportunity to visit Stellenborch University in South Africa as well as the Lagos State University. We were introduced to some of the most modern software for analyzing speech. I was a primary school teacher and now I am a lecturer at the university, thanks to Carnegie.

The Carnegie Foundation is an excellent example of UEW's efforts to seek external funding. The UEW participants in this study commended their university for seeking external funding to help promote female participation in higher education.

In further summarizing the benefits of the foundation, Kukuua a faculty member of UEW noted,

Carnegie Foundation assisted us to draw our strategic plan and gave some funds to support postgraduate studies for females. Additionally, they gave females the opportunity to purchase laptops and pay in installments. Most of the faculty members and administrators took advantage of this. Most of our departments have one computer located at a central location, which was not

feasible for the faculty members. Carnegie also has \$1,000 research funds for females. You have to write a proposal and if it is accepted, you are awarded the money. I have conducted two different research projects and I received two installments of \$1000 each. The Carnegies funds have helped UEW immensely in promoting gender issues. Although we still have a long way to go, I believe that we are headed towards the right direction.

Financial constraints are crucial impediments set back for most faculty members and students in Ghana's higher educational system. The salary for most university faculty members is appalling considering the economic hardships. On the average, a university lecturer (assistant professor) receives seven million cedis a month which is equivalent to \$700. Thus, without the provision of some form of travel or research grant to conduct research or attend a conference, or even a scholarship to pursue to further studies, it is virtually impossible for the average Ghanaian faculty member to develop professionally on his or her own. Although, as noted earlier, there are no disparities in salary in terms of gender male faculty members have to resources, grants and publications due to their access to networks and mentors; and this is where females are at a disadvantage. Without the provision of financial support for women to pursue graduate studies, most simply give up. This challenge, coupled with the societal expectation for a woman to marry, puts a dire strain on women's progression into higher education.

A major landmark in the history of education in Ghana was the establishment in 2000 of an Education Trust Fund by the government. Under this fund, an amount equivalent to 20% of the prevailing rate of the Value Added Tax collected (12%) is paid

in the Ghana Education Trust Fund for educational purposes (Effah, 2003). Ghana Education Trust Fund (Act 581):

The fund is intended to implement the provision of education at all levels by government, to develop and maintain educational infrastructure, to provide supplementary funding for granting scholarship to gifted but needy students and of loans to students and to offer grants for research and for the training of exceptional students to become teachers.

In specific reference to the section (2) of the GETFund, Act 581 charges the Board of Trustees to provide funds to promote and support the advancement of female education. The GETFund is a universal fund which all public universities can tap into. In commenting on the benefits of the GETFund, Akua, a UEW faculty remarked,

I am pursuing a long-distance Ph.D. program at the University of Sussex. There is no way I could have afforded this program on my own. The University of Sussex graciously gave me partial tuition waiver and the GETFund provided funds to supplement the rest. Initially, people thought the GETFund was for only primary and secondary education. GETFund also allocated funds for staff development.

The aforementioned themes in this section reveal that the establishment of institutional unit to support gender issues has been crucial for the participation of these women in higher education. This identifies the university's commitment to prioritize gender issues. The provision of alternative financial support for women in higher education promotes a culture in which women take the initiative to professionally

advance and develop. Insufficient funds have serious implications on the quality of higher education in Ghana. Johnstone (2003) contends:

When these cost pressures are not met with commensurately increasing revenues — which is increasingly the case everywhere in the world and especially so in the countries of Sub Saharan Africa — the result is less apt to be increased efficiency and productivity and more apt to be some combination of: (a) diminished quality of the output (i.e., of teaching, scholarship, and service); (b) diminished working and living conditions for professors, staff, and students alike.... (p.2)

The caliber of faculty and staff in any higher institution of learning has an impact on the quality of education provided to its recipients – the student. Thus, it is important to create and promote equity and ensure an even playing field for all staff. The importance of providing quality higher education cannot be overemphasized. Those countries that have achieved the highest levels of development, well-being, social cohesion, and social solidarity have invested in higher education for decades (Llop, 2006). The globalized economy and, the information and the knowledge society, requires a critical mass of people with solid education — higher education. There is the need, therefore, to provide adequate financial resources to assist in providing high quality higher education to all citizens.

Common Attributes and Strategies among women who have succeeded in higher education teaching and administration

This section addresses the fifth research question of this study: the attributes and strategies that are common among women who have succeeded in higher education teaching and administration. Three themes emerged, namely, determination to succeed, perseverance and planning.

Determination to Succeed

The patriarchal ideology of Ghanaian society continues to be reflected in the universities, which leads to women experiencing a range of discriminatory and gendered exclusions within the higher education system. These experiences are distinctive in that they often represent subtle forms of oppression. Despite these setbacks, a majority of these women under study have come so far in their academic careers because as a result of their personal abilities and determination to succeed. In revealing her survival strategy in the academe, Mansa, an UEW faculty member noted:

To survive in the academy, you have to remain focused on your career goals and let the sky be your limit. I started teaching at the university with a master's degree and I knew that to rise to the top, I would need a Ph.D. I knew that it would be difficult to leave my family to travel outside the country to further my studies. I explored several options and I am now pursuing a long distance Ph.D. program in the United States. (Faculty, UEW)

In validating this experience, Akua, another KNUST faculty member said:

I made a personal commitment to teach at the university despite the work overload, lack of resources, and subtle pressures of the university environment. I guess that, sometimes, you have to develop a thick skin and be radical to endure. I always challenge my colleagues to think critically and act like intellectuals. I think sometimes, as women, we easily get discouraged when we are not able to publish or do a lot of research as is expected in academia. A friend of mine always says, “you have to strive to thrive.” That has been my motto. When I came here I braved all odds and asked one of my senior colleagues if I could work with him and he agreed to do so. He is now my research partner. We have published a number of articles. I knew that being in an academic environment you had to publish or you perish. Within four years of teaching at this university, I was promoted to senior lecturer. At the beginning of this year, I submitted my dossier for promotion to associate professor.

Despite the myriad of experiences these women face in higher education, they have made the choice to remain. The decision to remain regardless of the challenges could imply that they have made a commitment to find alternative strategies to help them survive in the academe. These women have positively adjusted to the adversities that they face. According to Gray (1995) to participate more fully in the academe would involve the following options; “to accept the rules and procedures; to resist these or to engage in constant personal and professional negotiation, making some compromises along the way” (p.57). Gray’s assertion resonates well with these women’s experiences. Some have

accepted the rules as they are, some have questioned; some have made the choice to compromise.

Perseverance

Considering the experiences that have been revealed in this study, no doubt, without perseverance, these women would have already quit. Culley et al (1985) state:

The correspondence between the idea of female virtue and the image of the mother tends to work against our capacity to achieve or ever to aspire to such professional success. As mothers, we are expected to nurture, as professionals we are expected to compete. (p. 12)

The personal costs in attempting to survive in academe are very high, yet if one desires to be a successful academic, perseverance is crucial. In underscoring the importance of perseverance, Emefa, an UG faculty indicated:

Initially, when I started teaching at this university I could not cope with the large class sizes, the grading of scripts, and finding time to develop professionally. I nearly decided to go back to high school to teach. It dawned on me that that nothing ventured, nothing gained. In this life, nothing comes on a silver platter. If I have decided to teach, then I have to make a commitment to teach at the highest level of the educational institution. I knew it would take a personal determination to pursue my career. I sought alternative ways of teaching — preparing handouts and offering multiple choice questions during examinations. I also collaborated with colleagues to conduct research and publish. Amidst

all this, I found the energy and motivation to pursue my Ph.D. and at the moment I am working on my dissertation. It has been both a challenging and rewarding experience and I am glad that I made a personal commitment to stay on.

These participant accounts suggest that survival in academic setting requires a personal commitment to persevere. The expectations of the academy and the patriarchal family are time consuming for the Ghanaian women in higher education, requiring a good deal of tenacity and perseverance to thrive. Most of the faculty members interviewed referred to the phrase “you publish or you perish,” a reminder to them of the requirements and expectations of their jobs – teaching, service and research. Failing to publish and conduct research would render them virtually be nonexistent in the academe. There is a high level of drive, enthusiasm and energy among these women but it is perseverance that they can succeed. The following collage of remarks from faculty and administrations of the three universities summed up their determination to succeed:

My future aspiration is to really try and publish a number of articles, because if I want to remain here then I have to publish; I hope to complete this Ph.D., write papers for publications, then apply for promotion. The top is the ultimate; I want to do my Ph.D. Hopefully, next year I will start; I will keep on with what I am doing and do it very well and hopefully be the registrar in the next 20 years; The sky is the limit. I would want to go as high as possible, but first I have to complete my Ph.D.; I will climb as much as possible if that will help the ones

following me. I will work hard to become the first women vice chancellor;

At this level, I am aspiring to be a registrar either in one of the public or private universities.

The common theme threaded through these women's interviews is the desire and vision to obtain more academic laurels or move up the administrative ladder. This desire is personal and self-generated. The academic culture is such that more recognition is given to those who have attained their Ph.D.s. Although in Ghana's higher education, a Ph.D. degree is not required to move up the academic ladder, most of these participants acknowledge that with the current globalization trends, it is beneficial to upgrade oneself to be in the competitive world of academia. We live in a global village where in academia standards are being set by credentials. It is a step in the right direction for some of these women to pursue their Ph.D.s and let the sky be their limit.

Planning

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. For the women in higher education in Ghana, the demanding job expectations of maintaining a family and a career depend heavily on the ability to plan. Women typically assume more care responsibilities for dependents care than men do. Discussions with the participants revealed that planning is a key ingredient in their goals to be both a successful parent and a university worker. In addition to planning, there is also the need to factor in the possibility of unforeseen contingencies; thus a backup is always needed for the working mother.

For Akos, a KNUST faculty member:

Managing multiple roles as a mother, wife, homemaker and lecturer requires you to have an organized schedule in mind. I have arranged with my neighbor such that in the mornings, I drop off my kids, together with my neighbors' at their school, and she picks them up after school. Fortunately, I have a nanny at home who takes care of the kids when they get back from school. I try to concentrate on my job as a faculty member when I come to school. Days that I do not have an evening class, I make sure that I go home early to help the kids with their homework, spend some time with them before I put them to sleep. My husband works in another town about five hours away so he comes home every other weekend. During the weekends when he's home, I sneak out on Saturday afternoons to catch with grading of my papers and finishing up with lecture notes. This plan has worked for me so far.

Afia, an UG faculty member said:

I made it a point to build my career before giving birth. I knew that child rearing in addition to the hassles of the job, would be time consuming. Being the woman, I knew that I had to strategize so as not to jeopardize my career. I got married four years ago and my first child is four months old. The period before I gave birth, I set an aim to conduct research and submit publications. I won a contract to conduct a research publication on the meaning of sexuality in Africa I also attended a conference in Italy where, through networking, I got the opportunity to submit a book chapter on globalization. I also designed a course on globalization

which I teach. These projects were so time consuming and I am glad that I made that decision to postpone childbirth.

The accounts given by these women showed that their ability to plan helped them in their accomplishment of their goals. Colbeck (2007) reveals that when faculty members integrate and plan their personal and professional roles, they accomplish personal and work goals at the same time. Work or family boundaries are permeable to the extent that activities from one domain may easily or frequently interrupt activities in the other. When this happens, planning is the key. This is what Baaba, an administrator of UG had to say:

My schedule as a senior assistant registrar can sometimes be very intense.

I need to plan carefully to make sure that I am able to accomplish my goal as a mother, wife and a senior staff. I need to incorporate my children's schedule into mine to ensure that someone picks them up from school and helps them with their home work. To help catch up with work, I sometimes come to the office during the weekends.

The ability of these women to plan helps them to simultaneously accomplish personal and professional goals. Clark (2000) articulates that borders between work and family are flexible to the extent that the hours and locations of either may be varied easily. The ability to be flexible helps these women to decide to catch up with work during the weekends. They set aside time to accomplish these goals.

A key to their success was also the ability to negotiate. To help them successfully accomplish their goals, these women negotiate with other people. One woman negotiates

with a neighbor to pick up her children from school while others negotiate with their husbands to take care of the children while they catch up with grading or office work. As working mothers, negotiation is an important attribute to help them integrate their personal and work roles. Without negotiating, with a helper, for a example, these women may be handicapped in the performance of their duties. The ultimate aim of planning is to be able to strike a balance in achievement of both professional and work goals. Bailyn (1974) notes that the key seems to be a balance of commitment to work, family, society – without exclusive involvement in any of these areas.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the themes that emerged from observations and interviews with 14 faculty members and 6 administrative staff, along with educational document analysis. The findings of this study address the five main research questions posed in this study, and discussed thematically, and supported with quotations from participants, along with the institution documents, observations, and relevant research findings. The findings revealed a plethora of experiences for these women in the selected public universities under study. Significantly, gendered divisions of labor and women's socially prescribed domestic responsibilities influence women's participation in higher education. In a patriarchal society like Ghana, many institutions tend to favor men and not women. This issue coupled with the fact that women are out numbered by men could lead to women's voices being unheard or silenced. In the broad social structure, women's issues are a pub on the brick burner. In the families, boys are more likely to go to school. In addition, institutional support and structures impact women's experiences in higher

education. These external factors significantly influence women's experiences in higher education, but, collectively these women possess attributes and practice strategies such as determination to succeed, perseverance and planning, to help them in their role as women faculty and administrator.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of this study was to examine and offer an understanding of the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana, specifically faculty and administrators in selected public universities using their own voices. By examining lived experiences through the voices of these women, shared realities emerged. This chapter presents summary, major findings, implications for policy and theory, recommendations as well as suggestions for future research and conclusion

Summary

This study explored the factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in senior positions at the faculty and administrative level. In additions, it examined the challenges and opportunities that women experience as faculty and administrators. On the basis of the issues raised, this study sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the early experiences of females that impact their career paths?
- What are the factors that contribute to the under-representation of women in senior in faculty and administrative positions?
- What are the obstacles, challenges, and successes that women experience as faculty and administrators?
- What written and unwritten policies have been adopted by universities that influence gender equity?
- What are the attributes and strategies common among women who have succeeded in higher education teaching and administration?

In order to formulate effective policies on women's issues in higher education in Ghana it is important to hear the challenges and obstacles of these women expressed in their own words. This research could be used by women as faculty and administrators in these selected public Ghanaian Universities as evidence and a justification for policy implementation in their universities.

Relevant literature reviewed covered areas such as women and higher education in developed and developing countries, particularly Africa. The main issues discussed were the current state of women as faculty and administrators, challenges confronted by women in higher education in developed countries, and women and higher education in Ghana. Postcolonial theory and postcolonial feminism both of which provided the theoretical framework for this study was also presented.

The use of interviews in this research was to highlight the importance of individual voices on issues that affect them by paying specific attention to the language used by participants in expressing their lived experiences. Fourteen women faculty and six administrators from KNUST, UG and UEW were interviewed. In depth-interviews, supplemented by government documents and observations, were used in the data collection process. In interpreting data, inductive analysis, a process aimed at uncovering embedded information and making explicit (Hoepful, 1997), was used. As Bogdan and Biklen (2003) also describes how qualitative analysis helps themes and categories to emerge through identifying themes, coding, and interpretation. The five research questions guided this research.

The discussion of the results was presented through voices of the participants through the use of quotations. The voices revealed the themes that helped to understand the lived experiences of these women. A variety of studies and literature were used to interpret and discuss the data. The summary provides a backdrop for discussing the meanings attached to the lived experiences of women as faculty and administrators in this study.

Major Findings

This section presents the major findings of the five research questions which guided the study. The major findings covered themes such as sociocultural practices, mothers as academics/administrators, mentoring and networking, and framing the women's identity and institutional policies that promote gender issues, and personal attributes.

Sociocultural Practices

The status of women in academe reflects the larger society's expectation for women. Women still bear the traditional values of taking care of the family, making sacrifices and being diligent. Growing up in a traditional society such as Ghana, the societal expectation, conscious or unconscious, is that a woman is to remain in a relatively subordinate position. Boys are given preference over females; girls perform household chores, and look after younger siblings, and progress up in the educational ladder. The research revealed that most of these women, especially those who grew up during the period of and immediately after colonization, could have had their education jeopardized since this period was characterized by sex differentials in education. Bartels

(1965) reveals that when the first school for girls was opened in Ghana, the aim of the missionaries who ran the school was to groom young women to become fitting wives for the men they were training. Clearly, the colonists operated very much with male bias seeking young boys rather than girls, for schooling so as to provide literate Africans to help them run the colonial governments. Gender was used as a criterion by colonists, missionaries, and local peoples for deciding who would receive a formal education.

By its nature education cannot be analyzed in isolation. Several societal issues affect the educational process. The legacy of colonialism and sociocultural factors shape girls' education. A variety of factors, including the emphasis on domestic chores, generalized conditions of poverty, and the overarching influence of patriarchy, combined to make access and entrance to academic institutions for females a fantasy for much of the colonial period. To buttress this assertion, a 1935 Commission on Higher Education in East Africa, chaired by Earl de la Warr, emphasized that women should be educated for homemaking to which would include Westernized versions of elite education, such as sewing, home economics and hygiene, domestic management, nursing. Neither the technical subjects (engineering, medical and animal sciences or agriculture) were opened up to gender parity (Tamale & Oloka-Onyango, 2000). These examples from Congo and Tanzania all point to the fact that colonialism perpetuated sex differential education in Sub-Saharan Africa, which placed more importance of training boys in courses that would benefit the colonial government in its operations. On the other hand, women's education was carefully structured to be useful only in the home. It only makes sense that if a girl knows that she will enroll in school only to manage a home, and then she might

as well stay home and learn from her mother. Freeman (1978) has described the purpose of the form of education offered by the colonizers as “being less to eradicate a distinct women’s sub-culture than to crest and perpetuate a culture of femininity and motherhood” (p.210). Women were educated for the purpose of filling subordinate societal roles that serve the interests of men.

The socially prescribed attributes, roles, activities, and responsibilities connected to being male or female in a given society impacts the status of the individual’s future. If, when growing up, boys are made to believe that they have priority over girls in attending school, and are excluded from performing household chores, then they will grow up believing they are superior and will expect to occupy positions of authority. Females, on the other hand, are considered only good for marriage, childbearing, and homemaking. Some parents see the male child preference in education as an investment, which means that education is valued for a boy, who once he completes school and gets a job will bring financial return to the family. For the girls, however, it is assumed they marry and the return on investment goes to their husband. Hyde (1993) concludes that given the costs associated with schooling and the lower monetary return on girls’ education, the choice of whom to enroll in school is often made in favor of boys.

The research also revealed parental/outside influence makes a great impact on the educational future of the females. Almost all the participants cited the encouragement and support of a parent or some other person who challenged them to pursue academics. Sociocultural practices directly or indirectly affect the girls’ upward movement up the educational ladder. Not every girl will be fortunate enough to have such a supportive

parent or other adult. In the same way that positive influences have an impact in determining the success of an individual, so do negative influences inhibit an individual's success. It is therefore critical that an awareness of the importance of girls' education be promoted. The subtle pressures of sociocultural practices exist and must be addressed.

Mothers as academics/administrators

In talking about the woman as an academic or administrator, one must look at the effects of the career on her mothering, the effects of motherhood on her career, or the effects of combining these two roles. All the interviewees revealed that the task of combining motherhood with the demands of the academic life is a difficult one.

Academic women continue to have primary responsibility for housework, childcare and for instilling cultural values in the next generation. These social responsibilities, coupled with the demand of formal work, create a double, even triple, work day for women in academia. These women are handicapped in their career advancement by geographical restrictions, family obligations, guilt and prejudice. Consistent with Morris's (1993) research findings, women also seem to have different priorities, which change over time as their circumstances change. As young women starting a family, they may have to defer their own work aspirations in order to fulfill the role of caretakers; they may need to relocate because of their husband's job and forego an excellent position, sacrificing their career continuity. The nurturing role of a typical Ghanaian mother will cause her to consider her family first. Many accounts highlighted stories of women who had turned down opportunities to study abroad, postponing advancement in their studies, or had to put their careers on hold.

Throughout this study, the issues of marriage and motherhood recurred and offered explanations of power for women's underrepresentation as administrators and academics. Grant (1989) reveals that women's career pathways are locked into and shaped by developments in their personal lives. Their domestic role and the attendant responsibilities prevent them from having definite career plans, cause them to defer their career ambitions until these family responsibilities are fulfilled. According to Currie, Thiele & Lewis (2002), — the two greedy institutions university and family — are time consuming and require women to stretch themselves to meet the demands of each institution. Academia is based on norms, values, and practices that are antithetical to the lifestyles of many women. The most important single observation about women in the academic world is that their numbers decrease dramatically as the importance of the position increases. The lack of senior women is frequently explained in terms of women's decision to prioritize family over career (Krais, 2002). Due to a lack of statistical visibility of women in the top echelons of the university, women have little input into the decision making about higher education policies, student admissions, promotion, and many other issues. Women have difficult choices to make. Women in academia name the reality of the struggle and resistance that these dual roles involve. In a way, they find strategies for surviving the possibilities that these two worlds offer.

Mentoring and Networking

For the most part, academic women have not achieved either professional or organizational authority to the same extent as men. Mentoring and networking seems to be an invaluable asset in academia. Participants indicated that they are beginning to learn

about the invisible operations of mentoring and networking. Very few of the women in this study had a role model or a professional mentor, although most of them acknowledged that the benefits and the need for a mentor. One cannot live in isolation in academia and expect to thrive. Through collaboration and team work, some faculty members have had the opportunity to conduct research, publish articles, and have secured publication contracts, thereby facilitating their progression in academia. Yahya-Othman's (2000) research in Tanzania affirms that men have a head start in establishing networks among themselves, passing on information to each other, recommending each other for awards and grants, and teaming up to collaborate. Undoubtedly, progressing through academia requires knowing colleagues who can offer guidance and support. Evetts (1987) and Grant (1989) affirm that the advice, support, and encouragement from mentors also appears to be a significant factor in whether women become ambitious and gain access to higher positions.

The challenge these women face is that there are very few women to begin with who can act as mentors and introduce them into the networking process. Women in this study perceived that their male colleagues' greater access to the benefits of role models and networking gives them an added advantage in terms of support and being better placed to gain research experiences. Some of the participants mentioned that the "old boys" gathering was the forum where publication contracts, research ideas and other pertinent issues are discussed. Male cliques are formed naturally during these social gatherings where women are excluded. Women with professional information can help others to network by introducing them to colleagues and peers within the discipline

(Bagihole, 1994). A faculty member testified that the publications she has to her credit have been the result of the networking she had with female senior faculty. There is some evidence that these women in the study are beginning to develop a new support system of their own, relying on each other, rather than, men for help.

The particular difficulty women encounter in securing access to the colleague system, which brings mutual collaboration and information exchange, goes to reinforce Currie, Thiele and Harris's (2002) assertion that, historically, universities have long been recognized as male institutions into which females have been admitted. First, they admitted female students and then they began to hire female academics. Women in higher education in Ghana have to struggle and come together in solidarity to find a place of solace and strength within themselves and in their bond of unity.

Framing the Woman's Identity

The experiences of women at work are set within the social context in which they live. Women especially in Ghana's academic system are heavily constrained by cultural and identity constructions and expectations. The research findings in this study revealed that the woman faculty or administrator is automatically perceived as a mother and her authority is sometimes undermined. In general, women are victims of patriarchal mentality and the custom of appreciating men and underestimating women. A conflict arises when a woman's subservient role is exchanged for a role or position of authority. The culture is passively hostile to women and there exists a subtle aura of sexism. To illustrate, the study findings revealed that a conflict arose in a situations where a female faculty gave constructive criticism to a male student and in another case when a faculty

member faced opposition in her role as an examination officer and did not have her position renewed.

These stories affirm Grant's (1989) assertion that violation of cultural stereotypes may be another factor working against women faculty members moving into upper-level positions. The general expectation of our society and institutions is that women can make their best contributions in positions subordinate to men. Graham (1974) postulates that men are expected to be independent and assertive but when women display those characteristics they are thought of as "tough and bitchy." These same traits found in a man would be labeled clear-headed and attentive to details. The faculty examination officer described above had her Ph.D., was very out-spoken and had a forceful attitude. These findings confirm Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsky's study (1992), which showed that female leaders who exhibit a democratic participatory style were less likely to receive negative evaluations compared with those who have an autocratic, directive style.

The expected role of the woman is the subordinate position and therefore an internal conflict arises for men when this position changes. There is a perception that leadership is often associated with men and academic management is seen in terms of masculinity. Kerfoot and Knights (1998) contend that the skills, competencies, and dispositions deemed to be essential to leadership (including assertiveness, autonomy, and authority) are embedded in socially constructed definitions of masculinity. Women managers sometimes challenge gender stereotype and experience gender discrimination from traditional thinkers. Morely, Kwesiga and Mwaipopo (2005) argue that if women are not embedded in traditional roles, then they are seen as the dangerous "other." This

leads to undermining women's authority and women are therefore not valued or rewarded by men. A woman in a management role who enforces strict rules and regulations, may be tagged as an "iron lady." Women's education has always been resisted by particularly patriarchal communities as it can offer women financial independence, empowerment, and the possibility of alternative lifestyles that are threatening to male domination (Davidson, 2004). Women are often considered to be caring, nurturing, and submissive people and therefore any traits that conflict with this norm causes chaos. As Graham (1974) rightly puts it, "manifestations of independence and autonomy are expected in a male executive; their presence in women makes male colleagues cringe" (p. 266).

Institutional Policies that promote Gender Issues

The support and commitment of the organization in promoting an agenda is very critical to the success of that agenda. The socialization of gender roles, coupled with patriarchy resistant to discussion about nontraditional gender issues characterizes Ghanaian society. The commitment of Ghana's premier university, UG to spearhead the establishment of a department on gender issues, followed by UEW, was a step in the right direction. All three universities' the vice chancellors indicated that they are working on strategies to diversify faculty ranks to include more women. The notion of the professoriate in Ghana's universities is heavily dominated by images of faculty members and administrators who are typically males. The findings reveal that the organizational climate is gradually changing. Additionally, respondents considered the establishment of gender units as building bridges to educate the university community on gender issues and also bring issues of concern to the table for discussion, solution and implementation.

The respondents are, of course, are seriously concerned with deconstructing gender issues in the academic environment.

The findings revealed that the universities' efforts to collaborate with external funding agencies and constituents to promote career development and advancement were critical in boosting female participation in higher education. The issue of diversifying higher education funding is currently a viable option in higher educational institutions. For a longtime, the government of Ghana, has been the sole funder of university education in Ghana. Government funds have been insufficient to combat the increase in enrollment, inadequate resources, and the rise in per student cost of providing higher education. Collaboration with external constituencies has been necessary to augment the universities' efforts.

Personal Attributes

The women in this study overcame many external factors — their childhood experiences, sociocultural practices, subtle sexism, and a hostile climate in academia — to survive and succeed in their positions as faculty and administrators. The findings reveal that the strength from within, and willingness to persevere, and the determination to succeed along with their collective efforts, are characteristic of these women. They could have decided to give up, but they forged ahead to reach their goals. They have remained in academia despite the double or triple workload they each carry. For most of them, there is the determination to still pursue a Ph.D., to conduct research and to publish. It takes a personal commitment to have this vision.

Perseverance affords them the strength to juggle multiple roles. Each must strategize to be able to survive in a role as a mother, wife and worker. As Austin (2007) puts it, balance, flexibility, and integration of professional and personal responsibilities are handled in various ways. These faculty members are knowledgeable about their options and strategies that help them create successful, productive careers and meaningful personal lives.

Other key attributes of these women were their ability to plan, organize themselves, and negotiate with others. Knowing that both roles — mother and worker — were demanding, these women devised plans, often taking the initiative to negotiate with a helper. There is the strong tendency for women to struggle to combine family responsibilities and work to avoid being chastised if they fall short on either. In sum, their resourcefulness and creativity helps working mothers in academia survive.

Implications for Policy

The findings of this study provide insight into the detailed experiences of women as faculty and administrators in higher education in Ghana. Manuh (1995) states that to study women in Ghana means to focus on the conditions, opportunities, and constraints that different women face as they conduct the daily round of living and to pay attention to the gender and class issues. Indeed, this study has revealed that a variety of factors, such as sociocultural practices, patriarchy, undermining the authority of the women, their role as mothers, and institutional climate, influence their experiences in academia. The overarching factor, however, is the socio-cultural expectations for women, crucial in Ghanaian society and transferred into higher education.

The implications of this research are important to policymakers to reexamine social construction of gender, particularly the customary/traditional gendered division of labor in society. It is important for policymakers to redefine policies that facilitate equitable treatment of *all* faculty and administrators. The experiences revealed by these women only confirm what goes on in the wider society and other institutions. Higher education should set the pace and a reevaluation of institutional policies should be a top priority. Understanding the experiences of women in higher education would be a useful guide in redesigning policies and programs that would be beneficial to women at large.

Implications for Theory

Discussions about the status of women in higher education have always triggered serious debates. Various theories have evolved from these debates; however, postcolonial and postcolonial feminist theories offer a reasonable place from which to make sense of the experiences of women in higher education in Ghana. An object of postcolonial theory is to give voice and access to the unheard and unacknowledged subjects recovering from decades of colonial rule and oppression. The testimonies shared by these participants were presented without sacrificing the richness of their experiences and perceptions. This study has offered a premise for understanding women's experiences, which is a goal of feminist representations. The study gave these women a voice, a powerful tool of empowerment for these women. The experiences they shared reveal that the effects of colonialism had an impact on their opportunity to attend school during their early years. Males were always given a priority in education. Sex-differential treatment has roots in colonialism. Robertson (1985) revealed that during the colonial period, girls were not

sent to school or if they were, they were not given an education that would train them for the more prestigious and better- paid jobs that were opening up for men, or even for the less-desirable occupations. In revealing the gender segregation in education, Mianda (2002) acknowledges that materials used to teach girls and to boys were clearly differentiated. In the minds of the colonizers and missionaries, the purpose of school was to make boys into artisans and girls into perfect wives and mothers. Postcolonial theory can therefore be seen as a theory that delves into the past and traces problems that are associated with colonialism and subsequent neocolonialism. For most of these women in this study, their experiences growing up impacted their careers. Due to the struggles and challenges, they experienced, they have served as advocates for girls today.

Postcolonial feminism has focused generally around issues of cultural identity, language, nationalism, and the position of women in formerly colonized countries as they become nation states (Rosser, 2007). Within postcolonial feminism the notion of doubly colonization is important to understand. This theory explains that women were doubly colonized by imperial and patriarchal ideologies (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1995). The current study reveals that the experiences of these women were shaped by the patriarchal society institutionalized by the legacy of colonialism. Synder and Tadesse's (1995) *African Women and Development: A History* concluded that the colonists envisioned women's responsibilities as largely limited to nurturing and conserving society while men engaged in political and economic activities. This division of gender roles put men in higher authority, making women subservient to men in all spheres of life.

Recommendations

The findings of this study suggest ways the university and its stakeholders can use to improve the experiences of women in higher education and also to attract the recruitment of women into this profession. These recommendations are offered to three sets of publics: (1) universities (2) women faculty and administrators 3) policy makers

Universities

The onus lies on institutions to create environments and policies that are supportive of women's attempts to combine career and family. Austin (2007) reiterates that institutional leaders should assess the needs of faculty members in general, the relevant policies that are already in place, and those policies that need to be developed. For example, the inconsistencies on maternity leave policy for women faculty in the universities involved in this study need to be clarified. Young women are entering the academic profession, and institutions need to make the conditions of service attractive to augment women's interest and passion the working in academia. As Wolf-Wendel and Ward's (2007) research concluded: "The increasing number of women faculty of childbearing age in the academic workforce necessitates more proactive thinking about the policy context for faculty who seek to combine academic work with parenthood" (p. 51). The absence of a maternity leave policy for women could imply hostility towards women faculty. A 1997 survey conducted by the Families and Work Institute, which included employees in a variety of occupations nationwide, concluded that a supportive workplace environment is critical for the effectiveness, satisfaction, commitment, and retention of workers regardless of industry (Bond, Galinski & Swanberg, 1997). This

means that promoting policies that would make all employees feel welcome would benefit the university as a whole.

In addition, the university needs to institute clear gender-equity policies. A useful proposal is gender mainstreaming, a strategy embarked upon by Makerere University in Tanzania. The strategy involves gender mainstreaming in curriculum and management and gender-sensitization programs (Morley, 2005). It is a strategy that claims to make women's and men's experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs (Morley, 2005). "The tools include the collection of gender-disaggregated statistics, formulating equality indicators, engendering budgets, conducting gender impact assessment and evolving systems for gender monitoring and evaluation" (p.213). Morley, Kwesiga and Mwaipopo (2005) also explain gender mainstreaming as an integrated approach to introducing gender, which incorporates consideration of course content, staffing, professional development, assessment, pedagogy, practical matters, planning, representation, monitoring and evaluation.

The study participants echoed their concern with their limited representation on several boards and committees which prevented their voices from being heard in the right places. There is the need for a policy to be instituted to ensure gender balance and representation on all university committees. The university needs to incorporate democratic values and principles into its system. Currie, Thiele and Lewis (2000) in acknowledging that democratic processes have the capacity to silence and marginalize in the very process of promoting participation put stress on particular forms of democracy:

Those that represent a broad spectrum of the community; weigh voices of the less powerful; respect difference; and encourage listening as much as speech act.

There needs to be representative democracy where all sectors of the university are involved, to create the best forum to understand an issue. (p.186)

The issue of gender inequity in higher education requires an alliance from all sectors of the educational system. The universities need to solidify their collaborative efforts with primary and secondary institutions to organize programs that will encourage more girls to attend college. There needs to be a cultivation of students' interest and motivation to pursue higher education at an early age.

The universities also need to reconsider their admission policies to allow more female access. In Tanzania and Uganda, affirmative action has been used to increase female enrollment. Women university candidates have been given bonus points on their examination scores so that more of them pass the cutoff point. Interventions also include pre-college access course and scholarships for women (Morley, Kweisga & Mwaipopo, 2005). These programs have played a positive role in enhancing female participation in higher education in Tanzania. Rathbeger (2003) also suggests that if African university administrators have a genuine interest in making institutions more receptive to and supportive of female staff and students, then affirmative action programs should include designing bridging courses, focusing on content or coping skills, to eliminate weaknesses women might have before they enter the university.

One of the factors contributing to the underrepresentation of women in faculty and administrative positions stems from the decreasing number of females who enroll in

graduate education. Although there is a commitment by all the universities in this study to diversify faculty to include women, there is major need to put structures in place to encourage more women to pursue further education. The department heads need to connect with faculty members to identify women who exhibit academic potentials. These students should be invited to pursue graduate courses and offered them scholarships and financial aid.

The university needs to enforce a supportive climate and environment that is responsive to women's issues rather than continue as an environment that impedes women's personal, academic, and professional development. A commitment must be made by the university, in consultation with the Gender Units, for example, to organize a gender-sensitization program and for a, sex-role socialization program to educate men who are set in their ways as traditional thinkers and are proponents of patriarchy. There needs to be a collaboration of both women and especially men in achieving this effort.

The university needs to establish a division in the institution that is a neutral and separate entity from various departments, where faculty and staff can seek redress on issues such as sexual discrimination. This department should be staffed by qualified and legal experts who serve to adjudicate issues or concerns of faculty, staff, and students. This division will serve as an avenue for all entities of the university to promote a respectful, free and safe workplace environment.

Female Faculty and Administrators

Charity, it is said, begins at home. The university alone cannot be responsible for the quality of the academic workplace. The women faculty and administrators must take the initiative to undertake networking, lobbying, and mentoring activities so as to provide support for each other and to build a power base. As Bagihole (1995) suggests, one formal means of socialization is the pairing of those who have successfully negotiated their academic careers with those just entering the profession. This form of mentorship is being done informally at UG by a few of the women faculty. To make a systematic impact, mentoring should be formalized as an integral part of an institutional plan for equal opportunities. Morris's (1993) research revealed that at the University of the West Indies, on all three campuses, women's groups have been established that provide the much-needed support for university women. They are working towards the institutionalization of women's studies at the university. In addition the campuses undertake outreach work in the greater community to sensitize the public about the need for women to be part of the decision-making process and to lobby for more women to be appointed to senior positions. This goes to support the idea that with a unified, solid base of networking women, a meaningful accomplishment can be achieved at the universities.

Senior academic women and administrators have a charge to advocate gender-equity principles in the university community. They need to act as the mouthpiece for other women faculty and administrators. Women in academic leadership can be empowering and can mobilize collective action toward a common good. Currie, Thiele and Harris (2002) detail how Fay Gale, the vice-chancellor of the University of Western

Australia, and second female to hold Vice-chancellorship in Australia enacted a number of equity procedures that made the university a more comfortable place for women. She increased the number of women at the professorial level and above from 2 to 16 and moved the university from the bottom rung of Australia's equity index to the top.

Women faculty and administrators need to form support groups for female students to encourage them to pursue masters' and doctoral programs. If women faculty and administrators want to see an increase in their numbers, they need to find ways and means of recruiting women into the profession. Prospective faculty members need to know that they can make choices about how to organize their professional and personal lives.

Policymakers

The issue of gender inequity in education encompasses a broader social phenomenon. It is evident in this research that certain sociocultural practices and patriarchal frameworks, in particular mitigate against women's progress up the educational ladder. The government of Ghana has instituted the fCUBE, but more effort is required to find ways of rectifying the chronic gender imbalances in Ghanaian society. The experiences of women in higher education are a reflection of the experiences of women in society. The government needs to consult with local constituencies to provide support to community-based education and training programs, which work to recognize the value of women's education.

Policymakers need to reinforce gender equity through public policy. There is the need, however, to first work to understand and change the inequalities that are

perpetuated in social institutions, on individuals in everyday interactions, and in cultural symbols. Cultural change through the promotion of campaigns and a focus on ways to deconstruct gendered roles in society are necessary. The challenges women face in society and in the workplace is an intricate mix of sociocultural factors and patriarchy. As Nayak and Kehily (2008) succinctly explain:

By examining gender practices, and in particular how they are produced, regulated, consumed and performed, we can gain a fuller insight into broader gender patterns and arrangements. This enables us to interpret the relationship between gender and power and to see how gender is institutionally organized, discursively constituted, embodied and transfigured in social life. It can begin to explain how gender relations are embedded within the social fabric of human societies and serve to shape the choices and possibilities open to us as gendered subjects. This suggests that gender is not simply a matter of choice, but a negotiation that occurs within a matrix of social and historical forces enshrined in the ideological arenas of law, religion, family, schooling, media, work and so forth. (p. 5)

A commitment needs to be made by the government of Ghana to ensure gender-responsive budgeting for all sectors of the economy. This commitment is needed since the issue at stake is a broad social phenomenon. According to Budlender (2005), gender-responsive budgeting ensures that the needs and interests of individuals from different social groups are addressed.

The benefits of gender-responsive budgeting cannot be over emphasized. Budlender (2005) reveals that it:

- Strengthens advocacy and monitoring.
- Provides information to challenge discrimination, inefficiency, and corruption.
- Helps to hold public representatives and government accountable.
- Recognizes the needs of the poorest and the powerless. (p. 11)

The benefits of gender-responsive budgeting will go a long way to address gender gaps in budget allocations particularly, in critical areas for the promotion of gender equality, and women's socioeconomic empowerment, such as employment, income, health education, and human resource development.

Suggestions for Future Research

The findings and assumptions of the current study mark the beginning of a journey to a scholarly career focusing women's experiences. The findings of this of study suggest some themes for further research. The perceptions of male faculty members on the experiences of women in higher education as faculty and administrators would be useful as would a comparative study of finding study of male and female faculty and administrators perceptions.. It would be insightful to see how their perceptions differ or complement each other.

This study involved women faculty and administrators in three public universities. It would be interesting to conduct a study on this same topic for the remaining three Ghanaian universities so as to make a generalization on the experiences of women for all six universities. In addition, with the increase of private universities in Ghana, a

comparative study of the experiences of women in the public and private would broaden the scope of women's research in higher education.

Finally, a study to incorporate the experiences of female students in higher education is suggested. The insight given by female students could be useful in understanding their experiences from a different angle.

Conclusion

Women went to work in universities with an expectation of equal treatment, and assessment of their work on its merit, and an assumption that they would advance in the same way that men rise to the top of their disciplines. This has not always been the case, as this study has revealed. In this research, I conclude that despite considerable efforts to combat gender inequity in higher education, the challenge still exists. Women play an indispensable role in every sphere of the Ghanaian society. The responsibility of educating children generally falls on women, whether in the home or the school. Higher education in Ghana needs more women representation in faculty and administrative positions. Female faculty will serve as role models for female students and also curtail the perennial shortage of women faculty in Ghana's higher education. What is needed is a more caring, collegial, family, and community friendly culture within the university which support women. As DiGeorgio-Lutz (2002) emphatically states, the struggle is far from over but the goals are not insurmountable. The universities in Ghana need to play a more responsible role in this effort. In asserting the role of universities in promoting good citizens, it behooves these institutions to be in the vanguard in pursuing social goals that work towards greater justice and more caring communities.

Discussions in this research have revealed that the dominant concern of women in higher education are the absence of women in senior academic and management positions, undermining of women's authority, the perception of hostile organizational cultures, lack of mentoring and access to networks, and socio-cultural factors. Indeed, prevailing social norms still act as a disincentive to women in Ghana's higher educational system. The patriarchal nature of Ghanaian society has gradually crept into the universities. This culture, consciously or unconsciously, shapes women's experiences in higher education. The present study has revealed that the faculty and administrators' identity as women excludes them from the "old boys" network, their authority is undermined, and their minority status prevents their voices from being heard. Ghanaian universities, together with their governments need to collaborate to find strategies and institute policies to promote gender equity in higher education. Morley (2005) concludes that "we need to forge alliances that expose and confront how gendered power is relayed via exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence in academic life and in wider civil society" (p. 218).

In trying to find answers to the issues that baffled me as a college student, I have discovered some truths and realities. What I experienced as a college student was only the tip of the iceberg. In conducting a reality check on myself, I acknowledge that as a mother and wife aspiring to be a faculty member, I may experience these same challenges. The experiences shared by these women epitomize the concept of a woman in Ghana's higher education, which I may become a part in the near future. As the popular Ghanaian proverb says, when you see your neighbor's beard on fire, you keep a bowl of

water near yours. I know it will be an arduous task in pursuing an academic career and caring for my family. I need to find ways to creatively and corroboratively combine a productive work life and a satisfying personal life. Although I had a piece of the puzzle – my mentor – missing from my college experience, I believe I have a duty to help other female students fit all the pieces of their puzzle together.

As an aspiring faculty member, I believe I have a charge to join the crusade to maintain gender equity in higher education. Real change in our experiences as women begins with the process of dialogue, thinking, and writing. This research is part of that change process. We shall overcome, one day; but for now, the struggle continues!

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APPENDIX A: IRB Submission Approval

OHIO
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice President
for Research

06E230

Office of Research Compliance
Research and Technology
Center 117
Athens OH 45701-2979

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A determination has been made that the following
research study is exempt from IRB review because it
involves:

Category 2 - research involving the use of educational
tests, survey procedures, interview
procedures or observation of public
behavior

Project Title: Experiences of Women in Higher Education: A Study of Women as
Faculty and Administrators in Selected Public Universities in Ghana

Project Director: Augustina Adusah-Karikari

Department: Educational Studies

Advisor: Francis Godwyll

Robin Stack, Human Subjects Research Coordinator
Office of Research Compliance

11/9/06
Date

The approval remains in effect provided the study is conducted exactly as described in your application for review. Any
additions or modifications to the project must be approved by the IRB (as an amendment) prior to implementation.

APPENDIX B: Interview Protocol for Faculty

Institution:

Position:

No. of years in service:

Educational Qualification:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Can you tell about your experience growing up as a woman?
3. What motivated you to become a faculty member?
4. Tell me about your professional career.
5. What has been your experience with working with other faculty members in this university?
6. What support system does the university have in advancing gender issues?
7. What are your future aspirations?
8. Are there any important issues that I have not talked to you about that you think are important for me to know?

APPENDIX C: Interview Protocol for Administrators

Institution:

Position:

No. of years in service:

Educational Qualification:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Can you tell about your experience growing up as a woman?
3. What motivated you to become an administrator?
4. Tell me about your professional career.
5. What has been your experience with working with other administrators in this university?
6. What support system does the university have in advancing gender issues?
7. What are your future aspirations?
8. Are there any important issues that I have not talked to you about that you think are important for me to know?