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SHATTERING THE GLASS CEILING TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5: CONTRIBUTIONS OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP IN SELECTED DISTRICTS IN THE CENTRAL REGION

EBENEZER ACKON

2020

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BY

EBENEZER ACKON

Thesis submitted to the Centre for African and International Studies, Faculty of Arts, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in African Studies

DECEMBER 2020

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature…… Date……..

Name: ……

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Signature……... Date……

Name: ……..……

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ABSTRACT

Achieving gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls has been one of the focuses of the United Nation since the first Women Conference was held in Mexico City in 1975. As a result, several frameworks and policies have been drawn at national and international level meetings and conferences. From Millennium Development Goal 3 (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDGs), many governments, non-governmental organizations, private institutions and establishments have turned their focus towards working to help achieve gender equality. The purpose of the study is to describe experiences of women in leadership positions. Chris Argyiris (1970) Intervention Theory is the framework for the stud. I also explored their contributions, in terms of initiatives, activities, projects, policies and programs aimed at helping to achieve gender equality. The study also looked at challenges women in leadership encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality. The study employed epistemology paradigm, qualitative approach and an exploratory research design. In-depth interviews were conducted, relevant literature were explored and thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. It was found that respondents prior to their leadership status experienced inequality in gender roles and socialization, education, job opportunities and leadership. Contributions of women in leadership to help achieve gender equality included advocacy, training women on leadership skills, organize gender-sensitive workshops, research and counseling as well as providing mentorship for women and girls. It was also found that respondents encounter challenges such as geographical/ environmental factors, artificial barriers in marriage, same-sex marriage and financial constraints in their study.

The study recommended that, since empowerment greatly deals with the financial strength of women, the government should set up a common fund that women in leadership at the local level could access to help them in their initiatives and programs.

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KEY WORDS

Empowerment

Glass ceiling

Shatter

Sustainable Development Goals

Millennium Development Goals

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DEDICATION

To my late uncle, Papa Kodwo Mbir, for sponsoring my education.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GAD	-	Gender and Development
GE	-	Gender Equality
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goal
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goal
WAD	-	Women and Development
WID	-	Women in Development

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the words of Professor Jane Naana Opoku Agyeman, the First Female Vice- Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast, who doubles as the first female running mate of the National Democratic Congress party in the 2020 general elections "making history is gratifying; but what really matters is not to be first through the door. What matters is to hold the door open for those behind us and create other avenues for self-actualization for many more". This study sought to explore the contributions of women in leadership in their respective fields of work to complement the government's effort towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5; achieving gender equality for all women and girls.

This chapter focuses on the aim of the research, the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study in broad terms, objectives and formulated research questions. It also explores the purpose of the study as well as its delimitations. The chapter also discusses the limitations, defined operational terms and gives the organization of the study.

Although many women continue to achieve remarkable feat by being first females to be elected or appointed into positions which hitherto, had been filled by men, there is limited literature on their contributions to working to open many opportunities to empower other women to rise to levels of those who have already reached the top. The phenomenon of women breaking through the glass ceiling continues. However, there are a lot more who are still struggling to find their feet in their areas of endeavour. There is, therefore, the need to extend a helping hand by taking up initiatives to promote such individuals' needs and

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interests in their quest to rise to the top. In spite of this, there is a perception held in a section of the general public domain that women who have been able to break through the glass ceiling work to hinder progress and empowerment of other women, hence, the phrase 'same-sex rivalry' as used by Boateng (2017). However, this is what the study sought to show that women in leadership positions can contribute to the materialization of the SDG 5.

Background to the Study

In Africa, boys and girls, from infancy are defined socially based on their roles. This (role) is not only limited to the house but even when they get a chance to experience education in the formal setting. There is a belief that females are associated with certain gendered subjects such as Home Management, which in the end relegates many women to go to private spheres of life where they grow and develop their interest in managing the home. This decreases their participation in public and political events (Allah-Mensah, 2005; Baah-Ennumh et al, 2005; Ebila, 2011; Gyimah & Thompson, 2008; Sam, 2010). Such educational inconsistencies related to both genders emanate from the impression that men were valued as compared to women considered as second-class people and their place was in the home and kitchen. This, according to Janus (2008), is referred to as gender; the socially created roles, attitudes and characteristics that a particular culture considers suitable for both men and women. These psychological and social features are associated with one for being either a male or a female (Coon, 2001). This separated both genders of their roles as society expected of them. According to UNDP (2009), men and women were widely viewed as having markedly different roles in the family at the beginning of the 20th century; the place of a woman was as a mother and a

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wife in the home; the place of a man was in the public sphere. For that reason, girls are generally oriented to take up domestic roles.

In these domestic roles, Vaghela et al (2017) observe that much of them remain unrecognized, uncounted and unpaid: work in the home, food production and marketing are some examples. However, their male counterparts are seen as leaders, financial providers, household managers (Cejka & Eagly, 1999; Deaux & Lewis, 1984). They are either asked to assist or not involved in any household chores. Again, most often, males follow their fathers and learn their skills and occupation. Pleck (1976) asserts that boys and men are under pressure to fulfill a standard of masculinity. Those that do not comply with the norm often suffer from low self-esteem (Pleck et al, 1993).

The society or culture one finds himself or herself contributes to perceiving females to take up domestic roles and the males as heads of households. These cultural beliefs, among others, imply to establish that females are second-rate to males in many endeavors and have to operate in their private sphere. This is because, as the males go out to work to provide for the family, the women remain home to perform domestic chores, consequently making the women depend on the men. For this reasons, cultural traditions of some ethnic groups are distinguished by patriarchal structures that maintain male's dominance and merits (Amoakohene, 2004; Boateng et al., 2006; Ebila, 2011; Prah, 2004; Sam,2010). For instance, the two Ghanaian systems of inheritance (matrilineal and patrilineal) rights give advantages and privileges to males against females even though succession and inheritance also pass in the male line in patrilineal societies (Nukunya, 2003). One of the advantages is that beneficiaries of these inheritances stand a chance of inheriting properties and

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assets which can make them (mostly males) economically empowered and powerful, even though, women also inherit in the matrilineal society. These male's notional superiority and defined role, according to Vaghela et al (2007) become deep-rooted stereotypes about the role of women and men in the family as they grow up**.** As grown-ups, some women still live this stereotyped role in their homes.

Conway et al. (1996) and Feinman, (1984) mentioned that one factor that likely comes into play as far as gender stereotype is concerned is a societal belief that the gender role of the male is stronger than the gender role of the female. This consequently affects their selections of a future career as females are made to conceive the perception that certain careers belong to a specific gender. According to Ellemers (2018), stereotypical expectations do not only reflect the current differences but also how men and women perceive themselves and are perceived by others. Stereotypes can serve as double-edged swords, such that they are seen as having ''feminine traits; being gentle, wet, and compassionate can lead to a stereotype of weakness, devaluation, and exploitation (Cuddy et al., 2004) while having ''masculine'' traits; being aggressive, assertive, capable of leadership, and strong personality may lead to penalties, like sexual assault, in educational and professional settings (Berdahl, 2007).

Stereotypes according to Devine (1989) may influence emotions, perceptions and actions at an unconscious level, beyond conscious knowledge, and often when not consciously acknowledged. I will say that stereotype also goes a long way to affect gender career aspirations and selection. This assertion is supported by Jarman J, Blackburn RM, Racko G. (2012) that, social polls and

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census data indicate that, in the western world, across 30 industrialized countries in the western world; gender-specific job roles are strongly divided. For example, occupations as the military and police are dominated by men, whereas other occupations such as nursing and catering are dominated by women.

This gender-defined job selection explains why most women were engaged in unpaid work before the Second World War. Their main duty was to take care of the home and sustain the full-time career of their husbands (Schwartz & Zimmerman, 1992). Females thus first entered the world of paid employment in significant numbers during the Second World War, when they had to serve as substitute staff for the active working-age males who had then been called into military service. Now, before women were integrated into the workforce, women employed during that period were considered contract employees. Their job was second to marriage and childbearing, which were perceived to be their major obligation (Gutek & Larwood, 1987). In this view, in the 19th century, occupations like teaching, nursing, and clerical work were deemed to be suitable only for unmarried women (Nieva & Gutek, 1981).

Today, circumstances have changed dramatically and women have expanded their career aspirations. Unlike in the past, women have had fewer job opportunities because of factors like patriarchy, inequality and inadequate education. Moreover, research on gender and career ambitions in the 1970s showed that girls had more limited career targets than boys and that girls mostly opted for a small number of occupational groups (Looft, 1971a; Mendez & Crawford, 2002, Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000). Women opted for this category due to a lack of better work requirements. It is against this background that Khallad, (2000); Watson et al., (2002) said career preferences are affected by issues such

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as gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, parents' occupation and education, and parental expectations.

However, there has been a global improvement in females' achievements in education over the past years (Research Department of the International Labor Organization-ILO, 2016). With more females choosing majors that require a continuous job, women are increasing their participation in the workforce (Nieva & Gutek, 1981). Females are also no longer limited to traditional feminine sectors, like education or nursing. Women are now incorporated into what society considers to be previously male-dominated areas, such as accounting, pharmacy, law, among others (Schain & Jacobs, 2009). This is to demonstrate that in recent years, many women have gained the required skills and experience they need in the workplace. However, without regard to the improvements recorded, gender roles keep on being a barrier to women's promotion to the top of Management (Catalyst, 2003, Catalyst & the Conference Board, 2002) and that, women remain marginal in the top management ranks (Catalyst, 2003). According to Karamürsel (1994), at some stage in the middle of most career ladders, there seems to be a 'glass ceiling' that prohibits all but a few women from getting to the top and that is responsible for fewer women in top management (p.28). Glass ceiling according to Jackson (2001) is a term originally used to describe a business environment in which female's way to the top-management roles has been limited by corporate practice or way of life. Bombuwela & De Alwis (2013), Sharma & Sehrawat (2014) refer to it as the undetectable obstacles to women's career development.

In spite of these challenges, women in the Western world, across Africa, in Ghana and specifically in the Central region have broken through this

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invisible barrier and risen to the top in all sectors of their countries. For instance, in Australia, Julia Gilliard overcame hindrances for female political leaders by becoming the first woman Deputy Prime Minister. Julia Gilliard overcame the hurdles for female political leaders in Australia, 2007, and was sworn in from 2010 to 2013 as the 27th Prime Minister (Harrison, 2012, McCann, 2016). In Africa, the first female Liberian President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, was elected in 2005 and re-elected for a second term. She, therefore, became the first female Head of State elected in Africa (Wanyeki, 2012). Malawi also elected its first female vice-president, Joyce Banda, in 2009 and became Malawi's first female president afterwards (African Union, 2009**).**

In Ghana, Professor Jane Naana Opoku Agyeman and Prof. Esi Awuah became the first female Vice-Chancellors in the University of Cape Coast (UCC) (ghanaweb, 2008) and the University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR) (generalnews, 2018) in 2008 and 2018 respectively. Mrs. Joyceline Adeline Bamford Addo, according to myjoyonline (2009) was also elected as the first female speaker of Ghana's Parliament. The University of Ghana, Legon after being in existence for over seventy years sworn-in Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse as the first female Chairperson of the University's Governing Council in late 2018 (graphiconline,2018). Again, Ghana's Criminal Investigation Department in late 2018 had Maame Tiwa Addo Dankwa as its first female Director-General. Furthermore, Ghana's Electoral Commission in late 2014 had its first female Chairperson in the person of Mrs. Charlotte Osei. In August 2020, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology inducted its first female Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rita Akosua Dickson (myjoyonline, 2020), just to mention but a few.

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Statement of the Problem

The glass ceiling continues to be shattered by women in many fields of endeavor and women can now be found in male sex-based discriminated work in the labour force. The achievement of equality between women and men and the abolishing of all types of discrimination against women are elementary human rights and values of the United Nations. In order to develop effective strategies to eliminate such discrimination, equalizations between women and men also involve a detailed understanding of how women encounter sexism and are denied equality (UNHCR, 2014). Therefore, human rights which include gender equality and empowerment for women have been at the center of some international conventions that have made major political contributions to the human rights of women and equality.

In view of this, according to the UNHCR (2014) report, the United Nations had held a number of world conferences on world plan of action for women's rights including gender equality and empowerment of women. It is on this basis that in 2000, the international community agreed on eight time-limited changes to be accomplished by 2015, including a goal on gender equality and women empowerment. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were a major political commitment that spurred some of the world's frightening problems to be supported internationally. Goal 3 of the MDGs was to promote gender equality and women empowerment. The MDGs were expected to be achieved by 2015 and offered a global and overarching framework achieved for economic development system, including poverty reduction, better health and education outcomes and other priority areas across developing countries (UNMDI, 2000). While global progress towards achieving the MDGs was very

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successful in many areas, progress has been inconsistent in terms of both regions and priorities. As a result, some of the expectations remain unfulfilled by their 2015 deadline, and several new problems arose. Thus, the international community has also agreed to take on all the incomplete dimensions of the MDG agenda and the new global challenges in a more inclusive, systematic manner. The purpose is not only to achieve progress across all regions and priorities but also to ensure sustainability of the growth. This led to the new universal agenda; Sustainable Development Goals with a bigger scope and to tackle more emerging challenges. The MDG goal 3 was therefore carried over to the new universal agenda; Sustainable Development Goal 5; "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls".

Again, according to an Equal Measure (2030) survey conducted by Melinda Gates, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Foundation, no country in the world is on track to achieve gender equality by 2030. The report of the survey says that, Europe and North American countries topped the index in the Equal Measure (2030) survey while African countries dominated the bottom. This, according to the report should serve as a wake-up call to the world.

Governments are required to take ownership and design national frameworks for the implementation of the 2030 agenda (ESCAP, 2020). However, considering the assessment of MDG 3 to SDG 5 coupled with the report of the Equal Measure (2030) survey, the task to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment requires efforts, contributions, and techniques from many sources to achieve it. This is why the study aimed to examine and document women in leadership's contributions towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment for women and girls.

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Research Objectives

The study based on the above statement of the problem sought to

1. describe the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to their leadership status in some selected districts in the Central Region.
2. explore contributions of women in leadership aimed at achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls in the study areas.
3. bring out challenges that women in leadership positions encounter in their quest to help achieve SDG in the study areas.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions;

1. What are the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to their leadership status in some selected districts in the Central Region?
2. What are the contributions of women in leadership towards achieving gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls in the study areas?
3. What challenges do women in leadership encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls in the study areas?

Scope

The Sustainable Development Goal agenda has 17 goals targeted to be achieved before the year 2030. Government has the prime mandate to enact as well as implement globally agreed-on policies and frameworks to achieve this goal. However, the study sought to explore initiatives, activities, policies,

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programmes and projects undertaken by women in leadership to contribute towards achieving SDG 5.

Purpose of the Study

The study is projected to bring to bear, initiatives, policies, activities, programmes and projects women in leadership have undertaken, are undertaking, or intend to undertake to complement the central government's efforts towards achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls. This will put girls in a better position, give them the right skills and education and create necessary awareness as well. Second, the study is also expected to bring to bear some challenges these women in leadership encounter in their quest to work towards achieving women's full inclusion in decision making in political, economic and public life. Knowing these challenges will inform women and girls of the state of the female gender and how to address it. Finally, the research will also contribute to knowledge by serving as referential material for academia and future researchers.

Delimitation

The study was carried out in 4 selected districts in the Central region of Ghana. These included Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality, Cape Coast Metropolitan, Abura Asebukwaman Kese District and Mfantseman Municipal. Again, the work is revolved around goal 5 of the new universal agenda; Sustainable Development Goal.

Limitations

One of the difficulties encountered was the effect of the novel Covid-19 pandemic which knocked the country around March 2020. That was the period I wanted to begin fieldwork for the study. Since the main source of data

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collection was the use of one-on-one or individual interviews, it was very difficult for participants to accept to be interviewed due to the dreadful situation. Since the mode of transmission of the pandemic was alarming, both the researcher and the participants could not meet to schedule days for interviews. Interviews were conducted when the situation had normalized. In relation to the pandemic situation, some of the pre-selected participants were not available during the period of the data collection. Some opted out for reasons which were not disclosed. Consequently, other participants were approached to replace them.

Also, due to the pandemic and the electioneering period, it was impossible to speak to two of the participants who represented the area of politics. Both are female Members of Parliament with ministerial status. Given these, it drastically reduced the respondents. Secondary materials were considered to know how the government is playing its role in achieving gender equality.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five separate chapters. Chapter one is the introductory chapter in which the aim of the study is explained. It discussed the background to the study which led to the problem statement. The objectives of the study, the research questions and the purpose of the study were outlined. The chapter also defined the scope of the study and gave the limitations as well. Chapter two discussed and argued related works on Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), and Gender and Development (GAD). It also discussed gender stereotypes leading to the glass ceiling. The chapter also discussed gender and examined international law, gender equality

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and further focused on universal agenda such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)s. The chapter finally discussed the government's efforts towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

Chapter three is committed to the main methods employed in the study. It covered the philosophical underpinning, research approach as well as the research design, the study area, target population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments, data collection procedure as well as data processing and analysis. The chapter wrapped up with the description of the challenges encountered during the data collection period and how they were overcome. The chapter ended with a chapter summary.

Chapter four centered on presentation and discussion of the results on the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to their leadership positions in the society as well as their contributions to complement the government's efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 5. The chapter also discussed challenges or barriers these women in leadership encounter in their quest to help attain gender equality and women empowerment. The chapter appraised the theoretical underpinnings of the study

The final chapter presented an overview of the entire project from all the four previous chapters and gave recommendations.

Summary

Chapter one looked at the aim of the study and explored the background to the study which led to the problem statement. It also focused on the research objectives, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation as

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well as limitations of the study. The chapter also looked at the scope of the study as well as organization of the chapters.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter looks at some of the related literature of this study. Gender issues and gender inequality is a widely discussed issue across the world, in Africa and Ghana as a whole. This is evident in the empirical studies of similar nature, mostly conducted by women. Kadyrkulova (2008) worked on *'Female and Gender Leadership',* where she investigated into leadership and management style of both males and females. Also, Lovas (2017) explored '*Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, A Critical Examination of Select L'Oreal'* where she researched into L'Oreal women's empowerment policy. Similarly, Ngulube (2018) researched on the *'Influence of Traditional Gender Roles and Power Relations on Women and Girls' Education and Health in Northern Ghana'* where she argued that an 'educated and healthy woman is a key contributor to the country and national development. However, women in Northern Ghana face challenge in these two areas due to gender equity. It is for this reasons that I sought to find out what contributions are women in leadership making to help achieve gender equality.

This section also examines the intervention theory as the principal theoretical framework underpinning the study. It discusses perspectives of women and gender theories in development; Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD) and Gender and Development (GAD). The chapter further focuses on gender stereotype issues and glass ceiling. International laws on gender adopted by the government are also in focus in this chapter. Gender equality as well as the previous universal agenda; Millennium

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Development Goals and its substitute; Sustainable Development Goals are discussed. Finally, the chapter also explores the government's efforts toward the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment.

Discussions from the background to the study reveal that efforts of the central government alone cannot achieve the fifth goal by the year 2030. Therefore, other interest groups including women in leadership must come on board as interveners with initiatives, activities, projects, policies and programs to help; end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation, ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life, among the other targets of the goal 5.

Theoretical Framework (Intervention Theory)

Argyris (1970) describes intervention theory as when an intervener is to enter an ongoing system of relationship, to come between them or among persons, groups, or objects to help them. An intervener in this sense assists a system to become more efficient in problem-solving, decision making, and decision implementation in such a way that the system can continue to be increasingly effective in these tasks and that there is a diminishing need for the intervener to act. An intervener also focuses on activities and actions that eventually (not necessarily immediately) provide the people with opportunities to enhance their competence and effectiveness and to do away with all forms of barriers and hindrances that plague the people's personal growth and development.

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Since there should be an intervener in the 'ongoing system', Giridhar (2012), Ortiz-Barreda & Vives-Cases (2013) posit that the government has intervened to promote gender equality by signing on to treaties, both regional and international as well as passing legislation to ensure gender equality and empowerment. All the efforts of these institutions have not achieved the gender equality agenda. The study, therefore, sought to find out women in leadership as an intervener, and their contributions, as activities and actions, which have or do not have the potentials to help achieve gender equality eventually not immediately though. Also, the activities and actions of interveners will correct wrongs in the ongoing gender inequality and "to provide their colleagues with opportunities to enhance their competence".

The theoretical underpinning of the study implies women in leadership contribution through initiatives, policies, programs, activities and projects can complement the government's attempts towards achieving gender equality and empowerment. One of the perceived ideas which has contributed to glass ceiling factor in women's world of work is the idea of women and gender theories in development. This section highlights the trend women entered into the world of work and provides definitional shifts from the development stages the theories development have gone through.

Women in Development (WID)

The term "Women in Development" according to Rathgeber and Kettel (1989) is associated with Boserup's publication of Women's Role of Economic Development. As the first woman whose work was influential in focusing scholarly attention on the sexual division of labor and the unequal effects of gender development and modernization strategies, she analyzed the change that

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had taken place in traditional agricultural practice as society has been modernized and the unequal effect of these developments on the work performed by women and men has been studied. However, her research was later criticized of the essence of the work and roles of women. Nevertheless, the term became famous when it was used as part of a deliberate strategy by the women's committee of the Washington D.C chapter of the society for international development to bring the new evidence produced by Boserup and others to the attention of American policy makers (Maguire, 1984). American liberal feminists according to Jaquette (1982) advocated for the legal and administrative changes for the better incorporation of women into economic system, development of strategies and intervention plans seek to minimise women's vulnerabilities in the manufacturing sector and to bring an end to all types of discrimination against women.

In the latter years, it was argued by Boserup (1970) that in fact, the relative women's status has enhanced very little over the last two decades. Evidence has shown that the status of some women has deteriorated (Boulding, 1976; Kelly and Elliot, 1982). For instance, in the formal industrial field, the majority of females have been relegated to the lowest-paid, most monotonous and often health-impaired works, partially because of their low level of education, but also because of the position designated to them as complementary rather than key wage earners (Lim, 1981). It is without doubt that the conditions mentioned such as some women taking up monotonous and lowest paying job continue to persist in some areas and create disparity. These affect some women's work and remuneration in this 21st century period. As a

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result, many females are not able to penetrate to senior positions in their workplaces.

These have consequently made women to be perceived as victims of inequalities in society since they find themselves disadvantaged. Therefore, women at the helm of affairs are enjoined to use their voices, powers and capabilities as the privileged few to act through initiative, policies, activities, projects and programs to gain access, pull resources and make informed decisions to improve the lives of their fellow women.

Besides, other policies, activities, programmes and initiatives by groupings in societies are increasingly shifting social structures and as a result, women's empowerment and advocacy for gender equality have been on the agenda of many societies. Women's education is also on the rise. In recent times, girl child education campaigns in Ghana have contributed to a significant number of girls at schools. The great impact of girl-child education is the influence in social norms, which has stimulated many women exposed to more information and aspire to a higher socio-political status, which has helped them to break through these deep-rooted patriarchal structures and processes to hold position in government.

According to Rathgeber and Kettel (1989), WID approach of integrating females into international processes of economic, political and social growth of change failed to make an impact because, first, it was solidly grounded in the traditional modernization theory. With this, it was perceived that the WID approach could consider the traditional international factors to develop the locality as a modern one. Secondly, the WID approach commenced from an acceptance from an existing social structure. By this, instead of looking at the

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reason females had been less well off the development strategy in the last decade previous to its implementation in 1970, the WID method was more based on how women could better be incorporated into ongoing development initiatives. This is because, some internal or external factors might have contributed to women faring less well during that period. Finally, the WID approach also failed to question the sources of subordination and inequality of women, concentrating instead on encouraging more equitable inclusion in education, jobs and other areas of society (Mbilinyi, 1984a). The women, again, did not unravel the root cause of the subordination which could have directed them the best approach to employ in tackling such subordination. Perhaps, it is for these reasons that Carlisle (2000) posited that advocates must have the required level of competence and experience to carry out their position effectively and be taken seriously.

Furthermore, the WID approach appears to concentrate primarily on productive aspect of women's work, disregarding or diminishing the reproductive side of women's lives.

Amidst the controversies, in the 1980s, some feminist and development practitioners critiqued WID and indicated that WID did not adequately discussed the causes of gender disparity in society. As a result, Women and Development (WAD) was developed. WAD concentrated on economic activity, and on the relationship between women and development processes rather than simply focusing on strategies for women's inclusion into development. This new approach rather focused on women's productive responsibilities and neglected women reproductive role. Again, respondents of the Women and Development were of the view that the subordination of women in society is the

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product of private property and capitalism. (Parpat, Connelly& Barriteau, 2000, Muyayeta, 2007). That is, benefits and opportunities that could grant women their well-being is centered on a few who do not make public such opportunities. For this reason, this subordination of women in society has journeyed from the WID period to WAD and continues to persist in this Gender and Development (GAD) era. This is what Lee Gosseli et al (2013) posit, that, some challenges in policy implementation relate primarily to issues such as information on how to assess the effect of these gender equality policies, understanding how to enforce these policies, and leadership responsibility in ensuring successful implementation, among others.

However, as Prasad (2012) said about the empowerment of women, it does not mean setting women against men but helping them understand their changing roles and status, and creating a consensus for a harmonious life in society. It is for this reason it was captured as the third agenda of the Millennium Development Goal, and when not fully achieved in all aspects, has been carried onto the Sustainable Development Goal 5. It is in view of this that the research sought to discover initiatives, activities, projects and programmes that the women who are subordinated and less empowered seek to undertake to support efforts of the government in achieving the eleven targets under goal 5. As a researcher, I support Bosrup's idea of taking up the initiative, since it allowed her to realize loopholes during implementation. However, due diligence must be done in such circumstances to determine root causes of women's issues to provide possible solutions. In other words, handlers of women's issues must understand such issues and therefore, possess the technical know-how to be able to propose possible solutions to the issues.

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According to Rathgeber and Kettel (1989) WAD saw the activities undertaken by women at home, including those linked to social reproduction, are not of economic importance. This phenomenon has continued and in this contemporary times, women's domestic work performed is according to Vaghela et al (2007) unrecognized and unpaid for. Even though it is unpaid for, I think it should be given consideration especially in this 21st century period where most wives and mothers are also career women. That was the concern of the Gender and Development activists who concentrated on the relationship between women and men and promoted empowerment. (Hyndman and De Alwis, 2003). This resulted in the commencement of Gender and Development.

Gender and Development (GAD)

Clearly, when WID and WAD approaches did not succeed as far as development of both genders was concerned, a new theory known as Gender and Development became eminent. According to Kaliniuk and Schodozdaeva (2012) the GAD approach began from a holistic viewpoint, looking at the whole of social structure, economic and political life to understand the form of a specific aspect of the society. The approach is fitting for this study in the sense that women are typically considered to be second-rate to men in many facets of their lives, and relegated to the background in many human endeavors. They are generally perceived to be deficient in empowerment; the reason the Sustainable Development Goal 5 seeks to achieve gender equality and empower women. The GAD approach also had 'women empowerment' at the centre of attraction (Thomas, 2004). For this reason, one of the objectives of this study is to explore contributions through initiatives, programmes, activities and projects that

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women in leadership are undertaking to ensure gender equality and empowerment of women.

According to Moser (1993) the aim of GAD is to emancipate and liberate women from subordination to achieve gender dignity, equality and empowerment by meeting realistic and strategic needs. By empowering women, they will be released from subordination of men, which will go a long way to help achieve the second target of the goal 5; 'eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation'. This is because, most of the subordination occur as a result of women's total dependence on their husbands and their male counterparts for the provision of all their needs and wants. For this reason, Thomas (2004. p.23) posits that 'empowerment of women' is central to the Gender and Development approach'. However, it is arguable that the GAD approach has also not been fully realized. In essence, Batliwala's (1994:130) definition of empowerment encapsulates what this study seeks to achieve:

> Empowerment is thus a process and a result of that process. Empowerment is manifested as a redistribution of power, whether between nations, classes, castes, races, genders of individuals. The goals of women empowerment are to challenge patriarchal ideology (male domination and women subordination); to transform the structures and institution that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and gender inequality(the family, caste, class, religion, educational processes and institutions, the health practice and systems, laws

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and civil codes, political processes, development models and government institutions); and to enable poor women to gain access to, and control of, both material and informational resources.

Nonetheless, GAD had been used to illustrate the disparity in entitlements, access to resources, skills and social expectations of both men and women as well as boys and girls (Muyayeta, 2007). To women, empowerment means having authority or control; having a say and being listened to; being able to influence social choices and decisions concerning society as a whole; and being treated and valued as equal people and a human being with a contribution to make (Griffen, 1987, p. 117). Therefore, per goal 5, the study sought to bring out how this disadvantaged group wants to deconstruct how they are perceived and work towards achieving also, the fifth target of the goal 5; 'ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life'. The finding of the study has bridged the gap of inequality and empowerment, since empowerment can enable this marginalized group to develop an ability and strength to repel structures that appear to be marginalized and relegated to the background.

Women's empowerment, according to Batliwala, (2007) and Chakrabarti & Biswas, (2008) has five components; women's sense of self-worth; women's right to determine choices; women's right to have access to opportunities and resources; women's right to have the power to control their lives (both within and outside the home); and women's ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order,

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nationally and internationally. Thus, individuals who are not empowered may be empowered through measures and interventions such as programmes, activities, initiatives, policies and projects the study attempted to uncover from women who have been able to break through this invisible barrier are bringing on board to bridge gender inequality gap and empower women.

According to Hancock, P., Middleton, S., Moore, J., & Edirisinghe, I. (2011) empowerment is a socially created state motivated on the premise that valued resources should be accessible to a person or a community of people. These resources include improved education, improved health, structured jobs, stability and decision-making roles in political structure and equity in national and foreign policy reform. Therefore, through the empowerment construct, human talents and competencies, natural support structures and constructive attitudes can be harnessed for effective social policy and social transformation (Zimmerman, 1995**).** If this is not done, individuals, especially women would lead to stereotypes and affect their gender.

Gender

Gender, according to UNESCO (2003), refers to the males and females' roles and obligations of men and women created in our communities, our societies and our cultures. The definition of gender also requires assumption the expectations held about the characteristics, abilities, aptitudes and possible behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). This establishes the fact that gender is "socially constructed and as such can be changed or terminated because it is not biologically predetermined or fixed forever". Being socially constructed comes with its socially accepted roles for both genders. However, Mayberry et al (2013) assert that there is evidence that

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the evolving nature of a modern family may challenge gender role norms. This could be possible due to factors such as modernization, civilization and education. In the course that these socially constructed expectations become a common trait of a specific group, it becomes a stereotype

Gender Stereotype

The Oxford English Dictionary defines stereotyping as a 'commonly held but fixed and oversimplified picture or concept of a specific form or object'. The idea of stereotype being 'fixed' is what has negated the term and made its effects strong on its victims. A stereotype according to Lindsey (1997:2) is 'oversimplified conceptions that people belonging to the same group or category have certain characteristics in common'. In all cultures and communities, gender stereotypes begin from the moment we are born and identified as either a boy or a girl. This mark sets out how we are to be viewed, how we are supposed to be treated and our view of the universe (Etter-Lewis, 2010) cited from (Thompson, 2000). The concept of stereotype can be negative if it limits women or men's ability to develop their skills, pursue their careers and make informed choices about their lives and life plans (UNHCR, 2014).

This limitation affected women in the 1960s leading to the formation of WID and WAD. Gender stereotypes have both descriptive and prescriptive properties (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001). Burgess & Borgida (1999); Eagly & Karau, (2002) and Heilman (2001) explain descriptive gender stereotype designates what women and men are like, while prescriptive stereotype designates what women and men should be like. However, both descriptive and prescriptive gender roles and the standards they give rise to can compromise the advancement of a woman's career. This

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consequently leads to careers affiliated to the females. For instance, it was until 2008 when Professor Jane Naana Opoku Agyeman rose through the ranks to become the first female Vice-Chancellor of a public university in Ghana and for that matter, the University of Cape Coast, a prestigious Ghanaian university. Therefore, gender stereotype not only affects how women are judged by others but also how women judge themselves.

Ellemers (2018) articulates empirical research proves that gender stereotypes influence how individuals attend, perceive, and recall information about themselves and others. For this reason, gender stereotypes not only impact the way people view others and the opportunities they present to them, but also affects their self-conceptions, the actions they see as appropriate, the life goals they deem acceptable and the results they value. These effects can damage their tenacity to partake in domains that they find personally important, undermine their ability to do well and impair their life outcomes (Ellemers, 2018).

Research has shown that the characteristics of women themselves are essentially parallel to the characteristics of females in broad-spectrum (Hentschel et al, 2013). Therefore, it is important to educate people, especially women, about the descriptive and prescriptive nature of stereotypes. For instance, boys and girls should be educated to understand that their being male or female is not their fault; it is biologically formed. However, their abilities and capabilities to become and be who they want are limitless. This is because, according to Williams and Dempsey (2018) awareness of the stereotype's existence and the tacit consequences releases individuals from the assumption that all gender disparities are biologically defined and hard-wired. Such awareness helps them to understand the indirect impact on themselves and

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others that gender stereotype can have. Sharing these perspectives allow them to establish specific methods to overcome gendered expectations.

Bussey and Bandura (1999) assert if there is a kernel of truth behind gender stereotypes, it is a small kernel and does not account for the far-reaching inferences we sometimes draw regarding the fundamental discrepancies between men and women. Research suggests, instead, that gender gaps grow over a lifetime because of how boys and girls are brought up and educated. For instance, according to Ellemers (2018), gender stereotype precludes women and men from equally sharing the care of children and family members and from equally benefitting from the interpersonal relationships formed through these activities. In my opinion, this stereotype is what creates a lack of bond between some fathers and their children and deny fathers of enjoying the benefits of interpersonal connection with their children, since they perceive child upbringing and homecare as the responsibilities of their wives.

Stereotype and Oral Tradition

Generally, the socialization of women leaves them with the impression that they have less chances than men to rise to senior management levels (Wood and Lindorff, 2001). In traditional Ghanaian communities, men are often seen as being strong, more intelligent, and possessing leadership traits and the competence to provide security, sustenance, and livelihood (Gyan, 2018). This makes females to accept the male counterparts as wiser and having the natural capabilities, accrue power and use the power they possess at all levels of decision making in the communities. According to (Fayemi, 2009), proverbs are traditional moral and wisdom expressions that are handed over from generation to generation. Proverbs as traditional sayings depict culturally-specific accepted

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truths about how a community acts and lives. African oral traditions such as proverbs are intended to express and demonstrate truths and the expected structure of the society. A proverb cannot be challenged, and to do so would appear to challenging the wise ancestors. This would not be seen to be arrogance but a sacrilege (Awedoba, 2000). The revered nature of these oral traditions such as proverb that Chinua (1994) have made it strenuous to challenge gender inequalities and the stereotype within them. That is, the oral traditions are used in the perpetuation of patriarchal culture, which in turn promotes gender inequities, stereotypes, and inequality in traditional Ghanaian communities. Proverbs highlight several ideas and beliefs that at all times continue to reflect and define women and their roles. Some define women as being reliant on men, women and intelligent and women and leadership, among others. One of the proverbs that depict women as reliant on men is "ɔbaa tɔ tuo a ɛtwere ɔbarima dan mu" (which literally means "If a woman purchases a firearm, it is kept in a man's room"). According to Dogbevi (2007) men have the privilege to own a firearm; therefore, no matter the financial strength or social position of a woman, she is reliant on a man. Again, the proverb depicts women as unqualified to manage or handle valuable possessions and inform decisions in sensitive situations. This emphasizes the subordinate roles of women in decision making and the management of resources and properties. Clearly, the proverb portrays women's dependence on men for protection. Another proverb is "ɔbaa da ɔbarima akyi" (A woman lies behind a man) (Dogbevi 2007). These proverbs portray the different gender roles and describe women as subservient to men. The central idea of women being subordinate, inferior, or reliant on men make society perceive women as unproductive and parasitic. This is why a lot of

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women come to the leadership table late when they are almost out of active service. This is due to glass ceiling.

Glass Ceiling

Glass Ceiling (GC) according to International Labour Office (2004), Burke and Vinnicombe, (2005), McLeod (2008) is one of most convincing metaphors for exploring differences between men and women in the place of work. It is a transparent barrier that prevents women from rising to senior management positions in large companies or a transparent obstacle that prevents women from advancing beyond a certain point in the corporate ladder (Morrison et al, 1987). This transparent barrier, according to researchers is of different kinds. It involves sexual, cultural, racial and religious prejudice or abuse in workplace, dominant culture of many companies, lack of family-friendly policies in the workplace, among others (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995).

However, according to Rai and Srivastava (2008) there is no glass ceiling in the workplace. For them, "women have been paid lower salaries since they left the jobs midway, worked for lesser time and joined low-risk jobs". They also claim that companies are currently working internationally, with a range of career growth opportunities. Therefore, it is just a myth and a self-created problem. Rai and Srivastavas first contention is that women should occupy higher positions on the basis of their skills, through hard work and ambitions. Their second point is that family commitments come into the center of career growth. However, amid these deficiencies, women have become a big part of the workforce (Ratnam & Jain, 2002; Kaushik, Sharma &Kaushik, 2014). For instance, in this twenty-first century, Indian women are present in a

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variety of fields of work such as technology, education, engineering, police and politics (Desai et al., 2011). This means the glass ceiling issue can be addressed and gender equality achieved.

For this, with the right activities, initiatives, programs, policies and projects such as what the study has unravel, aimed to provide the same opportunities for boys and girls, the state of the female status could be reversed and gender equality achieved. Also, when the right socialization processes and education are provided to create awareness of the status of the female gender, the state could be reversed and gender equality achieved.

Many studies have shown that females face employment obstacles that can be both visible and invisible (Jackson, 2001; Veale & Gold, 1998; Tracey, 2006) and that woman have two positions at a time, which could be assessed as deficient workers (Broadbridge & Parsons, 2005). These worldwide recognized obstacles can be broadly divided into three categories namely, individual, societal and organization-related barriers (Maheshwari, 2012). Bombuwela and De Alwis (2013) outline individual factors such as lack of confidence, personal traits and inability to sell one's self. Also, societal factors include beliefs and stereotype in society, while organizational barriers include organizational barriers and management policies. For instance, there is a career height for women in certain organizations. Also, women are not allowed into the top management body in some institutions and establishments. The glass ceiling is therefore seen as a form of discrimination between the sexes (Tandrayen-Ragoobur & Pydayya, 2015) and gender inequality is the main barrier to human development globally (United Nations Development Programme, 2015). It is

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for this reason that the United Nations and other international bodies rose to tackle issues of women across the globe with international laws.

Gender and International Law

The achievement of equality between women and men and the abolishing of all types of discrimination against women are elementary human rights and values of the United Nations. In order to develop effective strategies to eliminate such discrimination, equalizations between women and men also involve a detailed understanding of how women encounter sexism and are denied equality (UNHCR, 2014). Therefore, human rights which include gender equality and empowerment for women have been at the center of some international conventions that have made major political contributions to human rights of women and equality. In view of this, according to the UNHCR (2014) report the United Nations had held a number of world conferences on world plan of action for women's rights including gender equality and empowerment of women.

Beginning 1975 in México City, the international Women's Year Meeting, culminated in the World Action Plan and the declaration of 1975-1985 as the United Nations Decade for women. Going forward, another international conference on women was held in Copenhagen in 1980 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was opened for signature. The third world conference was held in Nairobi in 1982. According to the report, these three conferences witnessed unprecedented activism on the part of women from all over the world and this led to other world conferences including the fourth world conference on women held in Beijing 1995. Hither to the Beijing Conference in 1995, there was a world conference

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on human rights held in Vienna in 1993, known as Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. According to UNHCR (2014: 18), the conference was successful in adopting the declaration that "the human rights of women and the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights" and placed particularly heavy emphasis on eliminating all forms of gender-based violence.

Then, in 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development which according to the report "represented a milestone for women's rights" was held. This conference which included 'people' as an important part of the population, took up issues in its plan of action basically and women's rights including gender equality, are essentially related. Most importantly, the programme of action is explicitly grounded in human rights and proclaims that "advancing gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women, the elimination of all kinds of violence against women and ensuring women's ability to control their fertility are a cornerstone of population and development related-programs". The year 1995 witnessed the fourth world conference on women; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which centered on 12 areas concerning implementation of rights of women and set forward the women's empowerment agenda. Building on the results of the previous world conferences, its Platform for Action included eliminating discrimination against women and achieving fairness between women and men.

It is on this basis that in 2000, the international community agreed on eight time-limited changes to be accomplished by 2015, including a goal on gender equality and women empowerment. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were a major political commitment which spurred some of the

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world's frightening problems to be supported internationally. The goal 3 of the MDGs was to promote gender equality and women empowerment. However, its conforming target was to eliminate gender disparities in education by 2015. Consequently, according to UN SDG (2015) report:

> Since 2000, UNDP together with UN partners and the rest of the global community has made the gender equality centre of their work. The report says they have seen remarkable progress since then, such that, more girls are in school compared to 15 years ago, and most regions have reached gender parity in primary education.

The goal 3 has been carried over to the new universal agenda; Sustainable Development Goal 5; "promote gender equality and empower women" this time with eleven targets to be achieved by the year 2030. At the 2nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Maputo (2003), the second article charges state parties to work to eliminate discrimination against women. In view of this, state parties:

> Shall combat all forms of discrimination against women through appropriate legislative, institutional and other measures. In this regard, they shall include in their national constitutions and other legislative instruments, if not already done, the principle of equality between women and men and ensure its effective application.

International bodies had ensured that women's rights which include achieving gender equality globally are enshrined and implemented before the year 2030. It is for this reason that, aside central government's efforts to achieve

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gender equality, the study sought to reveal contributions of some women in leadership towards the same course.

Gender Equality

Gender inequality according to the United Nations Development Programme (2015) is the main barrier to human development worldwide. According to UNICEF (2005) and UN Women (2013:35) "gender equality is not about transferring opportunities from men to women, but about the realization of the rights of everyone, and creation of conditions in which both have the right and ability to realize their full human potentials". Osagi (2001) defines gender equality as equal rights, opportunities and results for boys and girls and women and men. It does not mean that women and men are the same, but their rights, obligation and opportunities do not depend on whether they are born boys or girls.

Equal rights are also significant since a lack of rights will limit the options available to the disadvantaged community in many areas of their lives.

In view of this, Nuemayer and Plumper (2007) argue that females are frequently overwhelmingly affected by economic, social and environmental shocks and stress. This affects the well-being and progress of the female gender. Razavi (2012) affirms that gender equality and women empowerment are development priorities in their own right and also function as a vital means of achieving the other Millennium Development Goals such as to promote universal primary education (MDG 2), reduce under-five mortality (MDG 4), improve maternal health (MDG 5), and reduce the likelihood of contracting HIV/AIDS (MDG 6). Therefore, changes in one sphere of equality could then

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promote improvement in others, thereby affecting the next generation and improving the process as a whole.

For instance, some research shows that females in politics tend to back public spending that decreases the burden of women's treatment and to support policies that enhance economic security (Chattopadhay & Duflo, 2004). Nevertheless, progress in gender equality and sustainability plans have been shown to be difficult to execute, as shown by slow progress. (Benschop, Mills, Mills & Tienari, 2012). However, according to UNICEF (2005), women's equality and empowerment benefit children:

> Women's equality is a valuable end in itself; UNICEF regards women first and foremost as human beings entitled to the full exercise of their human rights and freedom, rather than as instruments, in their role as mothers, for service delivery to children. Nonetheless, the evidence is overwhelming that women's empowerment contributes to the well-being of children. For instance, better-educated mothers are more likely to space the birth of their children; have more knowledge about health and nutrition; adopt improved sanitation practice; be confident in explaining problems to health providers, and bring in sick children for treatment early on. These practices have been shown to lower infant and child mortality rates.

It is for this reason the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development tries to link gender equality and sustainable development. According to Buckingham-Hatfield (2002) and Johnsson-Letham (2007), gender equality and sustainable development can strongly reinforce each other.

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There is an increasing awareness that gender equality can be an accelerator or a catalytic policy action that causes a multiplier effects across the spectrum of development. Therefore, the SDGs would not be accomplished if women, who accounted for 3.5 billion people in 2017, or 49.6 of the world's population are denied access to resources to services and opportunities for education (UNDESA, 2017).

It is, therefore, necessary to follow a systematic approach to gender equality with a view to reforming frameworks that generate and sustain gender inequality, rather than implementing separate piecemeal intervention (Dugorove, 2008). It goes on to describe some of the many benefits of promoting gender equality, such as economic growth, poverty reduction and good health and education.

Also, recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care work is one collective benefit of advancing gender equality. For instance, lightening the burden of unpaid care work on women will provide them with more time to develop new knowledge and skills, and engage in public life, which in turn will lead to economic growth and boost well-being, human capital and social cohesion (UNDP, 2015, 2016b; UN Women work, 2015a, 2018). Food security and agriculture production could also advance gender equality. This is because women produce more than 50 percent of the world's food, and that 48 percent of the economically active women in the world and 79 percent in developing countries are engaged in agriculture, according to Doss (2014). In view of this, an estimate by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations report that if women all over the world had the same access to productive resources and opportunities as men, they could increase their farm yields by 20-

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30%, which could increase overall agricultural production by 2.5 to 4 percent and lift 100 to 150 million people out of hunger (FOA, 2011).

Women's greater public voice benefits not only themselves and their children, but also men. It is therefore persuasive to claim that equality between men and women is a mechanism for growth. That is why sustainable development goals aim to make the planet a better place by achieving gender equality and empowering women by the year 2030. It is, therefore, imperative to involve collective effort of women to complement governments' efforts in achieving this goal.

Women's collective agency according to the World Development Report on Gender and Development 2012 can be transformative for society (Razavi, 2012). It can form institutions, markets, and social norms that restrict their agencies and opportunities. Empowering women as political and social actors will alter policy decisions and make an organization more inclusive of a diverse variety of voices. Consequently, there should be a level playing ground where men and women can have equal access to and become politically and socially active, contribute to decision making, help shape policies which with time will increase representation of women and get them inclusive to a better development path.

The question is what governments in developed countries can do to encourage gender equality, which was captured in both the obsolete Millennium Development Goals and is also found in the existing Sustainable Development Goals. Should achieving gender equality be the responsibility of governments solely? It is for this reason that the study seeks to unravel policies, programmes, activities, initiatives and projects which are being undertaken by women in

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power to complement the government's effort to achieve gender equality and women empowerment by the year 2030.

Millennium Development Goal (MDGs)

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were the eight international development goals established following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations (UN) in 2000, where the United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted (UNMD, 2000). The MDGs were expected to be achieved by 2015 and offered a global and overarching framework for economic development system, including poverty reduction, better health and education outcomes and other priority areas across developing countries (UNMDI, 2000) while global progress towards achieving the MDGs has was very successful in many areas, progress has been inconsistent in terms of both regions and priorities. As a result, some of the expectations remain unfulfilled by their 2015 deadline, and several new problems arose. Thus, the international community has also agreed to take on all the incomplete dimensions of the MDG agenda and the new global challenges in a more inclusive, systematic manner. The purpose is not only to achieve progress across all regions and priorities but also to ensure sustainability of the growth. This led to the new universal agenda; Sustainable Development Goals with a bigger scope and to tackle more emerging challenges.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Sustainable development is defined in the 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). Sustainable development incorporates

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three main elements that are interlinked and interdependent: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. On this basis, world leaders adopted a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015. These goals constitute the core of the Agenda for Sustainable Development to be accomplished by 2030. The 17 SDGs also known as the "Global Goals" came into force on 1 January 2016 (United Nations Assembly General, 2015).

These 17 SDGs build on the MDGs but seek to go further, aiming to end all forms of poverty and ensure sustainable development everywhere. It is applicable to all countries in all stages of development and considers differences in national contexts, capability and priorities. They put together efforts of numerous actors, including governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, although governments are required to take ownership and design national frameworks for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (ESCAP, 2020). Women who are the victims of gender inequality could not look on. It is for this reason that the research sought to bring to bear initiative, policies, programmes and projects of some prominent women to complement the government's efforts in achieving goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goal.

The SDGs are larger in scope and considerably numerous than the MDGs. Thus, the MDGs consisted of 8 goals and 21 targets while the SDGs consist of 17 goals and 169 targets. Furthermore, while the MDGs focused primarily on developing countries, the SDGs are universal and apply to countries at all stages of development. In view of that the goals of SDGs promote development while protecting the earth, and recommend that ending

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poverty should be combined with economic growth policies and resolve social needs and environmental issues. The 17 Goals are interlinked and contain a variety of cross-cutting components, such as gender equality. It is also worth noting that the 2030 Agenda lays out the means of implementation to achieve these goals by their deadline (ESCAP, 2020).

Government's Effort Towards Attainment of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

The pursuit to achieve gender equality in all spheres of life has been an ongoing phenomenon. This is because, despite the greatness made as far as gender equality is concerned, gender inequality continues to exist in every part across the globe, from the United States of America to China and from Africa to the Gulf (Sen, 2001). Osagi (2001) defines gender equality to be equal rights, opportunities and outcomes for boys and girls and women and men. It does not mean that women and men are the same, but their rights, obligation and privileges do not depend on whether they are born female or male. Sen (2001) therefore considers some of the gender inequality issues as unequal access to schooling for girls, unequal access to professional training for females, unequal salary or income between males and females for the same work done, among others.

As a worrying phenomenon, international bodies such as the United Nations in collaboration with countries assembled to discuss how the trend could be reversed. It is imperative to discuss and know initiatives that the government of Ghana had taken to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women set under goal 3 of the expired Millennium Development Goals and carried unto goal 5 of its successor; the Sustainable Development Goals.

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According to Adomako (2008), most Sub-Saharan African countries are having a lot of challenges with the enactment of legislation which will ensure that governments in these countries are responding to gender inequality due to cultural as well as social barriers to these legislations. However, Giridhar, (2012) mentioned that a number of governments across the globe have responded to gender inequality in various ways and Ghana government's response to gender inequality has taken various responses and ways (Tsikata, 2009). Ghana's effort to attain gender equality and women empowerment started since independence and could be said to be multi-faceted in approach in response to the calls for gender equality and women empowerment.

Consequently, past and present governments' efforts at promoting the issues of women and men manifest in the enactment and passage of legislation, development and implementation of policies, strategies and dedication to international instrument to protect and promote the development of women, men, boys and girls from a variety of challenges (Government of Ghana, 2015). On signing of international treaties, Ghana signed on to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1980 and it was again ratified by the nation in 1986 without reservation (CEDAW Concluding Observations: Ghana, 2006; Tsikata 2009). Also, in 1995, the Government of Ghana in line with 188 other countries signed and adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) which identified established differences between women and men in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels of government (Tsikata, 2009). The Beijing conference among other things called for ensuring gender equality and women empowerment by all signatory states (Tinker, 2004).

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Furthermore, in recent times, Ghana signed on to the Millennium Development Goals in the year 2000 where goal 3 specifically talks about gender equality and women empowerment. Ghana's signing of the MDGs reflects the nation's high commitment to resolving gender problems with all the seriousness it deserves (Tsikata, 2009). Besides, Ghana is also a signatory to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa known as the Women's Protocol. Therefore, Ghana's ability to sign on to all these international treaties and declarations and also ratifying most of them is a clear indication of the country's commitment to ensure gender equality goal is achieved.

According to Giridhar (2012), whilst most developed countries in the world have legislation put in place to promote gender equality, only few in the developing world have enacted such policies. The first president of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah during his reign reserved 'special' seats for women in the then parliament. According to the Government of Ghana (2015), in the era of independence in 1957, and in recognition of the role played by women activists during the struggle for independence, 10 women were nominated and appointed to the legislature on the basis of the creation of the Representation of People (Billin, 1960). According to the policy, this appointment generated awareness of gender equality and women's empowerment. The nation's dedication to gender equality is expressed in Article 17 (3) of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution. The constitution forbids discrimination on the basis of gender and the main provisions on gender in the constitution are set out in Chapter 5 which describes the Fundamental Principles of Human Rights and Freedoms. Specifically, Article 12 sub-section 2, Article 22 (property rights of spouses)

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and Article 27 sections 1-3 (women's right) deal directly with gender (Tsikata, 2009).

Moreover, to show the nation's commitment to promoting gender equality, cabinet in 1998 issued a white paper on an Affirmative Action Policy which established a 40 percent quota for women's representation on all government's board, Commissions, committees and other official bodies (Tsikata, 2009). It could be argued that this is yet to be achieved yet it is a commitment on the part of successive governments to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. When the first United Nations Conference on Women called on member countries to create institutions to understand the problem of women, initiate programmes to promote the emancipation of women and to monitor progress of such programmes (Tsikata, 2009), the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) became the main institution that was set up and mandated to deal with issues concerning gender and gender inequality. This institution, in February 2001 gave way to the establishment of the Ministry of women and children affairs (MOWAC) which was given legal backing by Executive Instrument (EI18).

There were and are establishment of institutional frameworks and institutions charged to ensure attainment of the gender equality goal. For instance, according to the Government of Ghana (2015) the government, in 2001 through an Executive Instrument (EI) established a fully-fledged sector Ministry, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs headed by a Minister of state with Cabinet status. The aim is to incorporate gender issues into the national development process to improve the social, legal/civic, political, economic and cultural conditions of the people of Ghana, particularly women

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and children (Tsikata, 2009). The Government of Ghana (2015) also has it that, in January 2003, pursuant to Executive Instrument (EI1) the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection has been set up to replace the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs which places social protection and welfare within mainstream government policy alongside gender and women's issues. This has led to an extension of the mandate of the Ministry representing the government of Ghana's vision of building an all-inclusive society through the provision of a sustainable framework for the safety of persons living in situations of extreme poverty, vulnerability and exclusion.

Available data (Field Report, Political Science Department, University of Ghana, 2017) indicates that the National Democratic Congress (NDC) under the leadership of late President Jerry John Rawlings had only 3 women cabinet ministers out of 19 cabinet Ministers which represented 15.8 %. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) under former President John Agyekum Kuffour equally had 3 women ministers out of 19 cabinet members which again represented 15.8 %. The National Democratic Congress (NDC) again under the late President John Evans Atta Mills also had 3 women cabinet ministers which again represented 15.8 %. The same National Democratic Congress (NDC) under the former President John Dramani Mahama had 6 women cabinet ministers out of 19 cabinet Ministers and that represented 31.6% and the current new patriotic party under the leadership of Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo has 4 women cabinet ministers out of 19 cabinet Ministers representing 21.1%. This demonstrates how successive governments under the fourth republic have struggled to attain gender equality at the cabinet level.

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However, it is worthy to note that, an African country like Rwanda has attained the remarkable feat of having 63.8 percent of their parliamentary seats being held by women (Inter-Parliamentarian Union, 2015). The Government of Ghana (2015) has a mandate to ensure that women and men, the disadvantaged and the defenseless have a voice, engage and benefit equally from the government's "Coordinated programme of Economic and Social Development Policies, 2014-2020". From the discussion above, it is obvious that governments past and present made and are making productive efforts to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. However, it will be rational to bring to bear individual or collective efforts of some women in leadership positions to complement the government's efforts towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment.

It is on this basis and more that the study sought to bring to bear initiatives, activities, programmes and projects that women who have broken through the glass ceiling and at the helm of affairs of institutions, boards, commissions and committees both private and public have undertaken, are undertaking and intend to undertake towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment.

Leadership and Decision Making

Leadership is one of the most significant branches of management (Ameen, Almari, & Isaac 2018) and over the last two decades, the theory of leadership has been growth, according to Bass and Avolio (1994). Leadership, in the context of this study refers to females who have a large number of women and girls as beneficiaries of their initiatives and programs. Leadership consists of method, and not magic (Schmoker, 2001). Therefore, good leaders can be

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achieved with the desire and hard work, a good leader does not born by itself without any efforts to form it (Jago, 1982). This is also supported by Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001) that, leadership style depends on a number of factors including education, experience, culture, work experience, and personality, where it is still not clear to what degree it is influenced by gender and other factors. Women' exclusion from decision-making processes in public decision making should be an issue, which can no longer be ignored. People have seen public leadership positions as a male domain. However, women undoubtedly play a very significant part in the development of Ghana and Africa as a whole. Women and men bring different perspectives of leadership and decision making to the table since each gender perceives differently. Nevertheless, women face stereotypes and discrimination in all spheres of life and continue to be underrepresented in political and community leadership and governance (Offei-Aboagye, 2000). Women at all levels in leadership make differences. For most of these leaders in this study, their actions were a response to what happened in their environment and take decisions that influenced the people they lead. It is for this reason that the study sought to find out contributions of women who represent other women in their fields in the locality to help achieve gender equality and women empowerment.

Chapter Summary

In sum, this chapter has looked at the theory underpinning this study. It also explored standpoints of women and gender theories in development. Chapter two also discussed gender stereotype issues that led to glass ceiling in women. Again, gender issues and related international laws were looked at. Gender equality, Millennium Development Goal, Sustainable Development

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Goals were discussed. Finally, the government's efforts towards attainment of gender equality and women empowerment were also looked at.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This section of the study deals with the methods employed in the study. The general methodological approach is situated within the framework to describe the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership and their contributions through initiatives, activities, policies and programs to complement the government's efforts towards achieving gender equality. It also identified challenges women in leadership encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality. In this section, I discussed the philosophical underpinning of the study, the approach employed and the research design used, population, sampling technique, data collection procedure and data analyses.

Research Paradigm

The study's research paradigm adopted is epistemology. Maynard (1994) as cited in Crotty (1998) explains that epistemology is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for what kinds of knowledge are possible and how can we ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate. Epistemology is concerned with the acceptable of knowledge in the study fields (Saunders et al, 2009). Epistemology is based on an interactive and cooperative relationship between the investigator and the object of investigation in order to gain insight into the experiences of the participant. It relies on a holistic inductive approach where the research phenomenon is investigated as a whole and theoretical propositions are generated from the empirical field (Decrop, 2004). Thus, the quest to seek knowledge on the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to the leadership status, as well as document their knowledge

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on the contributions towards achieving gender make epistemology the appropriate paradigm. Again, the concern to seek knowledge on challenges women in leadership encounter also led to the use of the epistemological paradigm. With this research paradigm, the researcher employed the qualitative approach to address its research questions.

Research Approach

A qualitative study, according to Cresswell (2014) is a method of inquiry to understand a social or human problem, focused on building a complex, holistic image, word-forming, documenting, reporting detailed views of respondents, and conducted in a natural setting. In this instance, since situations were described with formed words, a qualitative approach was suitable. For Walliman (2011), "this type of research (qualitative) is focused on data expressed mostly in the form of words-descriptions, accounts, thought, emotions, etc., rather than on numbers. This form of study is common whenever people are the subject of the study, particularly in social groups or as individuals" (p.130). Hannes et al (2010) support the assertion that qualitative research offers a rich description of people's attitudes, behaviors and motives, and the data collection techniques allow researchers to use responsive questioning to elicit depth in participants' accounts. These participants are women, as Boesveld (1986) maintains that qualitative methods are more suitable and efficient when collecting data or researching women's needs and interests. Therefore, the choice of qualitative design for the research is convenient because it helped to achieve the research's aim of describing the experiences of gender inequality among the women in leadership prior to their leadership status; bring out contributions of women in leadership towards

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achieving gender equality and exposed challenges or barriers these women encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality. These were done with formed words which allowed me to ask open-ended questions for in depth knowledge from the participants. The focus is not on the quantity of information gathered, but rather its quality and richness (Decrop, 2004: 157)

Research Design

Exploratory design was used to carry out the research. Exploratory research is conducted when enough is not known about a phenomenon and a problem that has not been clearly defined (Saunders et al., 2007). The gathered information allowed me to understand the 'what' and 'how' but also to go deeper into 'why' of the case study. An exploratory research design offered the means to gather a great amount of data from a small sample (Struwig & Stead in Steyn, 2007). Considering the research question to describe the experiences of gender inequality on the participants and how they are contributing to help achieve gender equality, the qualitative approach and the exploratory allowed me to delve deep into issues for appropriate response.

In this regard, a one-on-one semi-structured interview considered to be more suitable for this topic was employed as the main method of collecting data. This allowed participants to provide rich, in-depth descriptions of their experiences, action and inactions which were vital to understanding the dynamics of challenges they went through and how they intended to help bridge the gap of gender inequality and women empowerment. These ensured issues are discussed and adequate information was obtained. Because of this, the researcher provided clear and detailed explanations to participants concerning the importance of the study.

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Study Areas

The study was carried out in selected districts in the Central Region. The participants for the study were selected from four districts within the region; Cape Coast Metropolitan, Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipality, Abura Asebukwaman Kesse District and Mfantseman Municipal. The Central region occupies an area of 9,826km2 or 4.1 percent of Ghana's land area. The region has Cape Coast as its capital town. The region shares common boundaries with Western Region on the west, Ashanti and Eastern on the north and Greater Accra Region on the east. On the south is the 168km length Atlantic Ocean (Gulf of Guinea) coastline (Ghana Statistical Service, 2005). The inhabitants are predominantly farmers and fishermen. The region holds few industries with a lot of educational institutions. The region is the home to some prominent females in the country in the areas of education and politics. For instance, the first female vice chancellor of a public university in the country hails from Komenda in the region.

Population/ Sampling Technique

The population for the study covered females aged between 40 and 72 years who are all inhabitants of the selected districts in the region. The research used purposive sampling since this method sought subjects based on specific personality. Mikkelsen (1995) points out the desire to make most of one's information, should guide the selection of respondents who are unique and crucial persons and are known to have particular knowledge. For this reason, 6 female participants and 4 male participants were selected based on purposive sampling for interviews. These individual females have a large number of

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women and girls as their beneficiaries. Therefore, their projects, programs, activities and policies tend to benefit these large numbers.

These individuals have defied all odds, impediments, including discrimination to surmount all challenges and rise to the top in their areas of endeavor. Participants included not only those in academia but cut across very educated and not much-educated personalities. This was necessary because it aided the study to have a fair representation of both the formal and informal as well as private and the public. However, all participants of the research are natives of the selected districts and by extension, the region. Consequently, the choice of this sampling technique is appropriate with the reason that information relating to women in leadership and how they are contributing to achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls have been established. However, interview sessions with the main participants (women) revealed that the inclusion of men in the campaign for gender equality will accelerate quick results. The women outlined several reasons. This, therefore, prompted the researcher to interact with 4 males as participants on the need to include men in the gender equality campaign.

Purposive sampling according to Given (2008) is synonymous to qualitative research and represents the purest or most clear-cut instances the researcher is interested in. Also, Teddlie and Yu (2007, p.17) describe that purposive sampling could be employed in the use of qualitative studies and 'may be defined as selecting units (e.g. individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on particular purposes associated with answering a research study's questions. This sampling technique, therefore, is appropriate for this research because of the specificity it requires in answering its research

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questions; for instance, 'what are the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to their leadership status in their respective districts. What contributions (in terms of policies, activities, initiatives, and programs) are women in leadership undertaking to support the government's initiatives of achieving gender equality? And what challenges do these women in leadership encounter in their quests to help achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'? .Also, purposive sampling was used because the research target was to get women leaders with a large number of women and girls who benefit from their initiatives.

The participants were made up of two women in leadership in the area of education, one in the informal sector, a traditional leader and two religious leaders. The male participants also included one educationist, a banker manager, a self-employed and an assembly member. The selection of the participants from different fields was to inform how women in leadership are contributing to these fields with the common purpose of helping to achieve the broad goal of gender equality. Names used in the study are pseudonyms to keep respondents' identity.

The respondents included Martha, a 35 year old lecturer and a research fellow from the University of Cape Coast with Centre for Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree and she is into gender advocacy. The Centre for Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation (CEGRAD) in the University of Cape Coast is established purposely to propagate issues of gender equality. It is to ensure that there is a safe and inclusive space for women where women and gender rights are respected. For this reason, it was appropriate to engage the Centre to bring to

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bear initiatives, policies, programs and projects they have undertaken, are undertaking and intend to undertake to help achieve gender equality for all girls and women. Also, Lydia is a chairperson of Central Regional Bread Baking Association in Mankessim. She is a 55 year old semi-illiterate considered to have broken through the invisible barrier to reach the top and have become economically empowered. As an informal business sector, most of the retailers are illiterates or semi-illiterate who do not have any regular sources of income and have to engage in petty trading for survival. Therefore, the aim was to find out initiatives and policies the association's leaders have put in place to empower these retailers economically.

Nana is a prominent queen mother of a Traditional Council in Cape Coast Metropolis. She is a 72 year old retired educationist. She is a former regional director of education and had served on several boards. She advocated for formal recognition of queen mothers in the region and beyond. She is well travelled and had represented queen mothers on several women empowerment programs. As a queen mother, she represents the interest of women and girls. She was interviewed to ascertain her contributions from the traditional leaders' perspective. Again, the assistant headmistress of a Senior High school was also interviewed for this research. The 52 year old is an assistant headmistress for administration in a school considered one of the most prestigious all-female senior high schools in the country. With the number of girls under her tutelage, the researcher sought to find out policies, programs and initiatives the school undertakes to contribute to achieving gender equality. Maama is a Christian religious leader. She is a 58 year ordained reverend of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. She was selected because she is a role model to numerous girls who

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benefit from her weekly preaching. She also uses regular religious services to educate women on their rights and responsibilities and involve in the outreach of the well-being of the members of her sector. Finally, Bintu is a 58 year old Muslim leaders in the Ahmediaya sect. She is a leader of the women's group and a victim of gender inequality. She regularly organizes meetings for Muslim women after Friday prayers to discuss women empowerment.

The four male participants included Fred, an educationist, James, an assembly member, Reynolds, a bank manager and Patrick, a self-employment. Fred is a retired educationist who heads a private basic school in the Mfantseman Municipal. The 65 year old man was interviewed to ascertain his opinion of how gender issues have travelled. James was a middle aged man around 37 years. He is assembly member in one of the electoral areas in the Abura Asebukwaman Kese. In his capacity as a political leader of the area, it became necessary to know of local initiatives taken and his thought about achieving gender equality. Reynolds is a 53 year old a bank's branch manager. He was interviewed to know qualifications that get female workers promoted, among other issues. Patrick is a self-employed individual who believed that people must get employed based on their competence and not on gender. He is 43 years old.

Data Collection Instrument

The data used the qualitative data collection tool to describe the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to their leadership status, explored the contributions (in terms of initiatives, activities, policies and programs) women in leadership are undertaking to help achieve gender equality and to bring out the challenges or barriers women in leadership

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encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality. Maxwell (2012) explains this type of technique was most appropriate for specific settings, persons, or events because it serves as an important source of obtaining vital information that cannot be gotten from others. Therefore, a one-on-one semi-structured interview was used to collect data. All interviews were guided by an interview guide. The time for the interview was scheduled during first meetings with respondents. The interviews were conducted in the homes and points of meetings that were decided by the participants.

Interview Procedure

The semi-structured form of interview used enabled the effective gathering of the information needed and at the same time gave the interviewees some degree of flexibility to express their opinions in depth. This type of interview also gave the researcher the freedom to digress and further probe for clarifications while staying on course. The use of semi-structured interviews ensured comprehensiveness, systematic and effective use of time (Patton, 2002).

Interview guide which was prepared in advance were used to conduct the interviews. The questions in the interview guide reflected the objectives of the study. It covered questions involving stories of how gender inequality has played out in the life of respondents prior to their leadership status, the need to support the campaign for gender equality, activities and programs carried out to help achieve gender equality among males and females and barriers which prevent the gender equality agenda. The researcher identified and met each respondent, did formal introduction and explained the purpose of the meeting as well as the purpose of the research. Dates, time and locations were fixed to

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the convenience of the respondents. All interviews were carried out using a voice recorder with the permission of the participants.

The researcher also had a notebook and a pen in hand to write down interesting comments and observations**.** Averagely, an interview lasted between 40mins to 1 hour. English and Akan languages were used for the participants in the interview participants.

Data Organization, Processing and Analysis

The data collected from the interviews were in notes and recording form. This was transcribed to get the information necessary for the study. A period of over two and a half months was used for the data collection. Within that period, each data collected was transcribed.

Atkinson (1998) posited that two major approaches exist in the analysis of interview data and these include transcription and interpretation of interviews such that they adhere to laid down objectives. Transcription allows audio or visual data to be translated or converted into written text or form. Though an arduous task, during the process of transcription, there is an ultimate need to ensure that every transcript captures needed information genuinely and truthfully and simultaneously takes into account the purpose of the research analysis (Edwards, 1993). In this regard, the audio recorded interview data of each respondent was separately transcribed word for word as a true reflection and representation of what each participant said. These were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The researcher discussed his findings situating them to the aim of the research. After transcribing the data, I printed them for the purpose of manual coding. The printed data was organized into similar responses using same colour

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highlighter. These similar responses that had been highlighted with the same colour were then categorized together. From these codes, themes were generated after a careful study of the data revealed common pattern of response or link in responses from the respondents. At least three major themes were derived from the responses to the interview guides under each research question. Some of the themes due to their similarity were merged and reframed to have a single theme.

Challenges Encountered on the Field

One of the difficulties encountered was the effect of the novel Covid-19 pandemic which knocked the country around March 2020. This was the period I intended to begin the fieldwork for the study. Since the main source of data collection was the use of one-on-one or individual interviews, it was very difficult for participants to accept to be interviewed due to the dreadful situation. Since the mode of transmission was alarming, both the researcher and the participants could not meet to schedule days for interviews. Telephone interviews were almost impossible due to busy schedule of the respondents. Some of them said they preferred face to face. The researcher began arrangements for interviews when the effect of the pandemic receded.

Another major problem encountered due to the pandemic was that, some of the pre-selected participants were not available during the period of the data collection. Some opted out for reasons which were not disclosed. Consequently, other participants were approached to replace them. Also, due to the pandemic and the electioneering period, it was impossible to speak to two of the participants who represent the area of politics. Both are female Members of Parliament with ministerial status. Given this, secondary materials were used

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to appreciate the role to know how the government is playing in achieving gender equality.

Ethical Considerations

According to Quarshie (2011, p.42) "adherence to ethical standards help promote, among other things, the purpose of the study through the creation of original information rather than the manufacture and misinterpretation of data". Approval was sought from the Centre for African and International Studies before the researcher went to the field to collect data. Because of this, respondents were given a copy of the introductory letter from the Centre as well as students identity card. Participants were also informed about the goals of the study and the expected benefits and significance that will be derived from its findings. Respondents were assured that the information collected was used for academic purposes and nothing more than that. I also explained to the respondents that their identity will be kept anonymous and under no circumstance will their real identity be revealed. The respondents were also ensured that information provided will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will not divulged to third party without their consent.

Chapter Summary

The chapter examined the processes involved in the fieldwork which aided in the collection of data for this study. This constituted giving a brief background of the study, philosophical underpinning of the work, the study approach, the study design, the study area, the target population, the sampling technique, the data collection instrument used and how data was processed and prepared for analysis. The chapter also gave an account of the challenges encountered in the field.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This research has explored the Sustainable Development Goal 5 and how women in various leadership positions are contributing to achieving gender equality by the year 2030. Given this, the research specifically sought to describe experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to the leadership status, explore contributions of women in leadership in terms of activities, projects, policies and programs towards achieving gender equality and finally bring out challenges or barriers these women in leadership encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality. This chapter, therefore, presents the results from the semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with participants and discussions in connection with the data.

Experiences of Gender Inequality Among Participants

This research has explored the Sustainable Development Goal 5 in relation to how women in various leadership positions are contributing to achieving gender equality. The research specifically sought to describe experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership prior to their leadership status; explore contributions of women in leadership towards achieving gender equality and finally bring out challenges or barriers these women in leadership encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality. To address the first research question, respondents indicated their experiences of gender inequality prior to their leadership status occurred through socialization and gender roles, education, leadership and access to work/job opportunities.

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Socialization and Gender Roles

Socialization begins the moment a child is born, from the simple question 'is it a boy or a girl'? (Gleitman et al, 2000). It begins the way one ought to be socialized in many African societies. This confirms what Etter-Lewis, 2010 cited from (Thompson, 2000) mentioned that in all cultures and communities, gender stereotypes begin from the moment we are born and labeled as either a boy or a girl and that mark how we are to be viewed, how we are supposed to be treated, and our view of the world. This was evident in the data collection when Nana shared that "girls experience gender biases from the very day they are conceived". She said this because, in some societies, when a husband gets to know that his wife had conceived a female, some men turn to neglect the woman and her unborn baby.

In much the same way, Martha indicated that "if a woman conceives a female, it is enough for you the wife and mother to be divorced" (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020). This results from the perception that communities, especially those along the coast hold females, and that is enough ground for discrimination in later life. She further said that "relatives who visit ask whether the woman delivered *"aboa" anaa "nyimpa"*, to wit animal or human being. According to Das Gupta et al (2003), most cultures have a certain degree of preference for sons, but often so slight that they are nearly undetectable. Most men consider male children valuable and assets, unlike females. They are therefore treated better than females in many instances.

This is particularly evident in the coastal areas, where the birth of a female is a disadvantage to the fathers, as Anorld and Zhaoxiang (1992) assert that it generates strong disincentives to raise daughters. The reason is that, as

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fishermen, they need male children not only to join them in their fishing expedition but also to replace them and inherit their properties for continuity.

It is for these reasons that the United Nations Development Programme (2013) argues that, gender inequality is a hallmark of most cultures, with males on average better placed in social, economic, and political hierarchies. When females are left behind, society does not only forsake their benefit, society denies them of their contributions to the development of society.

Socialization, therefore, is one avenue considered much important due to the initial contact of children and its impact on their lives thereon. During this period, children are exposed to behaviors society accepts as well as the ones it frowns upon. Fundamentally, children are taught what is good from the bad. During this period too, children are exposed to their relationship with other members of the society including how to conduct themselves around the opposite sex. Children during this important period of their lives are exposed to what they are likely to take up as occupation in the future. As a result, they receive mentorship from either the father or the mother depending on their sex. Therefore, this period becomes a critical period in the formative life of every child.

Sometimes, in some societies in Africa, the manner of raising children, especially in the home could be seen to disadvantage girls because of society's expectation of the girl child in terms of the work to be performed by girls and boys. Silver (1993) mentioned two dominant theories concerning the division of household labor. One suggests that females are primarily restricted to the domestic sphere and that men have paying employment; the other stresses women's dual roles as homemakers and employees. This explains society's

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expectation of who a female is and what should define her socially. Lydia confirms this argument by saying: “In growing up, we were two females and two males. Domestic chores in the home were divided for us girls. We were always responsible for cooking, sweeping, washing bowls among other domestic works. My brothers mostly walked around and played football” (Lydia, personal communication, July5, 2020)

This supports the position of the United Nations Development Plan that males were better positioned in social life as far as gender roles are concerned. This confirms what Rathgeber and Kettel (1989) mentioned that Women and Development (WAD) saw the activities performed by females in the home, including those of social reproduction are not of economic worth. The girls were always engaged in domestic works as society expects of them. This played out heavily especially in the era where the family was much concerned about the female role in the kitchen. This is what I refer to as a traditional home that paid much attention to female gender roles. However, although such division of labor used to be the case, the same cannot be said of all families today. Due to globalization, education and technology, parents do not pay much attention to strict gender roles for boys and girls. Mayberry et al (2013) assert that there is evidence that the changing structure of a modern family will question gender role norms. In a conversation with Martha, she stated that:

> It was during my national service before I got to know things like gender roles because, in my house, we were doing everything the same. I saw my father cook severally and my mother did almost everything. As children, we had help from

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my parents and opportunities were equal at home (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

The response above confirms Mayberry's assertion of gender role norms being challenged in recent times. The end result therefore would be that where so much emphasis is not placed on the strict performance of gender roles, the gender role socialization concept will gradually wane and this would create an enabling environment for both boys and girls to grow without one feeling superior over the other. Presser (1994) posited that men played a greater role in a family life when they supported gender equality and when their wives also contribute to household resources. Once the wife is also involved in income-generating activity, it makes every member very important and appreciated. This brings all family members on board as far as domestic chores are concerned outshining strict gender roles in the family. This, as said earlier, would start to create an equal background for males and females to operate, serving as the beginning of equal opportunities for both males and females in the society.

However, there are still some homes that still hold on to the traditional way of socializing boys and girls into separate gender roles. Such homes still hold on to the idea that it is only the man who is to go out there to work and bring money while the woman takes care of the home. In this instance, the woman mainly performs all the domestic works as the man works to financially support the home. This confirms Wood and Lindorff's (2001) assertion that socialization of females leaves them with the impression that they have less prospects for advancement than men. For gender equality therefore to be achieved, there is the need for such perceptions to be changed which would lead to both boys and girls socialized to take up all roles.

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Gender equality according to Klasen and Lamanna, (2008) is essential in various dimensions including education, health, employment, or pay. World Development Report mentioned that greater gender equality can improve productivity, enhance development outcomes for the next generation, and makes organizations more inclusive (Razavi, 2012). However, inequality between women and men, and boys and girls, is widespread across all areas of life in every society, cutting across both public institutions, such as government structure and markets, and the private sphere, such as families and households. Gender disparities are embodied in the everyday realities of the lives of women and children, including the disproportionate number of women among those living in poverty (United Nations, 2012). Issues of gender inequality exist in our society. An interview with Lydia indicated how some homes conceive gender role of females and find it difficult to move away from it:

> My grandmother when she was alive was very strict on our gender roles, especially, as ladies. She said, she wants us to go into our marriages as responsible women who will keep our homes and families in order. Also, works related to bread baking yielded no money for we the girls, yet any work that my brothers do in the bread baking attracted monetary gains (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020).

It could be inferred from the account of the respondent that, the kind of orientation given to the females in the house ties them to the kitchen and performance of their reproductive role as women in marriage. It is a misconception that the only reason a woman should go into marriage is to perform domestic responsibility and provide caregiving. These days, it goes

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beyond that. Many men are not willing to engage women who are jobless, knowing that a woman's financial gains will go a long way to support the wellbeing of the family. Also, the fact that the males get financial benefit even though meager, to compensate themselves for some of the duties they perform in the house, while the females are denied the benefit for the same work indicates how generally, women's work done in the house is considered valueless and unpaid for. These responses confirm the literature by UNICEF (2005) that the 'gender division of labor' generally dispenses women and girls the lion's share of largely unseen, unpaid caregiving and household tasks, for instance. The misconception is that the works that men typically do has greater status and perceive economic value than work typically done by women. Women's works are typically difficult but unpaid for. This creates the impression that women must remain in the kitchen while the men are free to chase their aspirations. Although such gender role division keeps on working against the female gender, various institutions such as family and education continue to put in measures for continuation and reinforcement of such roles. Martha shared this view:

> Even in the classrooms, some of our textbooks are gender discriminatory. For instance, in a textbook, one is likely to find "Mr. Baah goes to work, Mrs. Baah goes to the kitchen". Indirectly the textbook is telling you that boys and girls are not equal. That even though we are sitting in the same classroom, learning the same thing the textbook is teaching us different things; the boys to go to work and the girls to remain in the house and cook. The curriculum sometimes does not want to train both

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> genders equally from that angle. Again, the textbook teaches "Ama is playing with the doll and Kofi is fixing cars". It gives the impression that women have to be caregivers and men fix cars. These are things we are not paying attention to. So you realize that our textbooks have to be looked at again. They are gender-focused (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

If the family fails to recognize the role played by boys and girls or men and women as equally important and complement each other, the educational sector should teach that. Instead, some of the contents of the textbooks rather deepen the impression that women should be kept in the kitchen and be involved in child care while the men go out to work for money. This has become stereotype, and Ellemers (2018) mentions one disadvantage is that, it prevents women and men from equally sharing the care for children and family members and from equally benefitting from the interpersonal relations made through these practices. Attention should be paid to such issues some may consider trivial, yet have the potential to consolidate 'ongoing wrong'. It is in this direction that women advocates seek to advocate for change in the content of such books.

Education

One avenue women experience differences in their lives as far as gender inequality is concerned is access to formal education. Bintu in my conversation with her said that "I had to leave my parents to stay with a relative where my education was truncated because we were many and there was no money for all of our fees to be paid. So, my father said my brothers should go to school rather"

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(Bintu personal communication, August 15, 2020). Such situations according to the participant put women at the disadvantage and are either not sent to school at all or forced to end their education at lower levels. This results from the perception that a woman's education, no matter the level will end in the kitchen. This confirms what Bowman et al (1982) suggested that it made the position of some women decline.

Some fathers especially do not want to spend their scarce resources on their female children. This affected future employment type and economic gains of girls as Lim (1981) affirmed that, in the formal industrial sector, the majority of females have been relegated to the lowest-paid, most monotonous and often health impairing employment, partly due to their low level of education, but also due to the position assigned to them as complementary rather than principal wage earners.

Education is strongly embedded in the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), in ways that illustrate this rich relationship between gender equality and the right to education. In the CEDAW, article 10 explicitly enshrines the right to equality in education (Mundy, 2012). For this reason, an individual's access to education must not be impeded by any form of discrimination. However, many girls have been denied access to education or forced to end their education at lower levels for various reasons. In an interview with Lydia she mentioned that:

> Growing up in a family of two females and three males, the males were given better education and attention than the females. I remember my father will hurriedly give out money to pay for the fees of my brothers while that of my sister and mine delayed.

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> My father had always maintained that, if he did not use the little he had to give my brothers a better foundation; he had lost everything in life. He said we the females are prone to getting pregnant any day and that meant wasting his resources on nothing and would rather do the needful by spending what he had on the future heads of the family (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020).

The experience of Lydia indicates what other women and girls have gone through and are still going through in life. Mostly, females are almost denied education by their families who hold male education high against the education of the girl child. Education does not end at putting an individual in the classroom. Parents have the role to provide the needs and want of their children to support the children to access better education. Most often, from personal observation, and the experience of Lydia, girls have to struggle to pay for their fees and books while the available resources are used to satisfy that of the male children. In growing up, I had a classmate who had to gather firewood to sell in order to pay for her fees since her father did not see the need to educate her. She is currently a graduate and working her quota to the development of the family and country as a whole. It could be said that though the country's laws grant individuals the right to receive education, it goes beyond putting the individual in school. Parents, therefore, have to make conscious effort to provide education and its peripheral demands to keep children, especially girl child in school. It is in this regard that women in leadership will provide the link through their initiatives, projects, programs, activities and activities to expose, educate and create awareness in the society.

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Leadership

Gender inequality also plays out in leadership even as girls have had access to education. Some people hold the view that females do not have the quality to lead. Meanwhile, leadership style depends on a number of factors including education, experience, culture, work experience, and personality, where it is still not clear to what degree it is influenced by gender and other factors (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). Therefore, the fact that women in leadership positions are perceived differently from men (Eagly & Carli, 2007), may also affect the way they lead due to different expectations. From field data, in terms of leadership positions, respondents claim that males and females were not given fair treatment since males were always considered assets and given an undue advantage in terms of leadership roles. In an interview with Maa Joe, she indicated how in school, females were made to assist the male just as it occurs in the house.

> Discrimination against us begins from the classroom and the school as a whole. When in choosing class representatives, girls are made to assume the role of deputy/ assistance or vice. This places a girl in a position that makes her responsible and accountable to the man and can only function to her full capacities only in the absence of the male who is head. I was a victim. My head prefect was not better than me, but because I was a female, the teachers asked me to assist him. (Maa Joe, personal communication, July, 21, 2020).

In an instance such as above, the admittance of girls into schools does not end gender equality as far as access to education is concerned. The response

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indicates that girls encounter barriers that impeded them to hold a topmost position in schools. This was a kind of discrimination and a presence of glass ceiling that prevented girls to reach the topmost position. However, as Argyiris (1970) described interveners in his intervention theory, there is much being done in this area to limit the inequalities. For example, in an interview with Martha, she revealed how the Centre for Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation had used advocacy as program to turn around the policy. For this reason, in schools, females can now attain substantive leadership role as against being elected or appointed to assist. This is what women in leadership are doing through initiatives, activities, project and programs in contributing to achieve gender equality and empower girls.

Crawford, Brungardt, and Maughan (2000) claim that "conceptually defined, leadership is about creating change" (p. 114). Based on this, the issue of being a male or female leader should be considered secondary. The world has witnessed many powerful men who emerged and made a positive impact on the world. Equally, many powerful women have emerged and are making positive impact in the world. In this view, some women are denied leadership opportunities for the fact that their institutional roles will conflict with their domestic role, among other reasons.

Martha has this to say:

> In my department, there was this lady who was qualified and due to be appointed the head of the department. But do you know that men in the department rose against her appointment because anytime departmental meetings go beyond 5 pm she will complain that she has to go home to perform her domestic

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chores? She faced stiff opposition because she attempted to perform her duties as a wife and a mother. Meanwhile, the same men have their wives in the house around the same time to perform their domestic chores (Martha, personal communication June 27, 2020).

It could be seen that women go through some discriminations for leadership positions from the above claim. Nonetheless, when given the nod, they could perform very well and even sometimes better than their male counterparts.

Mamaa shares her opinion on areas she thinks women have been relegated to the background in terms of leadership. She says:

> In the religious sector, for instance, in the Mosques, women cannot lead prayers. Are we not clean as women? What is the reason for this? Meanwhile, many Muslim women play leadership roles just outside of the Mosque. In the church, certain positions are reserved for men, and women are appointed or elected to assist them. So that means we cannot take major decisions? I am very happy things are changing, though gradually. Everyone has this inbuilt capacity to lead in a way, at different levels, so it does not mean that women should always be behind somebody. I have always raised my voice against some of these issues (Mamaa, personal communication, August 17, 2020).

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Interestingly, women's participation in leadership roles when it comes to religion is another huge challenge that needs to be looked at. Nana recounted an incident in this direction:

> Interestingly, I said I was going to be Osofo and so during my national service days at Komenda Teacher Training College, I had asked the reverend minister there to help me enroll at the Trinity school, and then I got a shock. He said, "Methodist church, we have not started training women to be ministers. We have deacons and others". That did not go down well with me but thank God now they have, except that I became a victim at my time (Nana, personal communication, August 3, 2020).

Despite success attained by some women in leadership, many women generally continue to experience gender inequality to lead in the educational sector, in the religious sectors and at the family levels, among others. Astin (1996) emphasized his conviction that it is possible for all individuals to be leaders and to make a difference in society (Crawford et al., 2000). The sentiment the participants expressed in their responses also attest to what Wergin (2007) and Shapiro (2005) stated, that leadership is an activity, not a title, and the ability to lead can be found in every individual. This is also supported by Maxwell (1993) that leadership is not an exclusive club of those who were 'born with it'. Characteristics that are the raw materials of leadership can be acquired. Women and men bring different perspectives of leadership to the table since each person perceives differently.

According to UNDP (2013) gender is a primary marker of social and economic stratification and, as a result, of exclusion. Regardless of one's socio-

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economic status, there are systemic gender differences in material well-being, even as the degree of discrimination varies across countries and over time. Consequently, gender inequality is a hallmark of most cultures, with males on average better positioned in social, economic, and political hierarchies.

Access to Work/ Job Opportunities

Throughout the world and for most of history, women have had dual roles as income generators (workers) and wives/mothers/caregivers, while men have mostly worked as income generators (Glick & Sahn, 1998). This duality in women's lives has resulted in gender inequality, not only in the household and labor market but also in women's social status and well-being. This theme emerged to show one of the effects of gender inequality on girls and women who are denied equal opportunities as females with regards to access to work/job/ employment. An interview with Martha revealed how women are denied access to work/job and the financial loss that comes with it.

> Many women are denied certain job opportunities because of their sex. For those considered, it comes with lots of conditions such as delay in marriage and childbirth. Some employers often imagine that during these periods of pregnancy and maternity, women create huge vacuums in their places of work and that creates an additional burden on the company or institution. Again, some employers envisage that some categories of women cannot go beyond certain times in the workplace since they have to return home to perform their domestic chores. For this reason, they are denied job opportunities. My senior sister was not giving full-time employment in her last job, especially when she said

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her husband was a civil servant for fear of going on transfer (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

Most often, employers use the biological makeup of women to discriminate against them. The fact that a woman would one day get pregnant is used against women to deny them employment, most especially younger ones. They are denied because employers claimed they would one day go on maternity leave when they give birth. For this reason, even when women are qualified for the job, such job opportunities are given to their male colleagues leaving women unemployed. A similar encounter is narrated by Maa Joe of how a friend was treated. She said:

> A friend of mine after many years of being jobless excelled in an interview as an English teacher in a Senior High School. However, she was invited by the headmaster of the school and was told in the face that she was the best candidate but he wanted to have only male teachers for the core subject because he was afraid the woman will soon start making babies and create a vacuum in the department. So, she could not be employed. This is pure gender discrimination. (Maa Joe, personal communication, July 21, 2020)

These responses demonstrate that lots of considerations are done before a female is giving access to a job opportunity. These include age, marital status, among others that are subtly considered. Scholars such as Guy (1992), and O'neil et al. (2008) posited that females' career is affected by diverse structural and societal issues than males' career. For instance, many young women are given alternatives with regards to marriage and childbirth before they are

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considered for employment. However, these will not be necessary when a young man has to be considered for employment. This can impede personal development and contributions to national development since expertise females bring on board is denied. Companies could introduce and offer flexible work arrangements in the hours of work, among others which would benefit both company and the individuals and increase organizational performance. This will also ensure that the reproductive responsibility of the worker is not denied.

Women's denial to certain jobs greatly affects them in all manners, economically, psychologically and socially. Mamaa indicated that:

> There is construction work ongoing just behind this building (she pointed it). The only job available for women is carrying sand and concrete. All women are prohibited from going beyond that. Men assume that women are physically weak and cannot be involved in any strenuous activity. My daughter stopped because she was paid something small. If we engage in less strenuous activities it also affects our economic gains (Mamaa, persona communication, August 17, 2020).

When women are discriminated against based on their sex, it leads to a lot of constraints on them. From the above, women would earn less from construction work. Once they earn less, economic empowerment for women would not be fully achieved since they would still have to rely on men for support. Psychologically, they would continue to feel less important if they are denied certain jobs or are not placed at par with their male colleagues. Discriminating against them would make them continue to feel subordinate to their male colleagues. Women should therefore be given the same jobs as men

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in the construction site. If they try and they are not able to do the work, they would understand and analyze the situation better and not feel discriminated against. In this case, both men and women would be seen to be given equal chances to prove themselves other than just straightaway, condemning them and given them certain types of jobs because they are women.

Lydia added that:

> Many people in society do not believe that men and women could be equal. Women are therefore denied lots of opportunities. I have no problem when men take up certain jobs presumed to be for ladies. However, if a woman also ventures into certain businesses presumed to be for men, then, society begins to raise eyebrows. I think it depends on the person's ability and capabilities. This means less work for less pay. This puts some women down and affects their financial gains (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020).

Most often society has jacket certain jobs as designated for male and others for female. This is coming from gender role socialization. Recently, a lot of men are moving into jobs that used to be bracketed as female domain like selling of cooked food. On the streets of Accra, there is the proliferation of boys and men carrying fried foods in traffics which has become normal, on the other hand, it is becoming difficult if not impossible for women to venture into male domain jobs such as masonry, road construction, fitting works among others. Lydia explains:

> Look at how lots of male graduates here in Mankessim who are jobless have now ventured into bread baking. Can someone say

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> bread baking is the preserve of women and that no man should venture into? Can women also refer to such male graduates as being inferior, as weaker sex and people who engage in less strenuous works? I think everyone should be given a level playing ground to operate within their capabilities (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

From the responses of the participants, it goes to support Seguino (2010) position that women are more likely to find themselves in precarious often, low-wage employment, while men are concentrated in higher-income jobs with stability and benefits. For instance, a woman who is employed in construction work as a laborer could be sacked anytime especially when it comes to engaging in strenuous works on site. This shows how insecure some women's jobs are. However, many women through their educational qualifications have earned decent and well-paying job. This also means that, those found in the informal and 'insecure' jobs are as a result of not possessing the necessary qualification. It is for these reasons that education should be accessible to women and girls to provide them with the requisite skills needed for jobs. From this analysis, I support Dutton's (2015) assertion that gender inequality needs to be seriously discussed and addressed because if it is not, and inequality becomes the norm, the economic gains will go unrealized, even though many women also stand disadvantaged. This is more especially with the fact that there are a lot of talented individuals especially women whose potentials could be tapped for the richer benefit of the development of the society and the nation. In this regard, one of the ways to achieve this is the intervention programs and activities which

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stakeholders, including women in leadership organize to expose both the employers and employees in the fight against gender inequality.

In a personal conversation with James, he expressed his opinion on the fact that women who have the needed qualification should be given the same opportunity just as their male counterparts. He shared a personal experience in this regard. According to him:

> Gender equality does not exist in contemporary times. In times past, yes, but now I think things have changed and it does not exist anymore. For me, I hire and fire all the time. And I hire based on qualifications and competence and not on gender base. Women who are productive and efficient are hired. Women who are unproductive and inefficient are fired. Gender, to me, produces no unless the output of the individual in question (James, personal communication, August 27, 2020).

This response goes to support Rai and Srivastava (2008) that no glass ceiling (and for that matter gender inequality) exists. Those women were paid lower wages since they quick the job in the middle, worked for lesser time, and join low-risk jobs. Again, career women may hold higher positions based on their competence through hard work and ambitions. Also, family obligations come into the middle of their career development. Rai and Srivastava believe that these put men above women mostly.

Contributions to Achieve Gender Equality and Empowerment

After describing experiences of gender inequality on respondents, the second objective of the study sought to explore the contributions of women in leadership through activities, projects, programs, projects and policies aimed at

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helping to achieve gender equality and women empowerment for women and girls.

According to UNICEF (2005) and UN Women (2013) gender equality is not about transferring opportunities from men to women, but about the realization of the rights of both and development of environments where both genders have the opportunity and the full capacity to achieve their full potential. Gender equality concerns equal opportunities, rights, and obligations for women and men, girls, and boys. It does not mean that women and men are the same. This is the product of unequal distribution of power between women and men, compounded by ongoing discrimination, weaknesses in legislation, policies, and structures, and social relations that normalize inequalities (Australian Government, 2016). To this end, gender equality is about giving the level playing ground for both genders to demonstrate their capabilities and abilities

Work on gender equality is therefore to resolve discriminatory gender standards that limit women and men. However, Benschop, Mills, Mills and Tienari (2012) wonder why the progress of gender equality has been difficult and slow. For this reason, the international community has recognized the importance of fostering gender equality through the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in multilateral, regional and policy fora, but nowhere in the world have women and men achieved equality (Australian Government, 2016). In this regard, I intended to explore the contributions of women in leadership as a form of intervention to the ongoing

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discrimination between boys and girls and men and women to help achieve gender equality.

There is a need for women to champion the course of gender equality campaigns in their respective surroundings. According to UNDP (2015), women and girls constitute half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potentials. As a result, they should be integrated into the working group to achieve a better world. Basak (2017) argues that sharp discrimination between males and females in terms of their strength, ability, wage-earning capacity, and social acceptability is observed in many situations. Basak's argument with regard to misconception of the strength and ability of the female gender, insecure jobs and low wages of women in some employments and general 'social acceptability were experienced by participants, nonetheless, Bintu shared that "people have made it appear as a general belief that women are weaker gender and need protection, hence we have to become subordinate to men" (Bintu, personal communication, August 15, 2020). Evolving from the feminist theory, the deprivation argument claims that societal views deprive women of education, industry experience, networking, and access to resources (Appelbaum, Audet and Miller, 2003; Cron, Bruton, and Slocum,2006). Depriving women of these opportunities to have access to education, employment have affected them into entrepreneurial successes. Yet when opportunities are presented to women, they conquer existing structures.

Many women who have received appropriate qualifications earn them decent work and pay. Therefore, if women are supported and equipped, they demonstrate competence and ability which breaks the stereotypical conditions, especially in entrepreneurship, help raise the status of the female gender,

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provide equal economic gains and help promote achieving gender equality. Businesses headed by women contribute to employment, wealth creation, and economic development through their growing numbers, diversity of activities, and diversity of entrepreneurship in the economic process (Hakala, 2008, Manolova et al, 2007). It is often heard that women are better managers, and the few that have been given opportunities have demonstrated beyond that indeed women are better managers. Women represent different perspectives and alternative ideas when sought for. It is for these reasons that women in leadership sought to contribute to the success of this crusade through initiatives, activities, projects, policies and programs to help in that direction.

In an interview with Bintu, she explained that:

> Now some homes understand that if you give a girl the same level of education as to a boy, and the same opportunity, it benefits both and not just when you train only the man. Homes are now realizing that if you give a girl better education, you are better off in your old age because she will give you the support. Because your son marries and when you are in your old age, you cannot go and stay with your son like you will with your daughter. People who have realized opportunities they would have gotten now in their old age if they had given equal and better education to their girl child have now become advocates for the gender equality course (Bintu, personal communication, August 15, 2020).

Currently, women have broken into all sectors of the economy and are now in many positions that used to be occupied by men only. However, the

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number could be counted. Also, in most traditional homes, some women and girls are denied opportunities few women and girls are enjoying and this will not help achieve gender equality if few women and girls are better off. It is for this reason that traditional leader and religious leaders are included as participants to continue to use their platforms to educate and preach transformative messages.

Women's contributions to a better society cannot be underestimated and so they need to be given the best opportunities to develop themselves and bring out their potentials to the benefit of society. One key benefit of providing equal opportunity for both genders is the need to explore the experiences of both genders. For this reason, contributions of women in leadership through advocacy, training women on leadership skills, organizing gender sensitization programs, organizing gender lens workshops for female students, monitoring, research and counseling and apprenticeship/financial empowerment will go a long way to expose, educate, create awareness and develop more women to be empowered in achieving gender equality.

Advocacy

One major initiative that emerged from the major contributions of women in leadership is advocacy. Advocacy according to Edwards (1993) aims to alter how power, resources, and ideas are produced, consumed, and distributed at a global level, so that people and organizations in the south have a more realistic chance of regulating their development. The CARE International Advocacy Handbook (2014) explains advocacy as the deliberate process of influencing those who make decisions on policy creation, reform, and implementation. Advocates, therefore, must possess an appropriate level of

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skills and experience to perform their role effectively and be taken seriously (Carlisle, 2000). Advocacy is about causing a change in or review of policies that are inimical to the progress of a disadvantaged group. Interview with Martha at the Centre for Gender, Research, Advocacy and Documentation says:

> The main vision for setting up the center was to propagate issues of gender equality. It is to ensure that there is a safe and inclusive space for women where women and gender rights are respected. So we are always out there scrutinizing policies to see if it has a gender lens. If it does not have, we raise voices on it. We use advocacy, outreach and research as channels to achieve our vision. I give lectures and seminars on gender issues for the university community. I also engage in training programs bringing out the need to be gender-sensitive in all that we do as a university community (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

To help achieve gender equality, a center has been established for this course. This is an avenue with a strong voice and legal backing from the university to go for outreaches, conduct researches and investigation and use advocacy as one of their tools to alter existing policies inimical to the development of the female gender. I am of the opinion that centers of this kind be established across the country and not only in public universities, with each mandated and affiliated to one particular sector of our national life; education, health, politics, sports, economy, among others. In this regard, it will facilitate and accelerate achieving gender equality in all sectors of our national lives. As discussed earlier under research question 1, through advocacy the existing

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structure of females being selected or elected to assist, deputize and become vice to male heads has been abolished, especially at the senior high school. This is one of the ways girls have been empowered and their confidence raised to achieve gender parity at that level as far as leadership is concerned.

Martha in her position and capacity has been doing advocacy for gender equality. In an academic environment where the community is made up of the majority being elite, having structures being gender-sensitive is a very promising way to ensure that gender equality is achieved. Once her outreach is understood by both men and women on campus, whatever she teaches trickles down to reflect another lifestyle of her audience. For example, her audience will begin to change the way they had perceived themselves and the other gender and would begin to correct things right from there in terms of the way they socialize their children. A lot of women through her advocacy would also begin to see themselves as able women to challenge some existing structures that do not favor them. In so doing, her outreach and advocacy are going a long way to empower other women in the university community and to challenge existing unfavorable structures that go against women.

Interview with Nana also revealed how she used advocacy to alter policies to the benefit of the female gender when asked what she has done to contribute to gender equality. She says:

> Yes, I sometimes had to fight them, not physical though, severally, for the recognition of queen mothers, because due to my education they respected my views and accepted me somehow and so I took advantage of that. That is one of the reasons I kept pursuing further studies even when I became a

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> queen mother. I fought them until they recognized us and changed some of their chauvinistic policies. That was the only way to get some inimical policies changed (Nana, personal communications, August 3, 2020).

Nana talked about how she capitalized on her position to advocate for women and ensured that queen mothers are recognized for their contributions to national development. She mentioned that hitherto her coronation/installation, queen mothers were not recognized by their chiefs, even though the chiefs were nominated by queen mothers. The role queen mothers played was not recognized and was relegated to the background, which was partly due to their level of education. She, therefore, decided to advocate about it by capitalizing on her level of education which gave her some leverage. Through her advocacy, queen mothers are now duly recognized at the various regional houses of chiefs. They have recognized associations which they use to voice out adverse policies. This is what women in leadership are doing to aid in elevating the status of women and girls in society and help achieve gender equality.

Nana shared another success story which was achieved through advocacy. She continues:

> I remember when a government wanted to establish a second cycle school in my town; I advocated that we did not want a secondary school because there were too many of them around us. The government agreed but came again and proposed a technical education, and again, I advocated strongly that it should be a secondary technical to include vocational programs

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> so that girls can be enrolled. I stood my ground and that decision was reviewed. That is how come we have a secondary technical school here with many girls enrolled. So advocacy, if done strongly achieves (Nana, personal communication, August 3, 2020).

Nana reflected on how she single-handedly had to advocate for initiatives to be changed to the benefit of girls in her jurisdiction. As indicated earlier, she mentioned that her education empowered her and gave her the confidence to initiate advocacy, and made her views respected. It is for these reasons that education has to be made accessible to every girl child to empower them and serve as ultimate equalizer in their attempt to achieve parity.

Training Women on Leadership Skills

Training women and girls on leadership skills is one conscious initiative my participants employ to unearth and equip other women and girls with. According to Maxwell (2012) leadership development is one of the most types of development investments an organization can make. It says leadership training endeavors to achieve two objectives; to provide leaders and administrators with the resources to influence others and to help them appropriately cultivate and to exercise their power to influence and affect change. The point of view of skills makes it possible to teach leadership. Katz believed that leaders can learn and develop skills, while personality traits are something we are born with (Katz, 1955).

Interview with Maa Joe revealed how leadership training is consciously done in her school.

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For instance, in social development, we look at the leadership style as well as ways of nurturing leaders among the many girls under our control. We do this consciously as a school. So we begin from the classroom level where students are encouraged, motivated, admonished, and pushed to take up leadership roles right from the class. We have different portfolios even in the classroom. The reason is to make every member of the class responsible in one way or the other. So right from the grass root, we consciously teach them to become leaders. By this, we give them the chance to express their opinions and learn to be assertive. We also give them the chance to come out with initiatives themselves and you will marvel at the kind of brilliant ideas and initiatives that come up. Although sometimes, there may be one or two things that might not be fine with us, even in that circumstance, we don't discourage them, we do encourage them, motivate them to continue and do better. I remember some time ago, one of the girls was made a class perfect and she was not too happy with that. I had to sit the person down personally and talk to her to bring out her interest and build her confidence. Eventually, she took up the position and improved so fast and wanted to vie for the main students' leadership prefect, but some stronger girls beat her up for it. But I was happy that from that level we were able to build her confidence and wanted to move ahead (Maa Joe, personal communication, July 21, 2020).

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Heading a girls school confers so much responsibility on Maa Joe in terms of inculcating qualities like boosting the self-confidence of girls to take up leadership roles, attaining good grades to get higher education which in the end would all combine to empower the girls to fit well in the society. From Maa Joe, inculcating leadership roles in these girls teach them to take up challenging opportunities in society and to challenge themselves to run at par with male colleagues in schools, organizations, the communities and the country as a whole. Once such girls get their self-esteem boosted, they would be compelled to run for parliamentary positions which would, in the end, lead to an increase of women in parliament leading to the contestation and fight for policies that could help bridge gender disparities among men and women in the country.

Similarly, Martha indicated that:

> Leadership is not restricted to men so we raise the consciousness of girls and women. Women's leadership is different from men's because of how we are brought up. The kind of issues the leaders will see will be different because more girls and women will go to a female leader to talk to her about sexual harassment and abuse than will go to a male leader. We have also realized some females are more comfortable talking to a male about the experience of sexual harassment than they will talk to females. So we train interested males too. Whichever way, we try to inculcate leadership skills whenever opportunities come (Martha, personal communication, July 27, 2020).

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In an attempt to help achieve gender equality, women in leadership consciously undertake leadership skill training for girls and women. As Maa Joe indicated in personal communication with her, "leadership is one way through which gender inequality is perpetuated by enacting inimical policies which are not gender-sensitive". The argument is that most policies are formulated by people at the helm of affairs. These leaders do with limited inputs from the general populace and do not usually reflect gender equality. Therefore, when many women are trained to occupy top positions, policies formulated will be gender friendly. Therefore, when women are trained to take up such positions, they can use their power to formulate and implement and enforce gender-sensitive policies that can help achieve gender equality. For instance, Chattopadhay and Duflo (2004) in their research confirm that women in political office tend to back public expenditure that lessens the burden of women's treatment and support policies that support economic protection.

The other aspect is that, according to Nielsen and Huse (2010) on leadership style among the sexes, the capacity to perform organizational activities does not vary between women and men, instead through their increased openness to others, they add a new viewpoint to strategic decision making. Therefore, when both genders are exposed to the same level playing ground as far as leadership is concerned, both genders perceive and judge differently, present different expertise, experiences which mostly balance decision making. Males and females at every point in time are presented with different opportunities. Therefore, each presents different perspectives on how they observe, value situations and conditions. This helps in better decision

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making and implementation. It is, therefore, not beneficial only to the woman in training but also to society at large.

Personal communication with Reynolds also confirmed the augment and the initiative women in leadership have taken with regards to training women on leadership skills. Reynolds indicated that:

> Gender equality thing about women will take time. Because the arrangement looks natural that men have a role to play by our very nature; assertive, robust, strong. That is how men are made naturally. Women have to understand this and move on. It is natural. However, situations can change to achieve the gender equality campaign when many women are voted or appointed to positions that can make them have power to formulate gender-sensitive policies. Until that happens, things will continue to be slow" (Reynolds, personal communication, August 23, 2020).

Reynolds is of the view that men by nature possess qualities that make them distinct, just as women also possess distinct qualities. It is, therefore, a natural process and that each should play his or her role well to support and complement each other in the family. However, if many women find themselves in influential positions that can make them take decisions with gender lens, it could serve as catalyst in achieving gender equity and women empowerment. This is one of the initiatives women in leadership have undertaken.

Organizing Gender Sensitization Programs

According to Basak (2017) women, empowerment through gender sensitization is one of the key criteria to unlock the potentials of women. He describes sensitization to mean creating awareness to change the prejudice and

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discriminative behavior towards the downtrodden section of the society such as women.

In an interview with Martha, she shared that:

> Because of gender sensitization programs we do, departments are now asking for women to come in to ensure gender balance and equality. For instance, the departments of Population and Health as well as Economics did not have female lecturers. They are now trying to bring in. This has been possible through the gender sensitization program (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

From the above discussion with Martha, it could be said that she is doing and has done much through sensitizing program to bring other women on board where there was no woman. Gender equality is very important in every institution. An organization or a team made up of all female or all male is one that would face a lot of challenges. There is the need to get sexes on board to create a balance. In effect, a department with all-male lectures was lacking. Bringing females on board would go a long way to help. For example, there are female students in the department who would want to look at the female lectures as role models and also talk to them on issues that they might not feel comfortable opening up to male lectures. As a result, having the sensitization program goes a long way to bridge gender gap that existed in the department.

Basak's (2017) position of using gender sensitization programs as a means to create awareness to change discriminative behavior of a section of the

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oppressed group has yielded results in the education sector as indicated by the respondent. Therefore, gender sensitization (program) as an initiative refers to how behaviors are modified by raising awareness about gender equality concerns. Creating awareness enhances consciousness of people about the need to practice gender balance. It is for this reason that women in leadership employ organization of gender-sensitive programs to educate and create awareness which will accelerate the agenda of the gender equality campaign.

In an interview with Lydia, she explained:

> When we meet them (women and girls) we make them aware of the great differences and the gap between us as women and our male counterparts. So awareness is stressed. We also tell them to be assertive and put themselves up for positions whenever necessary. To the women and girls who have had a formal education, we caution them to be aware of the power of the media not to allow themselves to be portrayed as helpless people but rather modern liberated individuals (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020).

Gender sensitization programs have been adopted by the women in leadership as a means to make women aware of the status of the female gender and how to work towards improving their conditions and correcting misconceptions.

Gender lens Workshop for Female Students

Lenses shape who we are, what we think, and what actions we take, thus shaping the world we live… (Runyan& Peterson, 2014). Gender lens workshops have been adopted by women in leadership as one means of working towards

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achieving gender equality, by examining who they are and taking actions that can shape them better to live in society.

Interview with Martha revealed this:

> …we target the students' population. We also have a relationship visit that is supposed to train students on the issues of relationships and how to build equality in relationships among others. For instance, the ability to make friends and how to consciously make choices, relate with men and women, how women can be in control with their bodies, how they should seek consent, and why men need to understand and respect them (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

These are workshops that seek to expose women and girls to issues they may consider trivial, however, have potentials to bring down their images and reduce the status of the female gender. According to the participant, what the women conceive of themselves and portray to the public informs the treatment meted out to them. This is why women in leadership seek to create awareness in that regard.

Maa Joe indicated that:

> We do invite gender units and agencies and in collaboration organize workshops and seminars with gender lens on various topics that inculcate into our students the sense of leadership and expose them to unlimited opportunities while in school and after school. We also partner with departments and agencies to organize seminars and ethical practices workshops not only for

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our female professionals but students as well (Maa Joe, personal communication, July 21, 2020).

The argument is that women in leadership have observed that, how women perceive themselves and how they carry themselves about informs treatment to be meted out to them. For this reason, women in leadership design activities and strategies to explore or examine barriers to gender equality, by taking actions to shape who they and enhance their personality development. Women in Development device this means to accelerate achieving parity. This is one way that can help erase erroneous impressions and misconceptions about the competence and abilities of the female gender. It is for this reason that women in leadership employ as a means of contributing to achieving gender equality. Apart from advocacy, training women on leadership skills, organizing gender-sensitive programs as well as gender lens workshops, mentoring, research and counseling have also been adopted and used by women in leadership to try to achieve gender equality.

Mentoring

According to Kram (1985), mentors provide career development and psycho-social functions such as coaching the protégé, provision of problem-solving orientation, and counseling which is associated with facilitating the protégé's advancement in an organization. Mentoring was found to be one key factor in advancement or progression for women empowerment, especially in their career aspirations.

In an interview with Lydia, she shared that:

I will not hesitate to mention my mother as my sole role model. The whole business was started by my grandmother who died an

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> octogenarian. Due to high patronage, my mother did not look elsewhere for a job. My mother continued from where my late grandmother left off and that is what has sustained the whole family. My mother initially did not want me to take over the business from her. She wanted me to further in my education after completing junior high. However, when she realized my interest and commitment to the work and the fact that there are a lot of jobless graduates out there, she consented to my choice. We have earned properties from this business and the family is financially empowered (Lydia, July 15, 2020).

Lydia's response confirmed the position of Kneviton (2004) that parents may not be aware that they may also exert a strong occupation influence. From the interview, Lydia had also conceived the idea of taking over the business due to the fact that her mother took over from her grandmother. Due to her mother's commitment and involvement as well as the gains, Lydia indirectly got influenced without her mother's intention, which is confirmed by Kneviton (2004).

An interview with Maa Joe also revealed influence from her father:

> I looked up to my father. He was a lecturer and somewhere along the line, he went to a Colombian University to pursue his Ph.D. So he took us along briefly. And so I felt he had been able to make it to that level so I would also try my best to get to the top. And so after the first degree, I taught for years, got married, and after I had finished making my babies, I said let me go in for my second degree (MPhil –Educational Administration). …but that

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> notwithstanding, I think I have tried and if I am not too old, and I still get the chance, then I will go in for my Ph.D. just like my father (Maa Joe, July 21, 2020)

Again, this response shows how the respondent was also influenced by her father's career indirectly, which again confirms the assertion made by Kniviton (2004). Even though, she was able to 'move up', she could not get to her target due to marriage. Marriage is later discussed as one of the barriers which women in leadership encounter in their quest to achieve their targeted 'heights' and help achieve gender equality. Considering a lifetime career option can be a major decision for individuals. It is for this reason that Ferry (2006), posited that while people perceived to be an individual choice, research indicates that a number of variables such as family, school, culture as well as economic considerations are likely to manipulate the final option of one's profession. However, among these variables, students report that parents have the greatest influence on which career they choose (Kneviton, 2004) and the responses from the participants have confirmed that report. I also agree to this assertion based on personal experience and observations.

However, another participant indicated what influenced her choice of a career outside of what I call internal influence from her parents. According to her, she did not have a specific person in mind.

An interview with Martha revealed that:

> My boss, whom I worked with during my national service, influenced me. While I was growing up, one thing I knew was that I wasn't attracted to rich women. What I admired was women who had this powerful voice, they speak and you know

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> that it is backed by some authorities. I always aimed that when I grow up I want to become someone like that. That is what I had in my mind as a guide. I was ready to go all out for it, so when I met my boss she did just that and through her, I have met other influential people who have guided my path so far. When you talk to them, they guide you, teach you, among other things. So, I have a number of them now as mentors (Martha, June 27, 2020).

The response revealed another area people get their inspiration and influence from as far as mentorship in career aspirations and personal development are concerned. Even though her parents' status had an influence on her, it did not influence her to the extent of making their profession her ultimate choice. She wanted something different from what her parents were involved in already. Also, she knew she could do whatever she wanted because she had an equal opportunity like her other siblings. Again, her parents were ready to support and so nothing could limit her from what she wanted to do.

Mentors develop to be role models, which Gauntlett (2002: 211) defines as "someone to look up to and base your character, values, and aspirations" and not necessarily "because they embody our aspirations but rather as someone on whom we base our assessment of what makes a desirable character trait, value, or aspiration". Individuals have different preferences when it comes to choosing someone as their role models. The preference is also dependent on many factors around the individual such as career, level of education, position and influence in the society, economic background, among others. My understanding is that a role model or mentor is someone we admire, but it goes beyond that. For me, it

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is someone who holds 'your hand through a system', guides you and shapes your career path and life in general. A role model or mentor makes you know the obstacles and how to maneuver them, tells you mistakes he or she made that you don't repeat them. So, it is not just admiring somebody from afar but getting closer and involved in the person's general lifestyle as a whole.

Research and Counseling

With research, women in leadership investigate underlying reasons and causes of gender inequality. When the causes are established, it informs women in leadership to adopt immediate steps such as advocacy, training women and girls on leadership skills, organize gender-sensitive programs, and gender lens workshops to alter the situation for the better. With research and counseling, the outfit does organize one-on-one counseling sessions for students on regular basis. Most of the topics considered for the workshops as well as counseling are problems and challenges that women in leadership face as well as those students share with them during the counseling sessions. Sensitization programs, workshops and advocacy are planned based on the researches conducted by these leaders.

In an interview with Maa Joe, she explained that:

> The school also provides counseling sessions to students the school identifies with unique talents, basically to build their capacities and abilities to excel and achieve in the future. Those with special challenges too are also attended to. Various house masters and mistresses as well as form masters are charged to always be on the lookout for such individuals. We also entreat them to regularly meet with them and encourage the students to

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confide in them with their problems, challenges and successes (Maa Joe, personal communication, July 21, 2020)

From Maa Joe's response, the school management has stipulated measures such as charging the housemasters and mistresses and form masters, to continuously monitor the students and encourage them as well to share with them their problems and achievement. This is what the school seeks to offer counseling. It is through these opportunities school management educate and create awareness of some of the barriers that impede personal development and help promote and achieve gender equality. It could be deduced from the literature and the responses that most of the steps women in leadership adopt as the means to contribute to achieving gender equality are interrelated and ends with advocacy.

Nevertheless, some of the participants expressed the sentiment that gender equality could be achieved if women are empowered to be financially independent such that they could depend on themselves and care for their dependents.

In an interview with Martha, she shared that:

> We do gender assessment of the university yearly, looking at the male-female students' population and the programs they pursue. We also collect these data for the university to know where there are gaps, for instance, if there are fewer women in a program or staff recruited, we advise increasing female recruitment because they are few. (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

The Centre for Gender Research and Advocacy with its core mandate, regularly insist and ensure gender balance among students' academic programs

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as well as staff recruitment in the university to ensure that there is fair equity if not parity.

Apprenticeship/ Financial Empowerment

Economic empowerment describes the capacity to take and act on decisions concerning the management and distribution of financial resources (Golla et al., 2011). There could be interventions intended to increase the financial impact of females and girls to help them to achieve economic freedom. This is one way of empowering women and girls, as Prasad (2012) said that women's empowerment does not mean putting women against men, but acknowledging both their shifting roles and status and create consensus in society for harmonious living. Participants expressed their views that economically stable women achieve a certain degree of independence.

In an interview with Lydia, she expressed that:

> One thing I have realized is women should be empowered. Empowering women means they had to be financially strong. Most of the women who are denigrated or looked down upon or considered inferior to men are women who are not financially stable. However, if a woman is well to do in a society, she is considered, recognized, and acknowledged in many ways in society. It is for this reason that we try to link our women up to financial institutions for financial assistance in their trades...I advise women to work hard for financial freedom (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020)

She mentions a policy she has to that effect.

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> One initiative I have in place is to allow girls and women who have an interest to do retail business in my bakery but do not have a starting capital. Therefore, you do not need capital to begin a retail business from my outfit, only your interest to do the business. I only need to know your family background and two family members as sureties who have to agree to my terms and conditions (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020).

Women in leadership like Lydia maintains a position that anyone who is financially stable earns some degree of respect from male even if it is not openly displayed. It becomes very difficult for such women to be abused, especially when their source of livelihood and other financial expenses are dependent on their efforts. Lydia was optimistic that if women become financially stable, it contributes to attaining gender equality and empowering women. It is for these reasons; she has a very flexible arrangement with her retailers to improve their financial stability.

Similarly, an interview with Nana revealed this:

> I looked for some microfinance that negotiates and provides credit facilities to women for business. It is also to make women economically empowered to be able to improve their lives and also to help bring up their children especially girls in a modest way to make them responsible in society. The challenge, therefore, is that some of them did not fulfill their obligation to some of the financial companies and they had to withdraw.

Nana equally shares the sentiment that, for women to live meaningful lives, they need to be financially independent. She mentioned that education

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will help women to break the barrier of not being at par with the male gender. However, women who are not able to achieve financial independence need to work hard to catch up to enable them to use their resources to impact their future generations. This is why as a woman in leadership, Nana initiated a project to look for financial institutions to support women who are in businesses within her constituency.

Challenges/Barriers of Women in Leadership

There are challenges or barriers any individual who undertakes an endeavor encounter. Women in leadership working as interveners for gender equality also face some challenges. To understand this fully, the third research question sought to bring out challenges women in leadership encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality.

In the context of this study, the two terms; challenges or barriers refer to obstacles that test the ability of women in leadership and prevent them from intervening to achieve gender equality. Interviews with participants revealed barriers that women in leadership encounter in their quest to help attain gender equality.

Geographical /Environmental Factors

Contextually, environment in this context refers to a particular place and space where a girl or woman finds herself to be socialized, reside, or work and the impact it has on the individual thereof.

An interview with Lydia revealed that:

> Sometimes, the environment one finds himself or herself in counts a lot. It is one of the problems we have. This is what we are trying to breakthrough. As an association, when we meet the

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> women, we try to convince the unemployed ones to start up something that could earn them a decent wage. However, many women and girls do not want to go into any profitable venture. Many of the women and girls loiter around aimlessly and engage in profitless activities, and so it makes their life dependent on their men, who capitalize on this to sometimes abuse them. Some want to travel to other places to look for jobs that do not exist (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020).

Lydia in the interview expressed her deep disappointment for the actions of some women. She mentions that the young association notices the environment has not been helpful in the sense that, many women and girls care less whether they are into any economically viable venture or not. They belong to a school of thought that believes that once a man comes for their hands in marriage or proposes a relationship with them, he is duty-bound to provide all their needs and wants for them. In other words, their economic lifestyle is dependent solely on the man. For this reason, women and girls disregard every opportunity that could empower them and earn them decent wages or pay and make them economically sound. Men, therefore, perceive the women as their 'properties' and push them around with little respect for them. They abuse them with the least provocation. This is what women in leadership try to avoid raising the status of women in society by providing many sources of apprentices for financial empowerment.

In an interview with Martha, she recounted some challenges she went through in her life. She says:

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> One challenge is that when I started my Ph.D., male friends of mine come to tell me that they will not marry a woman who has higher educational qualifications than them. A woman should have a limit in her education. Unfortunately, these are men who are also doing their masters and PhDs. This is what some of the women and girls report to us during researches and counseling sessions. Many educated men do discourage their young girls to seek marriage after say, senior high. Many men also discourage women around them to end their education at certain levels, just like I was told severally, because, after all, she has to give birth and care for the child or children at home. So you can imagine the impediments that come your way. I did not give my attention to this because I was ready to go all out for it. So, I think that my survival was due to the kind of people I had around me in my environment (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

Impediments to women's rise to the top also occur in an academic and enlightened environment. Ironically, this is an environment where one would have thought people should know better. Unfortunately, the environment promotes and reinforces gender inequality. Many men want their wives to be career women to contribute financially to the well-being of the family. Unfortunately, some are serving as impediments with their words and actions in the progress of women. The environment a woman finds herself in and many challenges such as the above conversation confront them in their strides to attain a higher height in their fields of endeavor. It takes strong and determined women

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to stay through. So, the environment one finds herself contributes much to personal and career progression.

It is for this reason, that some of my participants organize workshops and counseling, as well as encourage mentorship to expose women to and make them aware of some of these issues likely to distract their progress and fight to the top.

Martha shared that:

> My co-workers and bosses are gender-sensitive and they do not create a hostile environment for me and so I can say those have contributed to my ability to rise to this level quickly and easily. Because I find myself in a space where women can thrive. So where you find yourself is also very important. We are women and working for women, so we are gender-sensitive about every move we make. They are people that understand gender issues and the consequences. It has been a good and safe place for me. However, I know many face challenges from a hostile work environment (Martha, personal communication, June 27, 2020).

The response above indicates how women should build a favorable atmosphere for other females to thrive, especially in the midst of men. Martha finds herself in an environment that had contributed to her success as a woman in leadership. Since every worker there understands gender issues, they take gender-sensitive decisions which to a large extent benefit all women. However, many women find themselves in environment, especially a working environment, where gender inequality is promoted, perhaps subtly. This results from lack of understanding of gender issues on the part of the co-workers and

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authorities. When this occurs, it becomes difficult too for the women to penetrate. An incident recounted by Maa Joe exemplifies this:

> A colleague of mine is in a department where it is male-dominated. Though we came out the same year, she has not been able to get to where I have reached. She has met a lot of gender obstacles because she finds herself in men dominated department which has not been helpful. For instance, she would be given fewer courses to teach. The assumption is she has given birth and will be unproductive, she would not have time, she will go home, among other excuses. All these affected the lady's promotion (Maa Joe, personal communication, July 21, 2020).

In an instance such as this, it could probably be assumed that the men are unaware of the need to be gender-sensitive in this regard. Women have a reproductive duty to perform. At the same time, with the right qualification, they deserve a decent job such as teaching. Therefore, in such instances, a flexible working arrangement could be introduced to maximize the productive benefit of the women instead of gender bias decisions that retrogress or cause a standstill in the rate of career progression of women. A gender-sensitive workshop could be an intervention in this regard.

Artificial Barriers

The issue of marriage and family problems also came up as one-way women in leadership progress is affected. This is as a result of heap of domestic works which prevent some women in marriage to take advantage of programs that provide support for personal growth and development.

Bintu, in an interview, shared that:

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> One problem we face as leaders is marriage and family issues with our women. We do not organize many programs regularly due to inadequate finance. However, in anything we do, most of the women do not show up and complain about family problems and demands. Meanwhile, we organize some of these things to help and empower ourselves but sometimes it becomes discouraging to note. Many did not get opportunities just as I did not get to go higher and I feel we can still do a lot to raise our standards, but it is sometimes discouraging to those of us leading these groups. Sometimes I understand them because we Moslem, our level of submission expected in the home is something else to talk about (Bintu, personal communication, July 21, 2020).

According to Bintu, women themselves through excuses impede their progress. Women should not succumb to family pressure and demand to deny themselves of their personal development. As she mentioned, as a woman in leadership, she organizes programs and activities that could empower women and help raise their standards and status. However, through excuses from women, such program mostly receives low patronage from the women. Also, she mentioned the fact that some women do not support their children, especially girl child in their education to keep them in school. They do not provide the girl child with her needs due to financial problems they encounter in the family. When this continues, it slows down the pace of the initiative and activities of women in leadership to help achieve gender equity and women empowerment.

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In an interview with Mamaa, she explained that:

> I have been a 'women's worker' all my life. So, in all the stations I have served, I took particular interest in the affairs of women. So when we get funds from donors, I arrange programs, invite resource personnel to the church to teach women empowerment, which includes how they can invest little and profit more, among other programs. I realized on weekdays, most of them become busy. So we do organize it on weekends. Still, patronage was low. I moved it to Sundays after church, still, the women give excuses and some of them sneak to avoid the program when we have invested in it. But the painful aspect is most of them are not doing anything that brings them enough, and so when you attend, you learn a thing or two to improve your lives. But the women complain of family pressure.

This conversation adds up to the earlier submission. Women allow family pressure to rob them off personal progress and activities that have the potential to improve their financial status. Such issues eventually halt programs and initiatives that otherwise improve lives for women as was revealed by the respondent. According to her, she does not like the state of some of the women, yet they do not want to avail themselves for activities that could turn their lives around.

In a personal communication with Fred, he revealed one reason that warrants women's low participation to attend empowerment programs organized by women in leadership. According to them:

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> Sometimes, the issue of women seeking equality is baffling. Men suffer a lot. Some of us leave home early in the morning and return late at night all in the name of working hard to cater for a family. When we return home, we need to see that our backs are safe that is why we marry. If women want to be equal to men, does it mean they want men to share their domestic work with them? (Fred, personal communication, August 27, 2020)

The response indicates a special role the men assume to play by working hard to support their families financially. In essence, the respondents expect women to be in the house and engage in domestic affairs and caregiving. This confirms some of the female respondents' view of men keeping them in the home. However, these women may have qualifications that could gain them employment and financially support the family.

Same-sex Rivalry

In this situation, same-sex rivalry pertains to obstacles females who have broken through the glass ceiling and are at the helm of affairs put in the ways of other women under them or frustrate their efforts in climbing to the top. Some women at the top feel threatened once those below them attempt to climb higher. Some, thus, put in place measures to frustrate or block the chances of other girls. During this period, some women employ all means subtly or overtly to demonstrate their frustrations. It is during some of these demonstrations that result in the popular aphorism that 'women are their own enemies'. This goes against what other women hardly admonish women to do.

Mamaa, in an interview, shared that:

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> Everything we (I and other Rev. Ministers) did concerning my entry into the ministry was totally at the blind side of all other female reverend ministers. You won't believe it. Even when my admission letter came, they asked me to keep it to myself. Finally, when my appointment came, they asked me to keep it to myself until I got to my first station before I could discuss it with some of the women. Why do you think they did that? From there, frustration from female ministers in higher positions began. This is ministry. It was not easy. Some women can be something (Mamaa, personal communication, August 17, 2020).

Frustrations some women go through in the hands of other women all in the attempt to prevent them from getting to achieve higher status and the personal benefits that come with it also occur in the religious sector. Fortunately or unfortunately, men have become aware of this phenomenon. Considerably, it is not all women who engage in the act participant described as 'retrogressive'. However, gender equality will become difficult to be achieved if the victims of gender inequality do not engage in the fight against it. It is for this reason that women in leadership take initiatives to rectify such menace among the female gender.

Lydia shared that:

> The ladies who work with me will come to complain of gossips my colleague women in the same business say about me. It is like an unspoken competition among us. According to my workers, some of my colleagues even say they will treat them better and give them better offers when they come and work with

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them. But I know how I treat these ladies. I have about forty-five of them now and it never reduces, but keeps increasing. Women…hmm. (Lydia, personal communication, July 15, 2020)

Many women display acts of jealousy to the progression of their colleagues. They engaged in 'unspoken competition' as used by the participant to frustrate and subdue their colleagues. Many women sow seeds of disunity among themselves and prevent themselves from fighting a common goal. According to the women, some even team up with men to discriminate against and subordinate their fellow women.

The submissions of these participants were confirmed in personal communication with Patrick, one of the male participants revealed that "some of the women themselves are against gender equality. They are not united in this course and so men do not see it as their problem but women's problem" (Patrick, personal communication, August 23, 2020).

The respondent raised issues that came up as one of the barriers or challenges women in leadership face in their quest to help achieve gender equality. Men have observed that women do not present a united front in this crusade. Therefore, some men do not attach seriousness and do not pay much attention to it. Men want to see all women involved in this campaign, however, instances, where other women create impediments and serve as obstacles to the career progress and personal development of colleague women, do not convince men to support the campaign.

Financial Constraints

Financial constraints in this context refer to inadequate or lack of funds to carry out planned initiatives, programs, projects, activities that create

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awareness and open women up to the course of fighting gender inequalities around them. Women in leadership complain of how their action plans suffer implementation as a result of scarcity of funds.

In an interview with Nana, she lamented that:

> I could do a lot but sometimes, resources to organize programs and initiate projects I plan is also another challenge I encounter as a queen mother. For instance, in one of my meetings with the women in my jurisdiction, we agreed to set up a scholarship fund to provide basic things for our ladies who enter into secondary schools, it did not materialize because the means are not there. It is difficult to get sponsors and the chiefs see that as our problems and so do not help (Nana, personal communication, August 3, 2020).

Nana poured out her frustration and inability to implement initiatives or projects she plans with either her colleague queen mothers or women in her jurisdiction. The will and the zeal to partake in the fight for gender equity and empowering women are impeded by financial constraints. This prevents women's empowerment and denies women progression. Interestingly, many men such as chiefs as indicated by the participant sometimes refuse to assist financially since they see women empowerment as women's problem. To this end, women in leadership call for men to be participants in the gender equality and women empowerment agenda.

Bintu recounted that:

> In the Muslim community, people think we give out money a lot. It is partly true, but you have to continuously knock on people's

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> doors for assistance before you could organize programs. You need to be innovative in this direction; else you could go a whole year without organizing a single gender activity. Meanwhile, we need to continuously create awareness and fight it in our way. The financial problem is drawing a lot of whole projects back (Bintu, personal communication, August 15, 2020)

Bintu agreed that financial problem should not impede their quest to organize gender-sensitive programmes; however, they sometimes go through a lot before they could organize programmes. Financial constraints have been a thorn in the women's flesh in the implementation of planned programmes. A fund set up by the government that women could rely on to organize their programmes and activities would help achieve the goals of women.

Theoretical Implication of the Study

The pursuit to achieve gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls is a prime responsibility of the government to implement international conventions and policies, formulate national laws and frameworks which will promote its achievement. According to Adomako (2008), most Sub-Saharan African countries are having a lot of challenges with the enactment of legislation which will ensure that governments in these countries are responding to gender inequality due to cultural as well as social barriers to these legislations.

However, other actors such as international organizations and private organizations have roles to play in this campaign. Another group that also has the responsibility to contribute to the promotion and achieving of gender equality is women who have been able to break through the glass ceiling and are in leadership positions. Contributions of such women in leadership can be

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seen as an intervention towards helping to achieve gender equality. In view of this, the study employed Argyiri (1970) intervention theory.

Argyiri (1970) describes intervention theory as when an intervener is to enter into an ongoing scheme of relationship, to come between them or between individuals, groups, or objects to help them. In this sense, an intervener supports a system to become more successful in problem-solving, decision-making, and execution of a decision in such a way that the system can continue to be more effective in these operations and have a dwindling need for the intervener.

An intervener also focuses on activities and actions that eventually (not necessarily immediately) provide the people with opportunities to enhance their competence and effectiveness and to do away with all forms of barriers and hindrances that plague the people's personal growth and development. Since there should be an intervener in the 'ongoing system', Giridhar (2012), Ortiz-Barreda & Vives-Cases (2013) posit that the government has intervened to promote gender equality by signing on to treaties, both regional and international as well as passing legislation to ensure gender equality and empowerment. Efforts of these institutions have not achieved the gender equality agenda. Therefore, the collected data brought out women in leadership positions as one group of 'interveners' and their contributions as activities and actions of the theory. The theory, therefore, fits into the study because the various activities have the potential to help achieve gender equality eventually, not immediately though.

Argyiri (1970) intervention theory is confirmed as one way of achieving gender equality and women empowerment through contributions of women in leadership in public and private institutions and establishments.

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Chapter Summary

The contributions of women participants in complementing the central government's effort to achieve gender equality cannot be underestimated. From the collected data, these are done through initiatives, projects, programs, and activities and policies that have been undertaken, are undertaking and yet to be undertaken by these women participants.

The consequence of gender inequality on society stretches from the individual women to their children and the society at large. Therefore, experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership were noticed in the areas of gender role and socialization, education, job opportunity and leadership.

Considering the heavy toll of consequences of gender inequality on women and girls and the personal experiences of women participants in the Central region, steps have been taken to help bridge the inequality gaps through initiatives, policies, activities, and programs. The results of these initiatives are advocacy, training women on leadership skills, organizing gender-sensitive programs, organizing gender lens workshops, mentorship, research and counseling as well as an apprenticeship for financial empowerment. These initiatives have been assessed to produce results and are considered to be steps, which to some extent, have the potentials of helping expose, educate and create the necessary awareness to help bridge the gender inequality gap.

However, these successes chalked did not occur without challenges. Women in leadership, in their quest to help achieve the results indicated above, encounter challenges such as geographical/environmental factors, artificial barriers, same-sex rivalry and financial constraints. If these challenges are dealt

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with, it will afford the women participants in this study a better opportunity to deepen their steps to help improve the rate to achieve gender equality.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study, examines the main findings, draws conclusions and makes recommendations for stakeholders. With one-on-one semi-structured interview guide of qualitative survey and line of reasoning from preceding writers both Western and African, the study has sought to add knowledge to the on-going debate on the ways of achieving goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals; gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls before the year 2030. To help address this gender inequality, the study adopted Argyiris (1970) Intervention Theory as its theoretical framework underpinning the research into contributions of women who have been able to break through the glass ceiling and in leadership positions to complement the government's efforts of achieving gender equality.

The study interviewed women in leadership in some selected districts in the Central Region and the initiatives, policies, activities, projects and programs they are undertaking to help achieve gender equality. The study further tried to bring out constraining factors these women encounter in their quest to help achieve gender equality in their respective areas. Gender inequality of women and girls begins from the time of conception where some wives and mothers suffer the fate of conceiving females. It continues where females are socialized differently from the male in society through strict gender roles. When both genders are not given the same opportunities to develop, it affects the abilities and capabilities of the disadvantaged gender and has consequences on their life.

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Summary of Main Findings

In exploring the experiences of gender inequality on women in leadership, areas that women in leadership have experienced gender inequality prior to their leadership status included gender role and socialization, education, job opportunities and leadership.

With the experiences of gender disparity in the life of the women in leadership, the women have taken up initiatives, activities, projects, policies and programs as a way to intervene in the experiences of many women and help attain gender equality and women empowerment. In this regard, some of the interventions included advocacy. Advocacy is done primarily to alter ways in which power is concentrated at one side of the gender group to the detriment of the other. For this reason, advocates must have a certain level of skills and expertise to execute their mandate. The other interventions as a way of contributing to achieving gender equality included programs and initiatives such as training women on leadership skills, organizing gender-sensitive programs, organizing gender lens workshops for females, mentorship, research and counseling as well as apprenticeship and financial empowerment. These interventions aim to expose women, educate them, empower them by equipping them with the necessary skills and create awareness of the unfairness and discriminatory conducts towards the less privileged. Also, there is an argument that most policies are formulated by people at the helm of affairs. Leaders mostly take decisions without considering concerns of the general populace and mostly affect processes towards achieving gender equality.

Therefore, when women and girls are consciously trained and equipped with leadership skills, policies formulated will have gender lens when such

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women take up leadership positions. Moreover, the study found that women in leadership organize gender sensitization programs as a means of achieving gender equality. These programs are intended to expose women and girls to the unfairness of female gender experience and create awareness to change the unfairness and discriminatory conduct towards the less privileged. Besides, the study found that, in their quest to help achieve gender equality, women in leadership design programs with gender lens to accelerate the rate to improve the female gender status. These programs make women perceive things from the female gender perspective. Again, findings indicated that women in leadership use research and counseling to help achieve gender equality. They investigate challenges or problems women and girls encounter and share. This helps women in leadership to properly organize and offer constructive and useful counseling. Finally, the study revealed the expression of the sentiment of equating gender equality to financial empowerment. This has to do with increasing the economic power of women and girls to live decently. The women believe that the above findings if properly planned and executed have the potentials of contributing to improve the status of females in society and eventually help achieve gender equality.

Through the study, it has been revealed that women in various leadership positions are not relenting on their efforts to help promote and achieve gender equality. However, they encounter challenges and barriers in their quest to help achieve gender equality which impedes their progression. These include environmental/ geographical factors, artificial barriers in marriage and family, same-sex rivalry and financial constraints. The environment some women and girls find themselves in does not motivate them to embrace interventions that

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women in leadership offer. Most women have the notion that men provide financial support and therefore, depend on men for their economic needs. This opens them up for abuse and lack of respect from men. Artificial barriers in marriage such as domestic works prevent women from participating in empowerment programs designed by women in leadership to expose and create opportunities for empowerment. Also, some women become obstacles in the progress of colleague women they perceive as a threat to their positions and results in antagonism on colleague females. They, therefore, employ different means to frustrate them from personal development and career progression.

Finally, financial constraints prevent women from implementing action plans which aim to expose, equip and create awareness of the status of the female gender and work to improve it. These challenges and barriers serve as contributing factors that impede the strides against gender equality. Therefore, the women admit that the strides they are making are slow, and even though, they do not hope to see sudden results, they are hopeful that with time, equity will be achieved if not equality.

The review of secondary documents also revealed that government, both past, and present have done a lot as far as the implementation of conventions, policies, and frameworks are concerned for the achievement of gender equality in the nation. According to a report from the Government of Ghana (2015) Ghana has made strides in promoting gender equality and empowering women in the political, economic, and social spheres over the past decade. The objectives of Ghana to achieve gender equality and women empowerment are guided by the 1992 Constitution, the goals in National Development Frameworks, and the commitments to International Frameworks and

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Instruments on human rights, social protection, good governance, and accountability for development with an emphasis on the rights of women, men, and children (Government of Ghana, 2015). Thus, the efforts made demonstrate the Ghana governments' commitment to end gender equality. Nevertheless, the headway made in Ghana on gender equality and women's empowerment is recognized by the fact that there is still a significant problem that needs to be tackled to ensure that national and international goals are accomplished in the best possible way.

The call by women in leadership for men to join in the campaign of women's fight for gender equality revealed perceptions of men. Men engaged in this topic had their reservations. Their responses indicate that the stride to achieve gender equality will be slow.

Conclusion

The study looked at the experiences of gender inequality on the women in leadership as participants of the study. It also explored the contributions of women in leadership towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment of the Sustainable Development Goal 5. The study also identified challenges or barriers women in leadership encounter in their quest to help attain gender equity. In the end, it was revealed that areas women in leadership experienced gender inequality prior to their leadership status included gender role and socialization, education, job opportunities and leadership.

The study also established that women in leadership are taking steps to correct these by making contributions towards ensuring that gender equity and empowering women and girls are achieved. These steps or contributions include advocacy, training women in leadership skills, organizing gender-sensitive

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programs, gender lens workshops for female students, mentorship, research and counseling as well as apprenticeship and financial empowerment opportunities. These contributions make women in leadership intervene in ongoing gender inequality. It is based on this that Argyri (1970) intervention theory is an application to the study. With this theory, the women in leadership are seen as interveners and focus on activities and actions that eventually (not necessary immediately) provide the people with opportunities to enhance their competence and effectiveness and to do away with all forms of barriers and hindrances that plagues the people's personal growth and development.

The study also found out that, in the quest of women in leadership to help achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, women in leadership encounter challenges or barriers. These include environmental/geographical factors, artificial barriers in marriage/family, same-sex rivalry and financial constraints which lead to poor budgeting and implementation of policies and programs.

Recommendations

Based on the research questions, findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made for the stakeholders;

Women in leadership should endeavor to share how they survived their experiences of gender inequality in their lives with young girls. This will expose young girls and strengthen them to strive to attain greater height.

Also, individual women in leadership should come together to form formidable associations and organizations with highly knowledgeable and educated individuals to get a voice for other women. This is because two of the participants indicated that their level of education gave them confidence in their

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advocacy and placed them in positions that made their advocacy to be considered.

Finally, the researcher recommends that the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection must establish a women empowerment fund at the local level from which women in leadership can access funds to help develop and implement empowerment programs for women and girls at their levels. Some of the participants had brilliant ideas but lacked the financial support to implement them.

Suggested Research

The researcher suggests that other works could focus on women associations and their contributions towards achieving gender equality and women empowerment.

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APPENDIXES

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Bio data of respondent

1. Name
2. Educational level(Background)
3. Areas of work

Experiences of gender inequality on Women in Leadership

1. Do you have a story of how gender inequality has played out in your life?
2. Which areas do you find girls and women experiencing gender inequality in society?
3. Did you have a role model(s) when growing up who influenced your career advancement?

Exploring contributions of women in leadership aimed at achieving gender equality and empowerment of all girls and women.

4. Why do you think it is necessary to support the campaign for gender equality in our societies?
5. What are the benefits of achieving gender equality in our homes and society at large?
6. What are your contributions (in terms of initiatives, policies, projects and programmes) towards achieving gender equality in your area of work or the society?
7. How are these projects, initiatives, policies and programmes evaluated?
8. What have you done to empower younger women and girls towards achieving gender equality?

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9. What advice do you have for young females concerning career advancement and glass ceiling?

Challenges women in leadership encounter in their quest to help achieve SDG 5

1. What are the challenges or barriers you encountered as a female in your quest to attain this height in your profession?
2. Do you encounter any gender-based challenges or barriers in your workplace?
3. How does gender inequality affect you personally and women in general?
4. What factors do you think hinder gender equality issues in your workplace?
5. Do you think the government is doing enough as far as gender inequality is concerned?

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