

FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST THE ACADEMIC GROWTH OF  
FEMALES IN

THE DANGME-WEST DISTRICT

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2009

FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST THE ACADEMIC GROWTH OF  
FEMALES IN THE DANGME-WEST DISTRICT

BY

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Dissertation Submitted to the Institute of Education of the Faculty of  
Education, University of Cape Coast, in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Award of Master of Education Degree in Educational  
Management

MARCH 2009



## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

*I, hereby declare, that this dissertation 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: Samuel Stevens Boateng

### Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's signature.....

Date.....

Name: Dr. Y. A. Ankomah

## **ABSTRACT**

The main focus of educational management as a discipline is to develop human resources. From cursory observation, Dangme West District was identified as having more females who are not able to further their education beyond the basic level. The study was therefore intended to find out what factors account for females' inability to study to the highest levels in order to enjoy the needed social status.

The sample size of 300 was made up of Head teachers, teachers, parents and the Junior High School (JHS) non-continuing students. Because the study is about them, the JHS non-continuing students formed 50% of the listed population of the study. The total sample size was selected on proportional basis using the seven circuits of the Dangme West District, namely, Volivo, Asutuare, Doryumu, Dodowa, Prampram, Ningo and Nyigbenya. The main instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire which embodied the Likert-type scale options. The captured data were computed using frequencies and percentages.

Findings from the study included some hidden practices against females. It was noted that these females were given over to serve shrines and gods and also to become priestesses. Parents' inability to afford their children's education due to high school fees and teenage pregnancy hindered education of the girl child, too. Parents however preferred to educate their sons while their females were retained as traders or farm hands. An intensive awareness creation and education on the effects of socio-cultural factors, counseling and establishment of female education funds or scholarships, would help address the gender imbalance. Nevertheless, the amelioration of socio-cultural and domestic factors that militate against female education in the area needs further in-depth study.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am particularly grateful to Prof. J. A. Opare who inspired me and suggested for me, a very caring supervisor. Truth to tell, but for the patience and fatherly guidance of Dr. Y. A. Ankomah this dissertation would have become an unfinished business. I cannot find words to express my gratitude to God and to these Officers for the part they played in seeing me through this all important project. I wish therefore to borrow the words of Dr. K A Busiah on his inaugural address when he was elected as Ghana's Prime Minister in 1969: The words "thank you are familiar words but I utter these (to our Saviour and the named Officers) "with a deep sense of gratitude."

To my M.Ed (Management) Lecturers, I say may the good Lord prosper your days and make you see the fruits of your labour.

Alice, my wife spent some days with me when I was struggling with life at Cape Coast to give me the needed support and comfort during the M.Ed. programme. Her contributions in making me finish this course are very much appreciated.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to education department, Valley View University, and to my wife, Alice and my children Daniel, Emmanuel, Solo, Sammy, Hana and Benjamin Boateng.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background of the Study**

On Friday June 20 2003, a news item appeared in the Ghanaian Times titled “Oldest Senior High School student attracts attention” (p.1). Many rushed to the Akyem Sekyere Seventh-day Adventist Senior High School (SHS) in the Eastern Region to catch a glimpse of Madam Elizabeth Boakye, the 52 year old mother of three children and a first year student of the school. “Elizabeth became a cynosure of all eyes,” reported the paper (p.1). Asked about what her ambition was in attending school at that age, Elizabeth confidently stated: “I want to finish my SHS and continue to university and become a teacher” (Bentil, 2003, p.1). In her school, Elizabeth was the oldest; older than even the school Headmaster. Besides, she taught one of the tutors when she was a pupil teacher, but this pupil of Elizabeth had been able to complete his university education and now taught economics in the school. Elizabeth’s school mates called her ‘mother.’ (See Appendix A).

This news seemed to have motivated many such mothers to desire schooling for their children if not for themselves. For example, the Headmaster interacted with the researcher about the enrolment of one other old lady (of course younger than Elizabeth), and the fact that the desire of these ladies attracted others to enroll to educate at Akyem Sekyere SDA SHS.

These events harmonized with the clarion call of gender activists like Anamuah-Mensah (1995) who found out that “In Ghana the feminine citizenry which constitutes fifty one percent of the population has remained untapped” (p.6). Many mothers in Ghana, are still uneducated, or have very little education. Singer (cited in Antwi 1992, p.221) notes that “if only ‘a part’ of a nation’s population” is educated, that nation cannot develop. Beuku –Bett and Logan (1993, in Anamuah-Mensah, 1995) in support of the above findings state that in traditional societies women were recognized as contributing to 90 percent of the house hold activities, as well as assisting agriculture, food production, food processing, marketing and transportation of goods, from rural to urban areas.

In traditional communities’ women play immense roles. It is a common experience after a day’s work on the farm in the rural traditional societies that the woman will carry a heavy load (food stuffs) with her baby skillfully supported with a cover cloth at her back. The husband usually will carry a sack in which game caught (squirrel, rat, grass- cutter, etc.), is kept, with his cutlass in hand. On market days, the woman conveys food items to the market centre for sale. In the house, the father is respected as the head of the family while the mother is more or less, the labourer. These routine schedules of family life are common in many farming communities in Ghana, and thus portray the heavy burdens borne by females.

The above scenario exemplifies the immense contribution of females to national development in Ghana. All over the world there are females who have contributed and are still contributing to the development of their countries. I

will begin with contribution of some women as cited in the good old book, the Bible and continue with examples from the contemporary world.

In the Old Testament of the Holy Bible it is indicated that Deborah was a prophetess, while in the New Testament the four daughters of Philip were also prophetesses. Deborah is even said to have judged Israel for some time (Judges 4:4; Acts 21:9).

Priscilla and her husband Aquila were by occupation tent makers but they were very good Bible students. Priscilla teamed up with Aquila to re-instruct Apollos on correct doctrines of Christianity so that he (Apollos) became a resource to the Church of Achaia. Priscilla and Aquila opened their house to become a worship centre for the Church (Acts 18:1-3, 24-28; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Romans 16:5). The Woman of Samaria who met Jesus at the well became another powerful evangelist who could bring a whole city to listen to Jesus (John 4: 1-40). Lydia the first recorded convert of Europe, opened her house to become a base from which the apostles ministered in the area (Acts 16:14-16). Dorcas was a philanthropist, a kind hearted woman who blessed people with her good deeds. She died, but was resurrected by Peter to continue her good works (Acts 9:36-41). These women of the Bible from the foregoing narration, were very useful in the Jewish and Christian religion.

In our contemporary world, there are women of repute. Some of them are recalled as follows: Mrs. Ellen G. White formerly Ellen Gould Harmon, was a woman who finished only three grades of schooling owing to ill health, yet in her lifetime she wrote over one hundred thousand pages in longhand. She wrote more books- published in different languages, with wider distribution. Mrs White's writings were in subject areas in which she had no



experience or formal education (Moore & Moore 2001). Mrs. White's prophetic ministry has enhanced the survival of the Seventh Day Adventist Church worldwide.

Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland emerged the new World Health Organization (WHO) Director in 1998. She was the first woman to occupy that position. On her election to this renowned office, Dr. Gro Harlem, one time a Prime Minister of Oslo Norway (1981), made a vivid presentation of her aims and aspirations as WHO Director as follows:

“My motivations will be this, making a difference –being able to make an effort – being one of many dedicated people working together for what we believe in. I envisage a world where solidarity binds the fortunate with those against nudity in certain parts of Ghana, and became known among the first women political activists and agitators in the dear country less favoured; where our collective efforts will help roll back all the diseases of the Poor; where our collective efforts assure universal access to compassionate and Competent health care, bring the world one step closer to that goal is our call for action” (Editor, 1998, p.9).

There is much wisdom in the above quotation from this woman. Her call focused on action to eliminate poverty and disease. This example identifies the immense and ineffable contribution that women can make to national development if they were well educated.

Michelle Bachelet a former torture victim was sworn in as Chile's First Female President. Ms Bachelet, 64 who claimed a convincing poll win in January 2006, smiled broadly and waved after taking her oath of office in the coastal city of Valparaiso ( BBC, 2006). Similarly Dr. Johnson Sir-Leaf

won the elections to become the president of Liberia in 2006, and thus made Africa proud, as the first African female ever to rise to such a political position (BBC, 2006).

In Ghana, Hesseh (2001) reports of Miss. Gunilla Daaku, a form three pupil of Garrison Basic Junior High school (JHS) Accra who made a mark in the field of science by manufacturing different products out of some small greenish garden egg-like vegetable known as kantosi. This young scientist made out of the kantosi vegetable food additives, kantosi blood tonic, kantosi squash and kantosi brine. The products won Gunilla Daaku a beautiful bronze medal (see picture in Appendix B). During a science exhibition organized by Ghana Association of Science Teachers (GAST) for science students, Gunilla won a first place for the JHS level. That achievement drew an invitation from the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), for her to present her products at the international exhibition in South Africa. This achievement reflects the potentials that are in females which can be positively harnessed through education. Pratt (1980) quoted Guilford who posited that all humankind are born genius, but half of them are made idiots by the system of education. No one is useless; females are as equally useful as males.

Another Ghanaian female whose contributions attracted national attention is Mrs. Esther Nimako-Boateng. Mrs. Boateng was lauded by the Christian Professional Fellowship (CPF) for having been the Proprietor of the Christ Ambassadors Early Childhood Care and Development Centre for 10 years, during which period, the centre excelled as one of the best child care and development Institutes in Ghana. Mrs. Boateng's immense contributions

towards national development was said to be a proof that women who are well educated could hasten a nation's development (Editor, 2003, p.4). (See Appendix C).

In Ghana again, Dr. Mrs. Letitia Obeng climbed to the highest peak of the academic ladder, as the first Ghanaian Female research scientist. Her major Ph.D thesis was on the worm, Simuliidae. The simulium fly is the transmitter of the worm *Onchocerca volvulus* which causes river blindness. The disease had made thousands blind in West Africa. Letitia is said to be the first Ghanaian woman to have obtained the BSc, Msc, and Ph.D (Chinbuah, 2006). (The picture of Dr Leticia is found in appendix D).

Chinbuah (2006, p.11) further reported of Mrs. Hannah Cudjoe a Ghanaian freedom fighter and social worker. Mrs Cudjoe is said to have pioneered the setting of day nurseries and day care centers throughout the country. Besides, she was popular for her campaign for freedom.

A review of the involvement of females in Ghana's political history reveals that the only woman, who gained election to Ghana's legislative assembly, was Mabel Dove who in 1954 became a member of the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly. Ironically however, when Ghana attained independence from the British colonial dominance after independence on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1957, Ghanaian women were completely absent from the legislative assembly. In 1960, this untoward anomaly was rectified by the election of 10 women to parliament by a special ballot. This election was facilitated by Act No 8 of 1960, Representation of the people- women members- Act. This legislation provided for a reduction of the male monopoly in parliament and Ghana

became one of the first countries to introduce a quota system for women (FIDA GHANA).

The National Redemption Council (NRC) government embraced the message of the United Nations concerning the declaration of 1975 as the International Year of Women. Consequently, NRC established the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) by decree (NCWD 322) of 20<sup>th</sup> February 1975. In 1975, Gloria Amon Nikoi was appointed the first woman commissioner in the government of the Supreme Military Council. As the commissioner of foreign affairs during the AFRC Regime, Mrs. Amon Nikoi excelled in her office so well that she became useful to that regime (FIDA GHANA).

In the year 2000, 189 states agreed to help the world's poorest countries significantly progress towards a better life for their people by 2015. These member states having drawn inspiration from social scientists resolved to prioritize education as a panacea to the ills of society to a very large extent. Kofi Annan, the then United Nations Secretary General had this to say about the agreement:

The millennium Development Goal particularly the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger cannot be achieved if questions of population and reproductive health care are not squarely addressed. And that means stronger effort to promote women's right and greater investment in education and family planning.

([www.unfpa.org/swp/english/ch2/index.html](http://www.unfpa.org/swp/english/ch2/index.html) December 10, 2008).

Kofi Annan further observed that “Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a preconditioning for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building a good governance” (Ronay, 2005 p.33). Ronay quoting Plato stated further that “If women are expected to do the same work as men, we must teach them the same things” (p.37). In Ghana, although the syllabus is the same for both males and females, the fact still remains that there is a gender gap between males and females with the latter less in enrolment in schools throughout the country on the average, as shown in Table 1.

Avickson (2004) stated that for every 100 girls that were admitted into primary one in 1991/92 only 52.6 % remained in school up to their final year of JHS. In 1999/2000 for every 100 boys admitted in primary school only 60.6 % remained in school up to JHS. This trend of student retention in schools is vividly portrayed in Table 1. Here, it may be seen that the enrolment rate for girls was 71.6% 1999/2000, but at the same time, it was 79.8% for boys. In 2000/2001 the enrolment of girls increased to 74.8% while that of boys went up to 82.2% In 2001/2002 the increase in enrolment continued; boys 83.2%, girls 76.1%. In 2002/2003 however, the enrolment dropped to 72.5 % for girls and 78.8% for boys. No explanation was given for the drop by Avickson (2004).

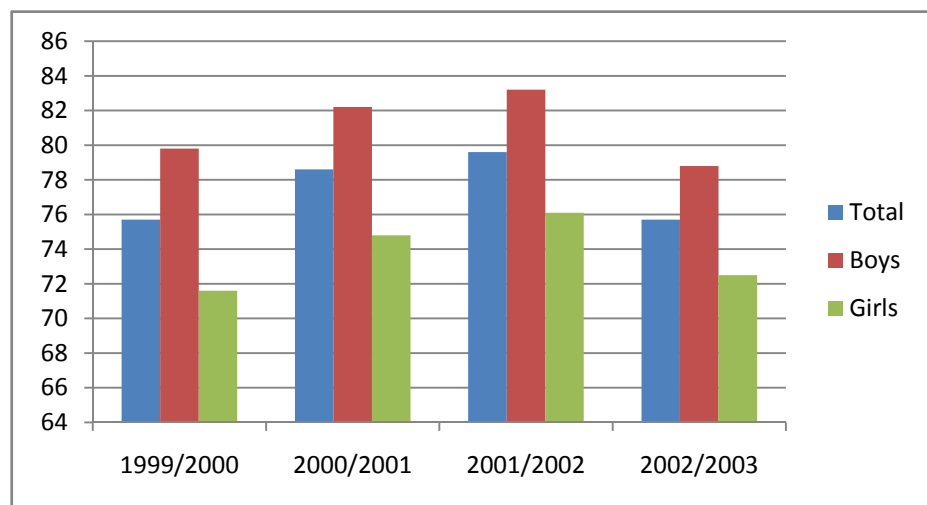
**Table 1**

**Enrolment Ratio at Basic Level**

Sex	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003
<b>Total</b>	75.7	78.6	79.6	75.7
<b>Boys</b>	79.8	82.2	83.2	78.8
<b>Girls</b>	71.6	74.8	76.1	72.5

**Source: Avickson in Daily Guide December 24 2004, No. 1304, p.11.**

From Fig.1. it could be quickly inferred that the enrolment rate of boys was close to 80% and above while that of girls was below 76 % from 1999/2000 to 2000/2003. This chart and the Table support the fact that there is a gender gap within the education sector.



**Figure 1. Gender gap in the Education Sector**

**Source: Avickson in Daily Guide December 24 2004,**

**No.1304, p.11**

Avickson (2004) continued that one of the main objectives of the Education Sector plan is to achieve free universal basic education. Acceleration of full girl enrolment and completion in Ghana will be the main supporting strategy. Avickson hinted of the benefits of educating being

improved health and nutrition, reduced child maternal mortality, manageable fertility levels and better opportunities for economic and social advancement.

Avickson (2004) concluded his observation on a note of warning that the education sector plan calls on government, parents, communities and other partners to provide girls with equal opportunities to access the full cycle of education. Such a challenge calls for the removal of traditional barriers against girls' education by parents and communities. These challenges are immense world –wide phenomena also prevailing in Ghana (p. 11).

Awumbila (2001) observed that gender disparities are prevalent in Ghana and closing the gender gap to enhance women's participation in development is essential not only for building a just society, but also it is a pre- requisite for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among people on a sustainable basis. Although Ghana has made some progress towards achieving development, gender inequalities continue to limit women's capabilities and constrain their inability to participate fully in, and contribute to the national economy. Besides, the problem of the gender gap remains a big threat to all development efforts not only in Ghana, but also in Africa (Gachukia, 1999).

A case in point is found in Dangme West District, the focus of this study. According to the 2000 population census, Dangme West had 50,259 females against 46, 550 males. Of this population, 39.6 % males and 30.0% females were in Junior High schools. While 2.7 % males were able to reach Tertiary Institutions, only 1.7% females, did. Generally, while 45 % of the student population was male, only 24.1% was female. Even, Dangme East that has similar characteristics as Dangme West had 28.4% female students and 49.2 %

male students. The sad part of it was that only 0.1% of the female population was found in administrative and managerial positions while 0.3 males were found in these high positions all the same (See Appendix H).

Dangme West educational statistics as found below show a serious gender gap. Primary school population is 18, 671 of which 9,636 representing 51.6%, are boys, while 9,035 (48.4%) are girls. At the Junior High School (JHS) level also, of the total population of 6,539 (both boys and girls), 3,456 representing 52.9% are boys, while 3,083 representing 47.1% are also girls. In both the primary and the JHS level, the gap between boys and girls is clearly seen; in the primary, the short fall is 601 and at the JHS, it is 373.

Of the total school population of 39,513 in Dangme West, 14,790 are girls representing 48.5%. This also means that 51.5% of the total school population are boys. It is very surprising, however, that while a total of 3,083 girls are in Schools in JHS, only 414 girls are in all the 3 Senior High Schools. This is an indication that either the shortfalls of girls are in other schools outside the District, or they could not continue their education and they are in the house. From the 2000 population census quoted earlier, however, many of the girls could not continue their education, and for which this study is being conducted. Table 2 has the current school population figures of Dangme West.



**Table 2****Dangme West School population, 2009**

Gender	Kindergarten	Primary	JHS	SHS	Total
Male	2,253	9,636	3,456	378	15,723
Females	2,258	9,035	3,083	414	14,790
Total	4,511	18,671	6,539	792	30,513

**Source: Dangme West District Education Director's Office, September 2009**

**Statement of the Problem**

Disparities in Educational participation among the genders; particularly after the basic level, is a common feature in Ghana, with females always lagging behind males. This is a source of concern to the government and educators alike. Studies have been carried out in various parts of the country to try to ascertain the extent of disparities between males and females and factors responsible for them (Ankomah 1990, Anamua-Mensah 1995, Mumuni 2000, Awumbila 2001). For example, Mumuni (2000) noted high school fees and teenage pregnancy as factors that prevented females from climbing the academic ladder. Ankomah (1990) also identified parents' preference of educating their males than their females so that the latter could be kept as farm hands and house helps. A cursory observation indicates that females in the Dangme West District are not enjoying the services of higher education after basic school as do males. The pertinent question that this situation raises is: What are the factors that militate against females' further pursuit of education in the Dangme West District? Answers to this and such other questions call for in-depth investigation.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to find out factors that inhibit the academic growth of females in the Dangme West District. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out why some parents do not want to educate their females beyond basic school in the Dangme West District.
2. Establish what socio-cultural practices in the district affect female academic growth.
3. Identify school related factors that prevent females from furthering their education.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by a number of research questions. They included the following:

1. What are the reasons for which some parents do not educate their females beyond basic school level in the Dangme West District?
2. What socio-cultural practices affect further education of females in the Dangme West District?
3. What School related factors affect female academic growth in the Dangme West District?

### **Significance of the study**

The emphasis on gender equality which comes about through academic growth is due to the call to reach the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) by the year 2015. Gender parity can be attained only when males and females are equally given the chance to actualize their potentials through higher education. This study will be a useful tool in the hands of gender activists to

hasten the attainment of the fifth goal of the Ministry of Education, namely provision of higher education for the development of middle and top level manpower requirement obviously towards national development, as envisaged by the MDG (Ministry of Education 2002).

The study will also be of use to policy makers in the education business. They will be made aware of the specific issues within the district that challenge the educational endowment of females and thus make more informed decisions to address them.

### **Delimitation of the study**

The study is about factors that militate against females' academic growth in the Dangme West District. It covered selected Junior High schools in the seven circuits of Dangme West District. Findings can therefore be generalized only to the Dangme West District.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The researcher made efforts to conduct a thorough study; however, some limitations could hardly be avoided. For example, time and financial constraints compelled the researcher to focus on a small sample size. It is thought that if a bigger sample size were used than the 300 the results would be more valid.

Another problem that was encountered had to do with the open-ended questions. Although the research assistants were urged to explain the questions to the respondents on the field, it is likely there were some lapses that affected comprehension leading to the poor responses.

## **Operational Definition of Terms**

**Ambidextrous:** Able to use either hand with equal skill.

**Expectancy Value Theory:**

Anxiety aroused when one expects negative consequences to ensue from certain actions. The anxiety then functions to inhibit the behavior

**Factors:** Any force or condition that influence

others to bring about a change. Fiasidi Vestal Institution:

**An Institution that accepts virgins**

at shrines for ritual purposes and such females are denied any form of formal education.

**Higher Education:** In the context of the study is Senior

High school and beyond.

**Gender:** The division into male or female

**Parity:** The state of quality of being equal

**Infrastructure:** School blocks and other facilities for classroom study.

**Innate:** denotes the viability of inherited talents especially that of females; the ability or quality which one is born with.

**Manpower** In this study, manpower refers to available human resource, teachers and other workers in the education business emphasis on women.

**Modeling :** Learning by imitation; a model is a system that is being used and that people might want to copy.

**n Ach:** Need for Achievement, a mental virus a cultural trait. It is

believed that n Ach is a developmental urge in humans, which enhances innovation and other unique achievements to benefit humankind.

Perception: The way people think about a particular event.  
person or thing; or the impression one has about something.

Potential: That which is capable of being useful or successful in the future.

Rest –room: Refer to toilet facilities such as urinal, KVIP, etc.

Sexual harassment:

A forceful attempt to make love with the opposite sex.

Trokosi: Females taken to shrines to pacify offences parents may have committed, such females are unable to go to school.

Socio-cultural practices:

Certain behavioral patterns of people within a particular ethnic system or group; eg. Trokosi system and fiasidi vestal

Virginity practices in the Volta Region of Ghana.

### **Overview and Organization of the Study**

Chapter one deals with the background of the study. It identifies the problem and defines the purpose of the study. The chapter also identifies the scope of the study.

Chapter Two presents a review of literature relating to the study. It covers gender inequality and factors that contribute to it. The literature review covered four broad areas, namely; parental attitude to education, school related factors, socio-cultural practices and domestic issues that affect females academic growth.

Chapter Three deals with the methodology aspect of the study. It includes the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, and the instrument for data collection. It also looks at the data collection procedure.

The fourth chapter presents the findings and their discussion, while Chapter five summarizes the study and findings. It also presents conclusions drawn and recommendations made for practice and further research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

There have been many studies on female education. Some of these studies were on factors that prevented the education of the girl child. In this study, only a few factors were selected for review in terms of their effects on the academic growth of females in Dangme West District. These were; parents' attitude to females' education; school related factors that prevent females from further education and socio-cultural practices that militate against females' academic growth.

#### **Parents' Attitude to Education**

Parents' attitude to education has a tremendous impact on the education of the girl child. This section will therefore examine two main issues namely; parents' educational background and occupational status, and the impact these have on the education of the girl- child.

#### **Parents' Educational Background**

There are numerous studies that show that the higher the education level of parents, the more their children (both males and females) are taken to school (Safilios-Rothschild, 1987, Kelly & Elliot, 1982). In a survey conducted on university and secondary students in Ghana, it was discovered that females who have educated mothers were more than those without educated mothers, and that such females were given funding for their education largely by their mothers (Dall, 1989). Mensah (1992 cited in Mumuni, 2000) discovered that

the background of many educated parents in the rural areas influences decision and attitudes in enrolling both boys and girls. It was found out that parents who had no educational background had little interest in educating their female children. The contrary is that educated parents seek to educate both males and females. Besides, highly educated parents become interested in giving quality education to their female children. In situations where parents are highly educated, girls are also highly educated (Mensah, 1992 in Mumuni 2000, p.24). In a similar study, Acheampong (1992) also confirmed that many of the girls who are able to enter tertiary institutions had highly educated parents. The foregoing studies underscore the fact that when parents are well educated they tend to educate their sons and daughters to higher levels.

### **Parents' Occupational Status**

Parents' occupation especially that of the head of the household, influences the decision to enroll the child in school. Household heads who are in the traditional agricultural sector tend to delay the enrolment of their children, especially between ages 6 and 9 so that they could perform various functions to assist them (the fathers on the farm and mothers on the market (Gbadamosi, Agyeman, Boakye and Baku, 2000). It has been observed that, "Parents who are generally poor and cannot pay their children's school fees either withdraw their wards from school or do not enroll the children at all" (Gbadamosi, et al., 2000, p.23).

Another aspect which needs to be considered is the occupational role of the woman in family sustenance. Obbo (1984, pp.30-35) believed that "the woman" and for that matter the girl-child, "has a burden which seriously hinders her efforts to study higher." In Africa, it is known that women account



for a higher proportion of the work involved in farming, in food supply, as well as processing and storage. In both retail and wholesale marketing for local and regional trade, for example, women are at the fore front. In sub-Saharan African cities, work inside and outside the home and varieties of occupation, falls on women. It has also been observed that, many men migrate to urban areas than women (Obbo, 1984). Such men leave their wives who become apparently burdened with home chores and child nurture. The result is that they have no time to even attend night school where they could learn how to read and write. Thus such women, cannot alone care for their daughters who may drop out of school, become hawkers and fall into the hands of unscrupulous men who will never help a needy teenage girl without “ exacting their pound of flesh” (Owiredu-Gyampoh, 1994, p.6 ).

#### **School Related Factors, that Prevent females from further education**

Baku (1997; Chao, 1998; Avotri, et al., 1999) cited in Gbadamosi et al. 2000, p. 20), listed some key determinants of access and participation in schooling, that is, factors that determine how high an individual (male or female) could climb the academic ladder. They include distance from home, cost of education, quality of school and availability of teachers. The other school related factors that may be considered are, teacher attitude; sexual harassment; gender stereotyping materials; and lack of role models.

#### **Distance from Home**

The longer the distance covered to school, the less attractive school becomes in the eyes of parents when it comes to where their children should be educated. This presupposes that when schools are situated far away from certain communities many would not want to enroll their children there.

Government policy on this matter is that children should not travel more than five kilometers to school. If parents have means of transport, or have a good financial status, however, distance may not be a problem especially to their daughters' education (Gbadamosi et. al. 2000).

### **Cost of Education**

The less costly education is, the more likely it is for parents to send their wards to school (Gbadamosi et. al. 2000). Government has therefore attempted to eliminate the cost of education by introducing the capitation grant at the beginning of the 2004/2005 school year. Reports indicate that with the introduction of the capitation grant enrolment in schools has increased by 40percent. This policy is of getting many to educate at the basic level, but the infrastructural facilities, school logistics and human resource to meet the increment in school enrolment need to be improved (Mornah 2006).

### **Quality of school**

Parents' assessment of school quality is a factor that motivates them to either enroll or withdraw their children from school. Quality of school in parents' view is expressed in terms of the quantum of inputs in the school, including repair of school structures, availability of books and furniture. It is in this context that Chao and Alper (in Gbadamosi, 2000, p.21) conclude that "improving school quality would improve access and participation."

If schools do not have specific structures such as urinals and toilets, girls do not feel comfortable educating in such institutions. Besides, parents are also not likely to send their daughters to such schools (MOE, 1995; Atakpa, 1978).It has been established that girls have to walk away when a need is felt to visit the rest room. Such walk always could result going home, missing

classes, and most of the time not coming to school at all (Herz, Subbarao, Habib & Raney, 1991). In similar studies in Guinea for example, where 71 percent of rural schools and 53 percent of urban schools have no rest rooms, families have withdrawn girls from the schools for this reason (Ahmed and Hassan in Khan, 1989.). Again a survey of 2000 Pakistani parents indicated that the absence of latrines was more important in placing girls in schools than the absence of desks and chairs (Culbertson, 1986). When Guinea and Pakistan provided adequate rest rooms and built walls to protect the private parts of female students, the result was that many more girls were enrolled to educate (Bellew & King, 1991).

In Zambia, lack of water and adequate rest rooms have dissuaded girls from coming to school, especially when they are menstruating (IBRD, 1992). Girls from poor rural areas in Zimbabwe frequently stayed away from school during menstruation owing to lack of sanitary protection. They are often too embarrassed to explain their absence to their teachers (CAMFED, 1995). Browne and Barrett (1991) describe the lack of rest rooms in schools as sexual harassment, while in Gambia, parents threatened to withdraw their adolescent daughters from school if the school authorities failed to provide separate urinal and toilet facilities for their daughters (Wamahiu, 1994). Thus, the lack of adequate but separate rest room facilities for girls could seriously affect their quest to educate higher.

### **Availability of Teachers**

When parents see that there are inadequate teachers in a school “they are unlikely to enroll their children” in that school. Furthermore, lack of adequate teachers equally affect teaching and learning, for children will not be taught

well. therefore, the number of teachers in a school is a very crucial factor to consider in children's education (Chao and Alper in Gbadamosi, et al. 2000, p.21)

### **Teachers' Attitude**

Teachers' attitude towards girls is another important factor to consider in females' education. In Ghana, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Guinea and Rwanda there are evidences that poor teacher perception of girls can lead to poor performance of girls at the basic education level. Teachers, just like parents perceive girls to be different from boys and as such hold different expectation for them. Some teachers tend to give harsh punishments to boys than they give to girls. In this way, they indirectly make boys realize that more is expected of them, while girls may think they will always be favoured and as such, may not work as hard (Osei, 1994).

In Malawi, a sample of teachers interviewed indicated that their female students were shy and did not most of the time raise their hands in class. While 80percent of these teachers saw girls as well behaved, 90 percent opined that boys are better than girls. They claimed that girls lacked ambition and have loose morals which made them drop out of school due to pregnancies (Davidson & Kanyuka, 1992).

Gordeon (1993) did a study in Malawi and discovered that the teachers were of the opinion that girls were being prepared for female roles in the house as cooks and caretakers and as future wives. Thus, they were treated as such, and were not in any way pushed to seek higher academic laurels. In Tanzania, the picture was not different; boys were positively handled and

prepared for higher education than girls. The school environment was described as hostile in that corporal punishment was the chief medium of correction and discipline. In this context, girls who could not stand such harsh and callous treatment dropped out; the boys stayed (Mbilinyi & Mbughuni 1991).

In the Cameroon, Nangurai (1994) reports that teachers gave more attention, support and care to boys than girls. It was identified in Zimbabwe that there was gender discrimination in the distribution of text books to children, where boys had adequate books, and girls considered later (Graham-Browne, 1991). A study in Malawi and Ghana showed that teachers' attitude towards girls negate their rise to the top of the academic ladder. For example, in Malawi the girls sit to one side of the classroom, where teachers seldom direct instructions and questions (Grant, Horn, Kainji, Nyirenda and Spratt 1990). In Ghana, teachers tend to ignore girls and isolate them in front of the classroom (El-Sanabary, 1989). An interesting conclusion was drawn in a study in Mozambique where it was discovered that the "higher rate of failure for girls might, to a considerable extent, be an effect of the unequal treatment within the classroom" (Palme 1993, p. 34).

The above literature, suggests that the negative teacher attitude towards females does not motivate the latter's academic growth. According to the literature, negative teacher attitude towards females relegate them to a background where creativity and innate potentials are stifled.

### **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment of girls has also been identified as a cause of girls not being able to educate higher. Abukari (1996), Adam (1994), and Owusu

(1974), confirmed this fact. Abukari (1996) recommended that teachers should treat all children equally, irrespective of gender and make sure that girls are not sexually abused by teachers or their peers. Adam (1994) also recommended that parents should be encouraged to give sex education to their daughters and advise them on the dangers of premarital sex. Owusu (1974) claimed that in the Bekwai District of Ashanti Region (Ghana), male students and teachers engage in sexual immorality with school girls which had resulted in dropouts due to teenage pregnancies.

The problem of sexual harassment and rape in schools appear to be a nagging issue in further education of girls. Seini, (2000) & Mumuni, (2000) report that students of the Bolgatanga Girls Secondary School (BOGISS) in Ghana, went on a demonstration to draw the attention of the authorities to alleged rape attacks on them. Some of the “girls planned to leave the school because of sexual harassment” In a similar development, it was reported that the Shama-Ahanta East Disciplinary Committee of the Ghana Education Service (GES) recommended the immediate dismissal of a class six teacher of Supomu Dunkwa Methodist Primary School for impregnating two Junior High School girls (Ghana News Agency, 2000).

An Editorial Comment of the Mirror (1988) has it, that in 1996 a teacher who was adjudged the best in his district was stripped off the award and later sacked by the GES when it came to light that the supposedly good, dedicated and disciplined teacher had impregnated a 16-year old class five pupil. (Mirror, 1988, p.2 cited in Mumuni, 2000, p.43).

In all these incidents males are identified as the perpetrators, the chief

offenders. In groups, as members of clubs and units, they prey on female students, abuse them verbally and cartoon them in obscene campus publications (Hallam, 1994). A study in Guinea indicates that boys are very aggressive towards girls and that they used physical force, threats and teased girls to silence them in class (Anderson-Levitt et al. 1994). Similar observations were made in classrooms in Rwanda, as it was particularly evident there that male teachers encouraged the “ganging-up” and abusive verbal interaction (Prouty, 1991). Above all, teachers also prey on their female students, threatening to fail them or publicly humiliate them, to prod them into sexual liaisons. Teachers are also reported to have rewarded female students who “co-operate”, with grades and tuition waivers (CAMFED 1994).

Mbilinyi and Mbughuni, (1991) confirmed the harm sexual harassment could cause. They observed that these few accounts of sexual misconduct that were unpunished, however, blocked chances of females from climbing the academic ladder.

### **Gender Stereotyping Material**

Gender stereotyping materials in school text books have a tremendous impact on females’ education as discovered by gender researchers. Walum (1977, p.5), posited that “gender stereotyping involves a personality supposed to be inextricably and forever male or female.” A male does a male’s job, and so does a female also performs a female’s job. The assumption is that females or males are considered to have been born to take up specific unchangeable vocations, such as carpentry for males and selling tomatoes or cooking for females—these are the main ideas behind gender stereotyping (Boateng, et. al. 1998, p. 25).

Again, McClelland in Fagerland and Saha (1983, p.16) posited that everyone has a Need for Achievement (n Ach) which is a “cultural trait, a mental virus”. Some have a strong n Ach, others have a weak one. To the developmental theorists, n Ach in a given people opens the way for developmental innovations. McClelland argued that pictures and illustrations in textbooks either strengthen or weaken n Ach in learners.

Invariably, authors of textbooks for beginners associated menial duties to females and giant exploits to males (Boateng, et al, pp 33, 34). As females flip through books they gain the idea that there is room for them in the kitchen and not in the aircraft as pilots. Such ideas continue to hold down the innovative capacity of the female (Torrance, 1971, pp 554 & 555 in Boateng, et al. p. 34). Thus, it is believed that all human beings are born geniuses but half of us are made idiots by the system of education (Guilford in Pratt, 1980).

There is a story in the Bible which explains better, the gender stereotyping idea. The key text is in 1 Corinthians 3:18. Here it is written “By beholding we are changed. When Jacob wanted to get more cattle, he first defined the type (colour) of cattle he wanted (Genesis 30:31-33). He then designed a rod that was placed where the cattle came to drink, and as they drank the water, they saw the designed rods. Beholding the designed rods from day to day, the animals were impacted to conceive after the rods that were being seen. The animals therefore delivered calves of the desired colour that was depicted in the designed rods. So Jacob had many cattle (Genesis 30:43).

The trick Jacob used defines the impact of gender-stereotyping material.



As girls see themselves associated with menial duties, they think of no giant achievements and “they grow to become what they see” (Delamont 1980 in Boateng, et. al. p. 34). The literature suggests that materials in textbooks have a tremendous impact on the education of girls and so Boateng et.al ( 1998), suggested a comprehensive review of all Basic Education text books in Ghana, since these “were found to contain gender stereotyping material to a large extent, with biases against the girl child” (p.102-103).

Osei (1991), reports that in Ghana the main textbooks which are read in all schools at the basic education level, contain a number of pictures and information which can indirectly influence the thoughts and aspirations of females, negatively. Mackinnon (1997) also asserts that in text books, women are associated with inferior roles which include; selling, cooking, washing clothes, caring for the baby and sweeping while men were assigned roles such as that of Doctors, Engineers, Carpentry and Welding.

In Malawi the review of textbooks by Gender Appropriate Curriculum Unit (GACU), found substantial disparities with more than 300 references to men and only 17 to women. Obura (1986), found that books in Kenya rarely showed women in any category, not even in agriculture, where women are very productive and contribute much to labour. Kenyan and Gambian study conclude that textbooks and learning materials perpetuate a stereotypical and erroneous view that women’s contributions to the economy are marginal (Lange 1991).

While Stromquist (1989) confirms that text books in developing countries are remarkably consensual in their portrayal of women in obedient,

submissive and unselfish roles, Lockheed and Vespoor (1991), Bellew and King (1991), found no empirical evidence linking gender stereotypes in textbooks with low girls' attainment and achievement in schools. They claim that girls and boys are taught by the same teachers and they obtain the same treatment. Therefore they concluded that, gender stereotypes in textbooks do not impact negatively on the attainment of girls in schools.

It was further discovered that gender stereotypes in textbooks are not problems in developing countries alone. In a survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Higher Education 75 of 134 children's reading texts, it was found that males were shown in 147 different jobs whereas females appeared in only 24.

In a similar survey of some books (*Women on Worlds & Images*, 1972, in King and Hill 1991) it was found that stories about boys displayed cleverness (131 times) whilst girls were clever only 33 times. Girls were depicted in household chores 3 times more often than boys. The final conclusion of the study confirmed that, the imbalances in educational opportunities for boys and girls partly stemmed from the gender biases portrayed in school text books.

### **Role Models**

The presence of female teachers in schools has been identified as a motivating factor in getting females to study higher. Cuadra, Anderson, Moreland & Dall (1988), reported that in one rural school, a female teacher's departure caused a drop in girls' enrolment from grade 4 to 6. Tilak (1989 in

Mumuni 2000, p.53) identified a “close correlation between the posting of female teachers to schools and girls’ enrolment, in the Philippines.” (Finn, Reis & Dulberg 1980) found that female teachers were less discriminatory towards girls, and at the same time they served as good role models. Braimah (1987) observed that female teachers who taught elementary school classes were less austere, harsh and threatening in Nigeria. However, Chamie (1983) found that male teachers were rather more supportive in Papua New Guinea. These differences could be due to the cultural settings from which these stories came.

### **Socio-Cultural Factors**

Owiredu- Gyampoh (1994 p.2) identified some socio-cultural practices that inhibit or prevent females from further academic attainments. “There are complex outmoded and inimical laws and practices, religious beliefs and attitudes which affect the advancement of women in society,” she lamented. “Such practices,” she continued, “prevent females from higher academic pursuits, in most cases even from becoming literates.” In this context, a look will be taken at Trokosi, Fiasidi -Vestal Institution and Islam.

#### **Trokosi**

Owiredu-Gyampoh (1994) further pointed out that Trokosi system being practiced in some areas of Volta Region of Ghana is one dangerous factor against the education of the girl child. It is a system where female virgins are made to serve a fetish or priestess, as the case may be, by way of pacification to the gods for an offence committed by a member of their family. This system has assumed the unbelievable proportion of “slavery.” Some of the girls hardly know their ages or the offence committed which occasioned

their being made the sacrificial “scape goat”. The girls sent to ‘pay’ for the offence are not themselves the actual offenders. They become the ‘pawns’ which both the actual offender and the beneficiaries of the gods, that is the priest and priestess, use to satisfy their various objectives. The lives of these girls, in short, are one resigned to abject poverty, slavery and absolute degradation. The worse of it is, these “sweet virgins” have to produce children for the priest and here, neither the virgins nor the children produced by them are allowed to be educated or learn a trade (Owiredu Gyampo, 1994 p. 2, in Boateng, et. al. 1998 p.42). Owiredu-Gyampoh further revealed that the victims of Trokosi and their families are “so deeply steeped in the superstition of gods” that they are unable or unwilling to rebel against them.

#### **Fiasidi-Vestal Institution**

The Fiasidi-Vestal Virginitude Institution at Afife in the Volta Region was identified as an inhibiting factor to females’ academic growth. The most serious problem facing the virgins of the named institution was absolute denial of access to formal education. The priests of this institution were said to have developed unprecedented prejudices, biases and taboos that prevented these females (virgins) from attaining any form of education in the Western context (Pometsey, 1994).

#### **Islam**

Lange (1991) observed that Islam is associated with low female participation in schooling. Kane and O’ Reilly (1993) discovered that western formal education was vehemently discouraged in Muslim societies with the fear that it would promote behavioral patterns that are contrary to Islamic norms and culture.

Atakpa (1996) also came out to confirm hostilities towards Western formal education in the northern region of Ghana. Some Muslims in the named region were noted to have felt that formal education is satanic and can never lead one to heaven. Secondly, they claimed formal education taught western culture which drives children or people to engage in vices, such as drug abuse and illicit sexual practices which lead eventually to teenage pregnancy.

### **Domestic Factors**

Domestic factors have also been identified as a force to reckon with when it comes to females' academic growth. The following will be reviewed in this section: house hold access to water; and family structure, size and composition.

#### **Household access to water**

The greater the distance for water supply, the lower the likelihood of the child enrolling in school and the lower the expected schooling attainment. Access to good water supply improves enrolment and retention of both males and females (Gbadamosi et al. 2000).

#### **Family structure, size and composition**

The chances of children with both parents living together enrolling and remaining in school are higher than that of children from broken homes. Similarly, the chances of all children in a small household being enrolled in school are higher than those from bigger households. In households with many siblings and elderly members, the chances of children, especially girls, enrolling and remaining in school tend to minimize. In such a situation the

girls drop out of school in order to take care of younger siblings (Gbadamosi et al. 2000).

### **Teenage Pregnancy**

A parent in rural Zimbabwe commented that his main problem and the problem of other parents was that the girls often “disappointed” them when they were taken to school (Graham-Brown 1991, p. 195). In Ghana, Ofori-Asante (1991) identified pregnancy as the major cause of school dropout. Boakye et. al. (1997) found out that pregnancy caused 11percent of all J.H.S dropout rate for girls. The incidence of pregnancy, accounted for 27 percent of all female drop outs from Basic 1-9 and 15 percent of all pupil drop outs. It was also discovered that some boys, stopped schooling for impregnating girls.

FAWE Ghana also discovered that in seven District focal group discussions pregnancy was among the very first factors affecting girls’ education (FAWE, 1996). Sutherland-Addy, Boateng, Osei, and Prah, (1995), found that pregnancy was one of the most frequent reasons; in fact the second after “financial constraints” which also caused girls to drop out of school. Out of 62 female dropouts interviewed, 14.5% said they stopped school because of pregnancy. Some researchers however concluded that the causes of pregnancy were due to factors such as: lack of family life education; parental irresponsibility leaving these girls in want of many essentials to livelihood; and biological desire of these girls (Ampadu-Mensah, 1993, Kunu 1993 and Nkum-Mensah, 1993 in Mumuni, 2000 ). It also came to light that fear of pregnancy made some parents remove their children from school, especially as the girls neared puberty. Besides, some of these girls dropped out because of pregnancy (Anderson-Levitt, Bloch, Soumare, & Cortina, (1994); Bledsoe,

1991; Serpell 1993).

In the Cameroon, Kelly (1987) reported of the gross disappointment of some Christian parents who sent their girls to school instead of making them marry at an early age. To their dismay all the girls became pregnant. Thus, many Christians and others alike refused to enroll their children for further learning because of pregnancy (Bledsoe, 1991; Mbughuni, 1991 and Yeboah, 1993). A study of school girl pregnancy in Kenya estimates that the annual average of approximately 10,400 girls leave school because of pregnancy (Ministry of Health/ GTZ Support Unit, 1988 cited in Mumuni 2000).

### **Betrothal**

In the area of the country where this custom is practiced, female children of any age are promised in marriage to male adults. Thus, this so preoccupies the girl's mind that at that tender age marriage becomes an aspiration, hope and a desire, to the neglect of education. "In many instances the betrothed girl-child may not even attend school to obtain simple reading and writing skills" (Owiredu-Gyampoh, 1994, p.2).

The practices of betrothal and early marriage which are adopted by traditionalists in some Northern Ghana societies posed serious impediments to females' academic growth up there (MOE, 1995). In his study on the causes of low level of education among Muslims in the Nanumba District, Abukari (1996) realized that majority of parents withdrew their daughters for marriage purposes between the ages 15 and 20 years. Anyagri (1993) also discovered that parents in his study area (Northern Ghana) gave out their daughters as maids to collect bride price to support their large extended families.

Abambilla (1984) argued that the belief of many traditionalists in

Upper East Region of Ghana was such that daughters were considered as “saving grooms” and that they could be given in marriage as early as possible to open the way for money to flow into the family coffers. Thus, such girls had no opportunity to develop academically.

### **Marriage and Females’ Academic growth**

It was established further that, highly educated females have difficulty in getting spouses. The reason according to Sharpe (1976, in Boateng, et. al. p.40) is that, “many men are afraid of clever or intelligent women.” As a result, some women think that men would be scared of them if they studied higher and become intellectuals. Sharpe’s postulate is said to be a major factor in discouraging some women from higher attainments. Expounding the causative mode of women’s fear of further learning, Williams (1987) hinted that the motive to avoid success is a stable personality characteristic that develops early in life as part of the learning standard of gender role identity. To Williams, the motive to avoid further academic attainment is a disposition of women to avoid behaviour that will have negative consequences such as rejection or threat to one’s feminine image. A female may argue, “I am a woman, I should have a husband. Further learning should not deprive me of this.”(p. 215).Williams thus puts forward the Expectancy Value Theory (EVT) to explain this attitude.

Expectancy Value Theory teaches that anxiety is aroused when one expects negative consequences to ensue from certain actions. The anxiety then functions to inhibit the behaviour especially that which is expected to breed negative consequences. To women, if academic achievement is seen to have negative consequences, actions or behaviours that are pertinent to academic



achievement arouse anxiety which in turn “inhibits them from venturing into higher academic exploits” (Williams, 1987, p. 15, in Boateng, et al. p.41). Thus fear of not getting a husband is said to be one major factor that prevents many women from furthering their education.

### **Parental Priorities and Values**

Jong (1973) posited that parents attribute different qualities to girls and boys at birth. This postulate was made after a study of parents’ perception of their new born infants in selected areas. Jong found out that although male and female infants did not differ in weight, length, or apger score, daughters were significantly more likely than sons to be described as little, beautiful, delicate, weak, and as resembling their mothers. The findings revealed that the bond between daughters begins at birth and that during infancy a strong attachment develops, one that is necessary for social development. But at a point in the development process, however, it becomes clear that the son is supposed to break away, the daughter to remain with her mother, of course in the kitchen, not in school. The bond between a girl and her mother is described this way: “A little gold chain, chained mother to her mother and me to my mother.” (Jong, 1973 in Williams, 1987, p. 161).

The study continues that girls, even when they reach adolescent stage identify themselves more with their mothers. Therefore if mothers do not spur their children on to attaining further academic laurels they will remain where they are (Boateng, et al. 1998, p. 44).

Studies by Haldane-Luttterodt (1995) shows that some traditionalists view the main functions of females as nothing, but procreation. To them, the very first role a growing daughter should play in her societal life is to marry

and produce children.

With current awareness on the value of formal education, however, the situation is changing. Shani (1996) claimed that the attitude of Moslem parents toward female enrolment is now positive and that 86 percent of the parents he interviewed expressed the desire to educate their daughters up to university, while 93.3 percent responded that Islam is not against female education.

### **Modeling**

Bandura and Houston, (1961) in Wagenen (1971 p.417) argued that “modeling has particular merits for the very young children.” The study continues, that “it can increase efficiency in observational learning.” Mothers are role models in a family home, while it is at the same time easy to imitate the same sex than the opposite sex. Contextually, therefore, mothers’ menial duties and roles pre-occupy the girl-child’s mind to the neglect of education especially if the role model has no form of education and neither knows the value of it.

A typical example may be as follows; the researcher of this study is a teacher by profession, and so is his wife. Their only daughter is also a teacher along with their twin sons who just completed University of Ghana. These two boys have started teaching in two private schools in Accra. Modeling may be at play here.

Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) in Williams (1987 p.177), however argued that “the significance of modeling in the learning of gender role behaviour is controversial.” To them, their findings did not support the hypothesis of parent --child similarity among dimensions of femininity or masculinity. They further confirm that imitation or modeling in acquisition of sex typed behaviour is

dependent on observational and cognitive process and can occur without any direct re-enforcement.

Such learning they (Maccoby and Jacklin ) believe, may occur from watching what other people do, observing the consequences of their behaviour, and attending to environmental events to symbolic material such as stones and pictures. Mischel in Mussen & Rutherford, E. (ed. 1963) confirmed this fact with his postulate on children's ability to observe persons and events and learn from same thereby and not necessarily from consequences of their own overt behaviours.

From the above, modeling appears to have got a very negligible impact when considering factors that inhibit or militate against girls' academic growth. Nevertheless, the fact still remains that "girls are closer to their mothers and might be influenced by their behaviour" (Boateng et. al. 1998 p. 46).

### **Summary of the Reviewed Literature**

The literature has focused on three main points: Parents' Attitude to education; School related factors that affect females' academic growth and Socio-cultural practices that affect further education of females.

Under Parents' attitude to education, it was established that parents' educational background and their occupation, influence the education of the girl-child. Those who are not well educated don't prioritize the education of their daughters.

School related factors touched on long distance to school, high school fees and low quality of schools in terms of logistics and human resources. These prevented some parents from educating the girl child. The other school

related factors that were reviewed were: a) Poor rest room facilities b) Negative teacher attitude towards the girl child; c) Gender stereotyping material in school text books that tend to create a poor self image in girls; and d) Lack of female teachers as role models in some schools.

Socio-cultural factors dealt with include Trokosi, Fiasidi-Vestal virginity, and Islam. These cultural practices were found to have barred some females from educating higher. Again, it was identified that some domestic factors militated against the academic growth of females, namely; if a house had difficulty in getting water, girls searched for water, boys went to school. Many a female in school had dropped out because of teenage pregnancy. Betrothal was another problem where parents gave their daughters out to marry at a very early age. Finally, it was identified that females did model their mothers and therefore chose to remain with them in the house and in the kitchen, instead of in school.

The Review has identified numerous factors that seem to be true. A survey of the relevant target group identified in Chapter three would determine which of the factors to consider as a threat to females education in our contemporary world, and specifically in Dangme West District.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the approaches that were adopted for the execution of the study. It focuses on such aspects as the research design, population, the sample, the instruments for collecting data, the data collection procedure and analysis of the data.

#### **Research Design**

The study is about factors that militate against females' academic growth in the Dangme West District. The research design that was adopted for the study was the descriptive sample survey. In a study of this nature, people's opinions are needed to be able to discover facts on the ground and thus draw conclusions. Gay (1976) argued that descriptive sample surveys are concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, demographic information, conditions and procedures, as they currently are. One cannot reach a satisfactory data for such a study without eliciting information from the population through the descriptive sample survey.

Again Babbie (1990) and (Osuala 1993) observed that the descriptive sample survey type is suitable for the purpose of making generalization from sample to a population. The descriptive sample survey was thus found appropriate to enable the researcher make a meaningful generalization after the study.

## Population

The study was conducted in the Dangme West District of the Greater Accra Region. The population of the study comprised teachers and heads of JHS, and parents whose wards were in these schools, as well as non-schooling young females comprising females who completed JHS and did not continue, those who dropped out of basic school, and those who could not school at all.

Dangme West has 76 Kindergarten with 70 teachers; 87 primary with 471 teachers; 63 Junior High Schools with 338 tutors; and 3 Senior High Schools with 118 tutors. These figures are shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3**

**Population of Teachers and schools in Dangme West as at March, 2009**

School	No of Schools.	No of Teachers		
		Trained	Untrained	Total
Kindergarten	76	64	6	70
Primary	87	440	31	471
Junior High School	63	325	13	338
Senior High School	3	118	0	118
Total	229	947	50	997

Source: Dangme West District Education Office, September 2009

## Sample and Sampling Technique

According to Neuman (1994, p.215), “for a large population size of over 10,000 and below 150,000 persons a sampling ratio (about 1%), is needed to be equally accurate.” Since the total school population of Dangme West stood at 29,839 as at 2009 (this was captured in Table 2 of chapter one), and that of Junior High School population was 6018 as at 2007, it was assumed that

Dangme West has around 30,000 school population as at the time of the study. Therefore, to reach the one percent population, quota sampling technique was employed to select parents, students and teachers in the district for the study. The researcher found that the population of the schools whose parents and teachers were to be used for the study was that of Junior High schools who are mature enough to help reach their parents. One percent of the total school population of 30,000 is around 300, which was shared proportionally among each of the circuit schools, in terms of teachers, parents and non-continuing students. For example, Prampram had JHS school population of 1,535. This was divided by the total population of 6018 and multiplied by 300, to give 76.5. To arrive at a round figure, 80 was used and shared equally among Parents, head teachers/Teachers. The non-schooling young females were given half of figure (i.e. 40). The various sample sizes selected on the basis of the school population for the various circuits, appear in Table 4.

Once the number of parents, teachers and non-continuing students had been identified, the simple random sampling was used to draw them for the study. Teachers who cared to assist the study were given questionnaires to answer in each of the circuits. The researcher however used the purposive sampling to select the heads; this is because a purposive sampling technique aims at selecting people of relevance, known to be able to assist in providing information (Neuman & Dickinson, 1994).

The snowball sampling technique was used to select the Junior High school non-continuing students. The researcher used the snowball sampling technique because the non-continuing students were scattered in the circuits.

To reach them for responses, the researcher found one who led him to other friends, who in turn led him to other friends, until the needed quota of students were reached. Parents were also reached through the JHS students who were mature and could send the enveloped questionnaires safely home. These students then brought these questionnaires duly filled either the next day or a few days after.

As stated earlier, Prampram and Ningo had the largest sample sizes. This was followed by Dodowa and Asutsuare followed next. Doryumu, Nyigbenya and Volivo had the smallest sample size of 20 each.

**Table 4**

**Distribution of Categories of Selected Sample from Dangme West school population.**

Circuit	Total JHS Enrolment 2007	Parents	Head teachers & Teachers	Non-Continuing JHS Students	Total Sample Size for Circuits
Prampram	1535	26	26	25	77
Ningo	1232	21	20	20	61
Dodowa	1092	18	18	18	54
Asutsuare	830	14	14	13	41
Doryumu	797	14	14	12	40
Nyigbenya	283	5	5	5	15
Volivo	249	4	4	4	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>6018</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>300</b>

Source: District Education Director's office, September 2007

#### **Instrument for Data Collection**

Questionnaire was the main instrument used to gather data for the



study. This was because the respondents were scattered and the researcher could hardly reach them one by one. In fact research assistants were deployed to send the questionnaire round to the non-continuing students while the students in the schools were used as messengers to reach their parents with enveloped questionnaires. The items included in the questionnaire were suggested by the areas covered in the literature review, and the consequent research questions.

The questionnaire for parents and teachers embodied the Likert –type attitude scale which was found to be the most suitable. That of the JHS non-continuing students did not however have any demographic data. The Likert – type scale was chosen to measure parental attitude toward female education. It enabled the respondents, to indicate the degree of their belief in a given statement” (Best and Khan, 1996 in Mumuni 2000 p.64; Casely and Kumah 1988). These writers argued that if a scale included odd numbers, the respondents are more likely to choose the responses in the middle of the scale. Thus, responses to the four-point Likert type attitude scale were used as follows:

1. Strongly Agree ( S A)
2. Agree ( A)
3. Disagree ( D )
4. Strongly Disagree ( DA)

On the whole, parents were made to answer 23 questions from sections A-D. The breakdown was as follows: six (6) questions were designed to capture personal data of parents in Section A. Sections B-D comprised 17 questions. These may be seen in the appendix G.

### **Pilot- Testing of Instrument**

In order to assess the validity of the Instrument, the researcher's supervisor assessed, corrected and approved it. A pilot- test was carried out in the Oyibi Township near Valley View University about 10 kilometers from Dodowa the capital of Dangme West. Oyibi shares similar characteristics with Dodowa the Capital of Dangme West. The researcher personally went through the completed questionnaire to find out how the responses were given. A few of the items were seen to appear ambiguous. The short falls that were detected were rectified and reviewed for the actual study.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

To gain the co-operation of the target population, a letter for permission from the University of Cape Coast was forwarded by the researcher to the school authorities at Dodowa District Education Directorate. The covering letter that was attached to the letter for permission and the response from the District Director of Education appears in appendices E and F, respectively.

The researcher and the research assistants went through the questions item by item as an orientation towards the exercise. The research assistants were sent to the various circuits to capture information either by non-probability sampling method of snowball or accidental, especially in the case of the non schooling young female respondents. A low cost strategy was then adopted: the researcher requested the purposely selected Head teachers to identify some of the students who were given questionnaires to be sent to their parents; there were no charges for these services. These students were to return the questionnaires duly filled by their parents a few days later. All the questionnaires that were sent out to parents were brought back, answered.

Then the deployed research assistants went to selected villages to draw responses from the JHS non-continuing students. In fact, 300 questionnaires were sent out, all of which were retrieved indicating 100 % return rate.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

The responses obtained were recorded in frequency tables. Since the study was a descriptive survey, the researcher employed descriptive statistical tools in the analysis of the data, aided by SPSS soft ware (version, 14 2008). The data were organized into frequencies and percentages to facilitate interpretation and the provision of answers to the various research questions. Bar graphs and frequency tables were also employed to enhance easy interpretation of the results.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents results of the data analyses and their discussion. The 300 retrieved questionnaires formed the basis of the analyses. Discussion points in this chapter focus on the biographical data of respondents, and findings brought out in relation to the three research questions of this study.

#### **Biographical Data of Respondents**

The biographical data of respondents have become a necessary record in the study to show the extent of maturity of the respondents. For a reliable study, respondents must be people who are experts in their field of knowledge and experience. It is in this vain that the demographic characteristics of the target sample of the population were included in the questionnaire (Osuala 1993).

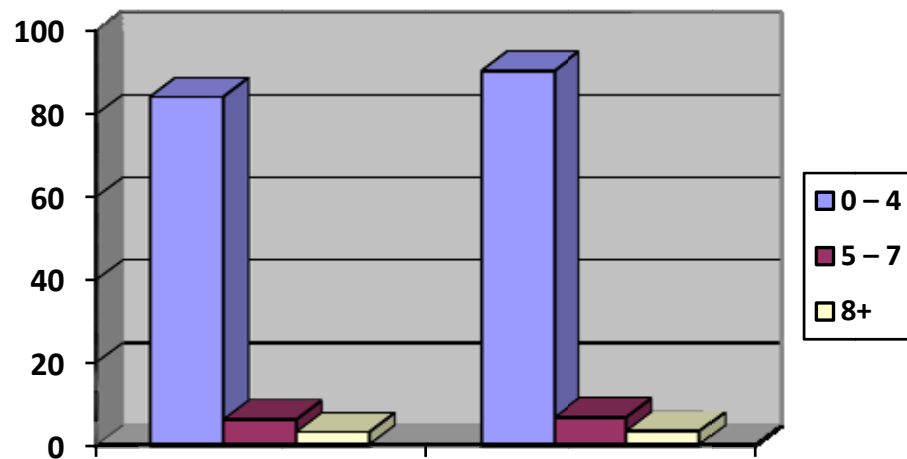
The basic school heads and teachers who responded have their biographical details summarized in Table 5. From that table, a large majority of the head teachers and teacher respondents were males (61.3 %). About 49.5% of them were married with 67.7 % having the least teaching experience between 1 and 10 years. About 30% of the heads and teachers who were interviewed had “Certificate A.”

Still in Table 5, 49.5% of the heads and teacher-teacher respondents were married, 90.3% had up to 4 children, and 67.7% had up to 10 years teaching experience.

**Table 5****Characteristics of Heads and Teachers**

Characteristics of Respondents		No	%
Gender	Male	57	61.3
	Female	36	38.7
Education	Cert A	28	30.1
	OL/AL	10	10.8
	Sec/Commercial	2	2.2
	Post SEC	15	16.1
	Specialist	3	3.2
	Diploma	23	24.7
	Degree	12	12.9
Marital status	Married	46	49.5
	Single	41	44.1
	Divorced	2	2.2
	Separated	2	2.2
	Widowed	2	2.2
Number of Children	0-4	84	90.3
	5-7	6	6.5
	8+	3	3.2
Teaching Experience Years	1-10 years	63	67.7
	11-20 years	21	22.6
	21-50 years	9	9.7

From fig. 2, one could deduce the maturity of the respondents because majority of them had had children. And so despite teenage mothers, the information provided came from people with some experiences making the study reliable to a very large extent.



**Fig.2. Respondents who have up to four children: Factors militating against females' academic growth.**

Table 6 shows that 39.6 % of parent respondents had completed JHS, Middle School and at least, one percent was Post Secondary certificate teachers. Again 43% of them representing 44.8% of them were females, while 53 of them representing 55.2% were males. Above all 73 of the parent respondents representing 76% were married.

**Table 6**  
**Characteristics of Parent Respondents**

<b>Respondents' characteristics</b>		<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender	Male	53	55.2
	Female	43	44.8
Educational level	Not Attended school	6	6.3
	Dropped out from basic school	8	8.3
	Completed JSS/MSLC	38	39.6
	Cert 'A'	6	6.3
	'O' level/'A' level	5	5.2
	Sec/Commercial	16	16.7
	Post Sec	1	1.0
	Specialist	3	3.1
	Diploma	8	8.3
	Degree	5	5.2
	Marital	Married	73
Single		9	9.4
Divorced		5	5.2
Separated		6	6.3
Number of children	Widowed	3	3.1
	0-4	49	51.0
	5-7	40	41.7

Majority of the Non- Continuing JHS respondents had experienced problems in their education. Simply put, Table 7 illustrates that 81 students or 54.4 % of the JHS students who completed their school informed the study. Since their plight was the major issue for which the research was made, the information received from them could be considered relevant to the study. This assertion is confirmed by the other minority young girls who also gave responses. Of these girls, 32.2% dropped out and could not even complete JHS, while 13.4% who also informed the study did not go to school at all.

**Table 7**

**Characteristics of Non- Schooling young female respondents**

Educ. Background	Number	%
Not attended School	20	13.4
Dropped out from basic school	48	32.2
Completed JHS	82	54.4
Total	150	100

**Research Question One: What are the reasons for which some parents do not educate their females beyond basic school level in the Dangme West District?**

This foremost research question addressed the reasons for which some parents do not want to educate their females beyond the basic school level. The head teacher and teacher respondents as well as the parent respondents provided various responses to this research question. The results are summarized in Table 8. From this table, it may be inferred that close to 70 % of the parents preferred to keep their daughters as farm hands. This finding answered one of the reasons for which research question one was posed. About 65% of the responses indicated that the same parents were poor and that was why they did not want to educate their daughters beyond Basic School Level. These facts were revealed by the Head teachers and Teachers. Incidentally only 30 % of the parents accepted this fact. The contrast is an indication that parents who were interviewed did not want to say the truth about why they did not want to educate their daughters beyond basic level.



Rather, the Head teachers and Teachers knew the facts and let the cat out of the bag.

What is depicted in Table 9 underscores what Gbadamosi, Agyeman, Boakye and Baku (2000) identified in their study. The Researchers identified keeping daughters as farm hands, poverty and preference of males' education to that of daughters, as factors that prevented females from educating higher.

**Table 8**  
**Perceptions of head teachers, teachers, and parents on why females are not educated beyond basic school level.**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Heads &amp; Teachers</b>		<b>Parents</b>	
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Parents retain their daughters on farm lands	51	67.1	22	32.4
Parents prefer educating males	43	56.6	43	63.2
Parents are generally poor	49	64.5	52	76.5

**Research Question Two. What socio-cultural practices affect further education of females in the Dangme West District?**

The Second research question addressed socio-cultural practices that affect female education in the Dangme West District. Table 8 displays the outcome of the analysis of the responses of head teacher and teacher respondents on this research question. Multiple responses were given to the items. From Table 9, 71.7% of the head teachers and teachers agreed that the socio-cultural practice of giving young girls over to shrines as wives contributes most to the inability of girls to further their education beyond the basic level in the district. The next practice that the heads and teachers perceived to be adversely affecting the further education of girls was the

dedication of young girls to serve family gods. Owiredu Gyampoh (1994) emphasized the need to abrogate giving girls up to serve family gods. A high proportion of 70.7 % of the heads and teachers in this study expressed this perception, but only a small percentage of parents (13.6 %) supported it. This result shows a sharp contrast between the responses of parents and the school heads and teachers. It is obvious from these responses about the giving over of girls to shrines, however, that the parents did not want to reveal this dangerous practice, but the teachers did not want to mince words; they said it all! This confirmed the study of Owiredu Gyampoh (1994) who discovered this practice in her study and advised against it. She emphasized the need to abrogate giving girls up to serve family gods because it militated against females academic growth.

Table 9 therefore depicted the hidden agenda by parents. They had for long been so entrenched in these practices—of giving their daughters to gods and shrines and in marriage—that they did not want to own up. This is the Trokosi and betrothal system about which Owiredu Gyampoh (1994) lamented and which Head teachers and teachers saw the need to expose for redress.

The practice that received the least expression by the head teachers was that parents want their daughters to help them sell at the market. About 29.3 % of the head teacher and teacher respondents held this perception. Majority of the parents (80.2 %) on the other hand held that the practice of some parents asking their daughters to help them sell at the market is a major contributing factor to the inability of most girls to further their education beyond the basic level in the district. This perception is contrary to the views of head teachers and teachers. The difference between the two perceptions is quite puzzling.

Head teachers and teachers are in school, parents are in the house. Could this be the reason why there have been two views on the issue of selling on the market? It is true that some head teachers and teachers saw selling on the market as a problem to girls' education, so there could be some truth in it.

Still on socio-cultural issues, depicted in table 10, about 60.5 % of the parents held that the practice of parents giving their daughters out for marriage due to economic reasons also contributed to the inability of girls to further their education. This fact was discovered as a big hindrance to girls' education in Northern Ghana (Owiredu-Gyampo 1994).

Table 9 further revealed that 55.4 % of the Head teachers and Teachers saw polygamy as prevalent in the district. Again, Owiredu-Gyampo had hinted that polygamy leads to many child births and the problems of child care and education, which could easily lead to poverty and lack of funding for girls education if not that of boys. Thus, the most serious barrier that was revealed by research Question Two as militating against females' academic growth was giving over daughters to shrines as priestesses and wives.

**Table 9****Responses of head teachers, teachers and parents on the effects of socio-cultural practices on female education.**

Socio- cultural practices	Heads & Teachers		Parents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Parents give their daughters to marriage for economic reasons	35	38.0	49	60.5
Parents give their daughters to marriage for prestige	0	0	36	44.4
Prevalence of polygamy	51	55.4	25	30.9
Young girls are given over to shrines as wives	66	71.7	11	13.6
Some girls are given up as priestess	64	69.6	14	17.3
Young girls are dedicated to serve family gods	65	70.7	9	11.1
Highly educated females do not get married	47	51.1	46	56.8
Parents prefer daughters to be farm hands	43	46.7	17	21.0
Parents want their daughters to help sell at the market	27	29.3	65	80.2
The notion that girls are meant for the kitchen	39	42.4	39	48.1

Still under socio-cultural factors, three domestic factors were covered: namely; moving to distant areas to fetch water, early pregnancy and preference in educating boys than girls.

From Table 10, 148 of the non-continuing student-respondents representing 99.3 % of them identified early pregnancy as a hindrance to females' academic growth. Majority of these non-continuing respondents were females, so their testimony must be true. Blesoe, 1991; Mbughuni, 1991 and Yeboah 1993 had found this problem as a major hindrance to females' academic growth, as noted in the review of related literature. Again from Table 10, 33.3 % of 95 head teachers and teachers agreed to both moving to

distant areas to fetch water and teenage pregnancy as factors contributing negatively to the enrolment of females in higher institutions. Here the issue of poverty comes into play. Parents saw their daughters' schooling rather as a waste ( Baku 1997; Alper 1998; Avotri et. al 1999; cited in Gbadamosi 2000, p.20 ). Instead, girls could be of use in the house by assisting household chores and even trading to support the family budget (Alper 1998, in Gbadamosi et.al 2000).

Another domestic issue that came to light was about family size and structure. In Table 10, the Head teachers and teachers (35.5 % of them) were of the view that parents usually had large families and hence gave preference to their boys in the pursuit of education. This will obviously reduce the number of females who will pursue further education in the district. Sixty three percent of the parent respondents also agreed that they gave preference to male education than female education.

**Table 10**  
**Views of head teachers, parents and non-continuing students on domestic issues that affect females' academic growth.**

Factors	Heads & Teachers		Parents		Non-continuing females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Girls have to move long distance areas to fetch water	31	33.3	49	60.5	0	0
Early pregnancy	51	63.0	0	0	148	99.3
Parents having large families and giving preference to boys	33	35.5	0	0	0	0

### **Research Question Three: What School related factors affect female academic growth in the Dangme West District?**

The third research question was posed to investigate school related factors that militate against the further education of girls in the Dangme West District. The results of the analyzed responses from the heads and teachers, parents and female respondents who did not continue after completing basic education are displayed in Table 11. The factor that gained much attention was High School fees. The non-continuing students found school fees as the greatest discouraging factor for females' academic growth. As many as 120 of the non-continuing student respondents, representing 80.5%, claimed that school fees was a threatening factor towards female education. Since the school fees problem affected the female drop outs directly, their claim was credible. Parents also saw school fees as a threat to female education. Of the parent respondents, Table 10 states that 54 of them representing 70.4 % see school fees as a real preventive factor against female education. These authorities noted that poor parents withdrew their children from school due to inability to pay their school fees. However, only 38 Head teachers and teacher respondents representing 40.9 % of the respondents considered school fees as that which militated against females' academic growth. Majority of these teachers, from the records, do not consider school fees as a threat, probably because they see no reason why parents cannot educate their girls. After all, they are able to buy clothing for churches, funeral and the like, and yet they cannot afford their children's school fees. However, Gbadamosi (2000) and Mornah (2006) have noted that cost of education could deter some parents from educating their females, and that improvement in school logistics could

help many to educate their wards.

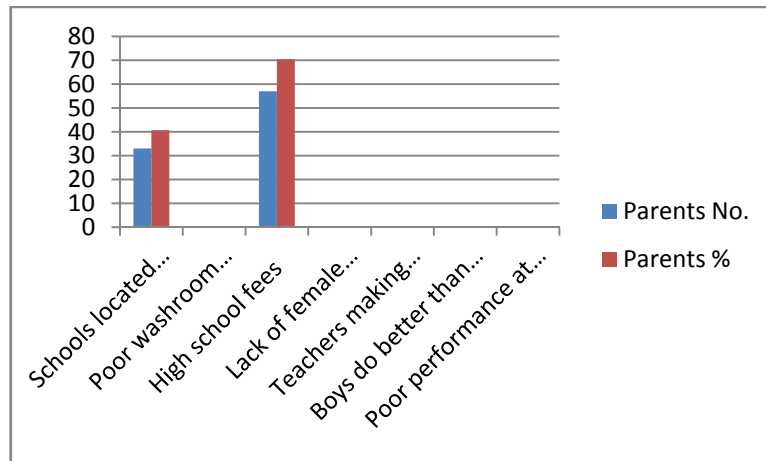
The same Table 11 recorded 59.1% of the Head teachers and teachers saying that lack of female teacher role models was a factor against female academic growth. The empirical review of related literature has it that lack of female teachers as role models was a discouraging factor towards females' education according the study of Cuadra, Anderson, Moreland and Dall (1988). Gbadamosi and others (2000) saw that lack of teachers dissuade parents from enrolling their children for further education. Parents and non-continuing students did not, however see lack of role models or lack of teachers as a factor against female' academic growth. The reason for this could be because it appeared to be a psychological factor that only the educated could decipher.

**Table 11**

**Views of head teachers, parents and non-continuing females on school related factors that affect females' academic growth.**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Heads &amp; Teachers</b>		<b>Parents</b>		<b>Non-continuing females</b>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Schools located farther away from homes	39	41.9	33	40.7	79	53.0
Poor washroom facilities	56	60.2	0	0	0	0
High school fees	38	40.9	57	70.4	120	80.5
Lack of female teachers as role models	55	59.1	0	0	0	0
Teachers making discouraging remarks	0	0	0	0	60	40.3
Boys do better than girls	0	0	0	0	97	65.1
Poor performance at basic school	0	0	0	0	59	39.6

Since parents are equally important in the study, fig.3 brings a quick pictorial view on their perception of school related factors. As noted already from table 11 about 70.4 % of the parents see high school fees as a barrier to their daughters' education. Schools located further away are also seen as a threat to female education by 40 % of parent-respondents.



**Fig.3. Parents' perception on school related factors that affect females'**

### **Academic Growth**

#### **Suggestions from Respondents**

Table 12 identified suggestions on how to improve further education of females in Dangme West. About 37.4 % of Head teachers and Teachers think that parents need to be sensitized to know the benefits they will gain from educating their daughters beyond the basic level. A further 25.3% of them suggested the need to provide counseling sessions for parents on the issue, while 26.4 % suggested the establishment of scholarship schemes for both genders.

The same Table 12 identified 30.4 % of the parents as having suggested scholarship schemes to relieve the poor parents of the financial burdens that accompany further education. Another 28.3% also stated that parents need to



accept responsibility to provide their girls as well as their boys with further education. On the part of the female respondents who did not continue after basic school, 20.8 % mentioned awareness creation as an important measure to improve the further education of girls beyond the basic level. Again, 18.1% stated that parents need to be more responsible towards their obligations as parents to provide their children including the girls with adequate education for their better future.

**Table 12**  
**Suggestions to improve further Education of Girls**

Suggestions	Head teachers		Parents		Non-Continuing	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<b>Both-Sex</b>						
Education	7	7.69	3	6.52	20	13.89
Scholarship funds	24	26.37	29	63.04	39	27.08
Guidance and counseling	23	25.28	11	23.91	36	25.00
Awareness creation	34	37.36	2	4.35	26	18.06
<b>Females</b>						
Models	3	3.20	1	2.18	23	15.97
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Overview of the Study**

This study is about the factors contributing to the relatively low participation of females in the Dangme West District in post -basic education. It also sought to find out why few females of Dangme west District are in positions of trust, despite the many interventions instituted by government of Ghana to improve the gender imbalance through educational participation at all levels. It is such an observation that actuated the researcher to study the factors that militate against females' academic growth in the Dangme West District.

The main purpose of the study therefore was to find out the factors that inhibit the academic growth of females in the Dangme West District. It was especially meant to establish whether parental attitude to education, and socio-cultural practices in the district affected female academic growth. Again the study sought any school related factors that prevented females from studying even through tertiary institutions.

A sample size of 300 was selected on proportional basis out of the various categories of respondents for the study from the seven education circuits of Dangme West District. A self – developed questionnaire was used by the researcher for the data collection. In all, 300 questionnaires were

retrieved from the field. Using SPSS software (Version 14, 2008), frequencies and percentages were computed from the data collected and presented in charts and tables.

### **Findings from the Study**

The chapter presented the results of the analysis of the data on factors militating against the further education of females in the Dangme West District. The respondents were school heads and teachers, parents and females who completed basic school but did not continue further.

#### **1. Research Question One**

On why parents would not want to educate their daughters beyond basic level, 67.1 % of the basic school heads and teachers held the view that parents prefer to retain their children as farm hands, with 64.5 % of them attributing the inability of girls to continue their education beyond the basic level to poverty. On the part of the parents, 76.5 % of them also cited their poverty as the reason for which they could not educate their daughters beyond basic school. This was followed by 63.2% of them who held the notion that they prefer to have their sons receive further education to their daughters.

#### **2. Research Question Two.**

On socio-cultural factors that negatively affected the further education of girls, 71.7 % of the Head teachers and teachers cited the giving away of girls to shrines as preventing their further education beyond the basic level. Another 70.7 % of them also observed that girls in the district are given over to serve family gods, with 69.6 % of them stating that girls are given out as priestesses soon after basic education making it impossible for them to continue their education. However, only a small proportion of the parent

respondents confirmed that their daughters were given over to shrines and family gods as priestesses.

On domestic factors, the heads and teachers indicated parents' preference to educate their males rather than their females as a major inhibiting factor to the further education of girls. The parents confirmed the assertion that they preferred educating their males to their females. But a stark revelation that came up was the admission of almost all the female basic education graduates who did not continue further (148 i.e. 99%), that pregnancy is a reason for the non-continuation of girls in further education after basic schools. Early marriage was also cited as a factor.

### 3. Research Question Three

This was on school related factors. The Head teacher and Teacher respondents cited poor washroom facilities particularly in some of the community day Senior high schools, as barriers to further education of females. They also cited lack of female teachers in the schools to serve as role models, as a threatening factor to the further education of females. For their part, the non-continuing female respondents identified the charging of high school fees and the far location of schools from their homes as preventing them from furthering their education.

The female graduates of basic education non- continuing who assisted the study also cited the charging of high school fees as one of the school related reasons for their inability to continue further. They also cited their poor performance in school as well as discouraging remarks from some teachers as some of the school factors that deterred them from continuing their education.

## **Summary of Major Findings**

Out of the analyses of the data the following findings were made:

1. Parents were found to prefer keeping their children after basic schools as farm hands. The poor economic status of some parents was also found to be responsible for the inability of girls in the Dangme West District to continue their education. There was a general preference of parents to have their male children receive further education rather than their daughters.
2. On socio-cultural factors, it was revealed that parents gave their daughters to shrines to serve the gods or endorsed them as priestesses. Again, teenage pregnancy was identified as another threatening factor that militated against females' academic growth in the Dangme West District.
3. School related factors such as poor washroom facilities and lack of female teachers as role models were found as preventing females from climbing the academic ladder to the highest level. Similarly, high school fees and discouraging remarks by teachers as well as the location of schools farther away from homes were found to have prevented many girls from continuing their education beyond the basic level.

## **Conclusions**

From the findings of the study a number of conclusions could be drawn:

- 1) the gender imbalance in the Dangme West District of the Greater Accra Region is indeed a big problem that need to be addressed if the envisaged Millennium Development Goal (MDG) is to be achieved by the year 2015. It

does seem that of all the problems, giving girls to shrines as priestesses appear to be crucial, if not high school fees and teenage pregnancy.

2) Parents must be responsible in facing the challenges of their daughters' needs to forestall school dropout. Irresponsibility in this direction results in using daughters for commercial purposes and the associated teenage pregnancies.

3) While the school related factors could be easily identified and addressed, the domestic factors are quite hidden and need bold initiatives to deal with them.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study it is recommended that:

1. All key stakeholders in the education business like; Government, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Ministry of Education, etc., should mount intensive education to create awareness of this problem in the locality. This will encourage parents and teachers to eradicate their inhibitive practices.
2. Again, a national scholarship fund for girls' education must also be established. To this fund, philanthropists could donate in cash or kind to assist the development of girls' education in Ghana. Beneficiaries of this fund may be girls from deprived areas or as the case may be. The girls' education unit of the Ghana Education Service should be strengthened to assist the campaign of creating awareness of the problem at stake in the Dangme West District.
3. The Ministry of Women and children affairs must have a special budget for rural campaign against this problem. This will surely call

for the establishment of gender training institutes, countrywide.

4. The problem of girls given over to shrines must also be addressed. Since this is a problem of culture, it will take an equally strong intensive education by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, to change peoples' perception about this in the district.
5. Lack of washroom facilities and lack of female teachers as role models should also be addressed by government in collaboration with the communities of the Dangme West District. The communities should be sensitized to their corporate responsibilities in helping schools to obtain the needed infrastructural facilities and the related logistics.
6. Teachers should be educated to refrain from passing negative comments about females in class. "The non-directive teaching model based on the work of Carl Rogers" (1951, 1983 and cited in Joyce and Weil 1986, p.143) may also be introduced as a package for In-service Training for all teachers of this country. This teaching model designed to help students learn better; it enhances student performance. By this model, teacher and learner become friends and both willingly team up in the education business.
7. Public forum must be organized on zonal basis in the district to find solution to the problem of teenage pregnancy. The district assembly should organize brainstorming sessions to find means of palliating if not completely eliminating this evil. If these problems are also prevalent in other districts but hidden, gender activists in Ghana have to wake up to this challenge and educate women to be able to play their

complementary role, to bring about the needed attitudinal change.

### **Suggestions for further Research**

The study in question “Factors militating against females’ academic growth ...” could not be studied across the whole Greater Accra Region. Only one district, Dangme West was covered. It is therefore recommended that the study must be replicated either directly or conceptually, in other districts.

The issue of girls being given over as priestesses to shrines is another problem that needs further investigation. Tied to this is the teenage pregnancy issue that seems to have defied solution. Thus, the effects of socio-cultural practices on female education and Parents’ attitude to female education in rural areas are potential areas of research.



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[www.cim.co.uk/themarketer](http://www.cim.co.uk/themarketer)

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A



Oldest Senior High School student

Ghanaian Times Friday June 20 2003, Page 9

Appendix B

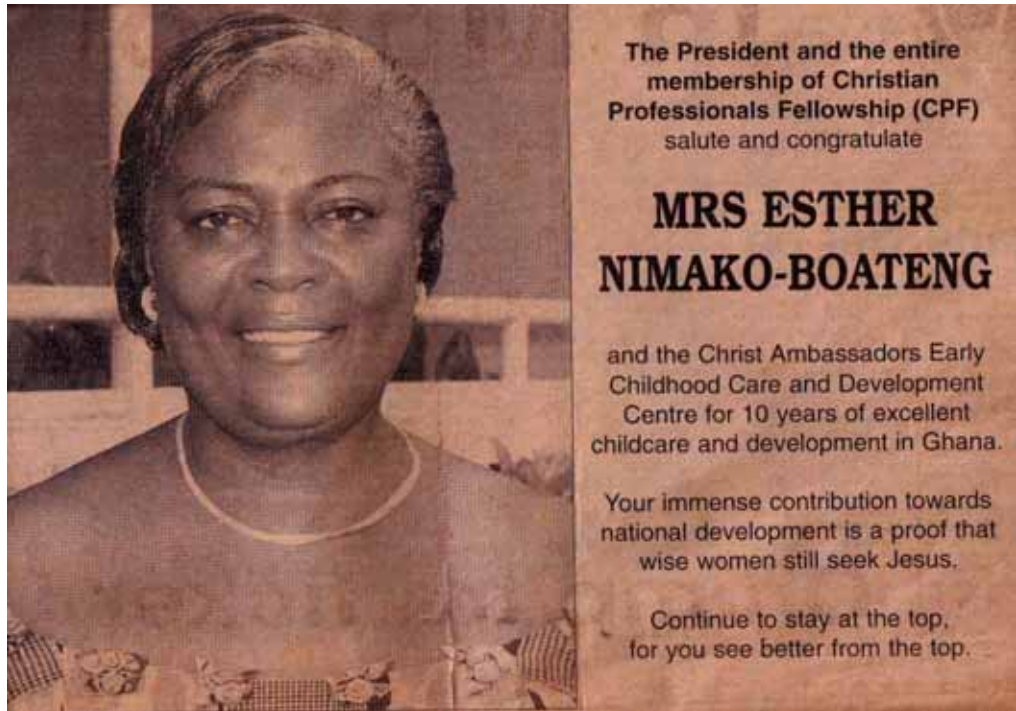


Gunilla Daaku displays her bronze award and the products

Courtesy: Junior Graphic No. 28 March 21-27, 2001 Front Page

Picture by Tina Nyamekye

Appendix C



Courtesy: Daily Graphic Friday July 25 2003, p.4

CPF Advert.



Appendix D



First Ghanaian Female Research Scientist

Daily Graphic Friday November 17 2006 p.6

Feature Article by Chinbuah A. B.

APPENDIX E  
VALLEY VIEW UNIVERSITY  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

P O Box A. F. 595

Adenta-Accra

January 17 2008

District Director

GES

Dangme-West

Sir,

**Permission to conduct a survey on the Topic:**

**Factors that Militate against Females' Academic Growth in the Dangme West District**

A study is being made with your District as a case study as indicated in the topic above. Two fundamentally essential inputs are very much needed for the success of the study.

1. Statistics on the various zones that comprise the district, in terms of enrolment of all schools from Basic to second cycle (Males and Females), shall be needed. At least, some 3-4 years back, would be of a great help.

2. Exam results for basic and second cycle schools for the past 2 years.

3. Permission letter to distribute the survey instrument.

A letter from the University of Cape Coast from where the study is being supervised would be submitted in due course.

I humbly crave your indulgence to assist this academic exercise, by issuing the permission letter for the survey first, while the statistical data is being compiled.


Yours faithfully

Samuel S. Boateng

(Instructor)

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S PERMIT

**GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE**

  
REPUBLIC OF GHANA

*In case of reply the number and date of this Letter should be quoted.*

My Ref. No.: *GES/DDO.5/89/27*  
Your Ref. No.: .....

**DANGME WEST DISTRICT OFFICE**  
POST OFFICE BOX 45  
DODOWA  
Tel. No. 022 - 252192

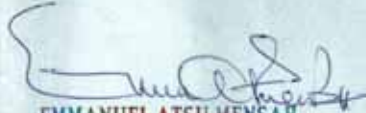
*21<sup>st</sup> January, 2008*

**PERMISSION**  
**RE: SURVEY**

The bearer of this letter is a Lecturer at Valley View University - Education Department.

Mr. Boateng is conducting a research in this District. We would be grateful for any assistance offered.

Counting on your utmost co-operation.

  
**EMMANUEL ATSU MENSAH**  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
DANGME WEST DISTRICT  
DODOWA

**ALL HEADS OF  
1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> CYCLE SCHOOLS - DWD**

**DIRECTORATE STAFF**

\*pm\*

## Appendix G

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Questionnaire on Factors Militating Against the Academic Growth of Females  
in the Dangme-West District.

### Questionnaire for Parents

You have been chosen to participate in this study because of your important role as a member of the communities involved in this exercise. Please respond to this questionnaire in terms of your most sincere beliefs, feelings and experiences. There is no right or wrong answer. The work is purposely for research and your confidentiality is assured. In Section A below, you are required to provide information about yourself which is titled, 'personal data.' In the questionnaire Section B you will be required to indicate your opinion and offer some suggestions on the causes of females' inability to study higher.

#### Section A

##### Personal Data

Please indicate your answers to each of the following questions by ticking ( ) the appropriate answer or by completing the spaces provided.

1. Gender of Respondent: Male ..... Female.....

2. Educational Background

- a. Not Attended School .....
- b. Dropped out from basic school .....
- c. Completed JSS .....

- d. Cert 'A' .....
- e. OL/ AL .....
- f. Sec/ Commercial .....
- g. Post Sec .....
- h. Specialist .....
- i. Diploma .....
- j. Degree .....

3. Marital Status

- 1 Married .....
- 2 Single .....
- 3 Divorced .....
- 4 Separated .....
- 5 Widowed .....

4. How many children do you have?

- 0-3 ....
- 4-6 ....
- 6 + ....

5. How many of your children are girls?

- 0-3 .....
- 4-6 .....
- 6 + .....

6. How many of your female children or female dependants go to school?

- 0-3 ....
- 4-6 ....

6 +

...

## **Section B**

### **Reasons for Not Educating the Girl Child beyond Basic Level.**

The following statements relate to your perception of Parents' attitude about females academic growth in your community. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below as follows:

SA	-- Strongly Agree
A	-- Agree
D	-- Disagree
SD	-- Strongly Disagree

1. Parents retain their daughters as farm hands

Instead of taking them to school SA A D SD

2. Parents prefer educating their males to females SA A D SD

3. Parents are generally poor to be able to cater for their

Girls in higher education SA A D SD

## **Section C**

### **Socio –cultural practices that Affect Female Education**

4. Parents prefer to give out their daughters to marriage

as a way of prestige. SA A D SD

5. Parents give their daughters to marriage for economic

reasons SA A D SD

6. Young girls enter marital homes as wives due to the high

prevalence of polygamy in the Community SA A D SD

7. In this Community, young girls are given over to shrines as

wives of gods SA A D SD

7. Girls are given up as priestess-trainees SA A D SD
8. Young girls are dedicated to serve family gods SA A D SD
9. There is the general perception that highly educated females do not get husbands. SA A D SD
10. Parents prefer their daughters to be farm hands rather than Scholars SA A D SD
12. Parents want their daughters to help them sell at the market SA A D SD
13. In this community there is the traditional notion that girls are Meant for the kitchen and hence do not need higher education SA A D SD

#### **Section D**

#### **School Related Factors that Prevent Females from educating higher & Family size and Education of Females**

14. Girls usually walk long distance to school SA A D SD
15. Girls have to move to long distance areas to fetch water. SA A D SD
16. Girls are not able to continue their education because of high school fees SA A D SD
17. Parents usually have large families and hence give preference to their boys in education in such situations. SA A D SD

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Questionnaire On Factors Militating Against the Academic Growth of  
Females in the  
Dangme-West District.

**Questionnaire for Basic School Heads and Teachers**

You have been chosen to participate in this study because of your important role as a member of the communities involved in this exercise.

Please respond to this questionnaire in terms of your most sincere beliefs, feelings and experiences. There are no rights or wrong answers. The work is purposely for research and your confidentiality is assured. In Section A below, you are required to provide information about your self which is titled, 'personal data.' In the questionnaire Section B you will be required to indicate your opinion and offer some suggestions on the causes of females inability to study higher.

**Section A**

**Personal Data**

Please indicate your answers to each of the following questions by ticking ( ) the appropriate answer or by completing the spaces provided.

1. Gender of Respondent: Male ..... Female.....
2. Educational Background
  - a. Cert 'A' .....



- b. OL/ AL .....
- c. Sec/ Commercial .....
- d. Post Sec .....
- e. Specialist .....
- f. Diploma .....
- g. Degree .....

3. Marital Status

- 6 Married .....
- 7 Single .....
- 8 Divorced .....
- 9 Separated .....
- 10 Widowed .....

4. How many children do you have?

- 0-4 ....
- 4-7 ....
- 6 + ....

5. How many of your children are girls?

- 0-4 .....
- 4-7 .....
- 6 + .....

6. How many of your female children or female dependants go to school?

- 0-4 ....
- 4-7 ....
- 6 + ....

7. For how long have you been a teacher? .....

### **Section B**

#### **Reasons for Not Educating the Girl Child beyond Basic**

#### **Level.**

The following statements relate to your perception about females academic growth in your community. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below as follows:

SA -- Strongly Agree

A -- Agree

D -- Disagree

SD -- Strongly Disagree

8 Farmers encourage the education of their daughters SA A D SD

9. Some parents retain their daughters as farm hands

Instead of taking them to school SA A D SD

10. Parents prefer educating their males than females SA A SD D

11. The better a person's income the better the chances of

Educating their males than females SA A SD

### **Section C**

#### **Socio –cultural practices that Affect Female Education**

12. Parents prefer to give out their daughters to marriage

as a way of prestige SA A D SD

13 Parents give their daughters to marriage for economic reasons

SA A D SD

14. Young girls enter marital homes as wives due to the high

Prevalence of polygamy in the Community SA A D SD

15. In this Community, young girls are given over to shrines as wives of gods

SA A D SD

16. Also some girls are given up as priestess

SA A D SD

17. Young girls are dedicated to serve family gods

SA A D SD

18. There is the perception that highly educated females do not get Husbands.

SA A D SD

19. Parents prefer their daughters to be farm hands rather than

Scholars

SA A D SD

20. Parents want their daughters to help them sell at the market

SA A D SD

21. In this community the traditional notion is that girls are meant for the

kitchen and hence no need for higher education

SA A D SD

#### **Section D**

#### **School Related Factors that Prevent Females from educating higher &**

#### **Family Size and Structure and Education of Females**

17. Students here have to travel long distance to school

SA A D SD

18. Moving to distant areas to fetch water affects female education

SA A D SD

19. Girls are not able to continue their education because

of high school fees

SA A D SD

20. Poor washroom facilities in your school affect female education

SA A D SD

21. Teenage pregnancy caused some girls you know of, to drop

out of school...

SA A D SD

22. Lack of female teachers as role models affect female education

SA A D SD

23. Female enrolment in this school is higher than that of boys

SA A D SD

24. Your parents and teachers association (PTA) members are  
co-operative

SA A D SD

25. Parents usually have large families and hence give preference to  
their boys in education in such situations

SA A D SD

28. What suggestions would you offer about how female education can be  
improved?

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Questionnaire On Factors Militating Against the Academic Growth of

Females in the

Dangme-West District.

**Questionnaire for Second Cycle School Heads**

You have been chosen to participate in this study because of your important role as a member of the communities involved in this exercise

Please respond to this questionnaire in terms of your most sincere beliefs, feelings and experiences. There are no right or wrong answers. The work is purposely for research and your confidentiality is assured. In Section A below, you are required to provide information about yourself which is titled, 'personal data.' In the questionnaire from Sections B-E you will be required to indicate your opinion and offer some suggestions on the causes of females inability to study higher.

**Section A**

**Personal Data**

Please indicate your answers to each of the following questions by ticking ( ) the appropriate answer or by completing the spaces provided.

1. Gender of Respondent: Male ..... Female.....

2. Educational Background

Cert 'A' .....

OL/ AL .....

Sec/ Commercial .....

Post Sec .....

Specialist .....

Diploma .....

Degree .....

3. Marital Status

Married .....

Single .....

Divorced .....

Separated .....

Widowed .....

4. How many children do you have?

0-5 ....

4-8 ....

6 + ....

5. How many of your children are girls?

0-5 .....

4-8 .....

6 + .....

6. How many of your female children or female dependants go to school?

0-5 ....

4-8 ....

6 + ....

7. For how long have you been a Headmaster/Headmistress .....

### **Section B**

#### **Reasons for Not Educating the Girl Child beyond Basic Level.**

The following statements relate to your perception about females academic growth in your community. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below as follows:

SA Strongly Agree

A Agree

D Disagree

SD Strongly Disagree

8. Farmers encourage the education of their daughters SA A D SD

9. Some parents retain their daughters as farm hands

Instead of taking them to school SA A D SD

10. Parents prefer educating their males than females SA A D SD

11. The better a person's income the better the chances of

Educating their males than females SA A D SD

### **Section C**

#### **Socio –cultural practices that Affect Female Education**

12. Parents prefer to give out their daughters to marriage

as a way of prestige SA A D SD

13. Parents give their daughters to marriage for economic reasons

SA A D SD

14. Young girls enter marital homes as wives due to the high

- Prevalence of polygamy in the Community SA A D SD
15. In this Community, young girls are given over to shrines as wives of gods  
SA A D SD
16. Also some girls are given up as priestess SA A D SD
17. Young girls are dedicated to serve family gods SA A D SD
18. There is the perception that highly educated females do not get Husbands.  
SA A D SD
20. Parents prefer their daughters to be farm hands rather than  
Scholars SA A D SD
21. Parents want their daughters to help them sell at the market SA A D SD
22. In this community the traditional notion is that girls are meant for the  
kitchen and hence no need for higher education SA A D SD

### **Section D**

#### **School Related Factors that Prevent Females from educating higher &**

##### **Family size and Female Education**

23. Students have to travel long distance to school SA A D SD
24. Moving to distant areas to fetch water affects female education  
SA A D SD
25. Girls are not able to continue their education because  
of high school fees SA A D SD
26. Poor washroom facilities in your school affect female education  
SA A D SD
27. Teenage pregnancy caused some girls you know of to drop



out of school...

SA A D SD

28. Lack of female teachers as role models affect female education

SA A D SD

29. Female enrolment in this school is higher than that of boys

SA A D SD

30. Your parents and teachers association (PTA) members are co-operative.

SA A D SD

31. Parents usually have large families and in such situations, they tend to educate their boys than their girls.

SA A D SD

34. Kindly indicate your views about how the education of girls can be improved.

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Questionnaire on Factors Militating Against the Academic Growth of Females  
in the Dangme-West District.

**Questionnaire for Basic School Leavers –None Continuing**

You have been chosen to participate in this study because of your important role as a member of the communities involved in this exercise. Please respond to this questionnaire in terms of your most sincere beliefs, feelings and experiences. There is no right or wrong answers. The work is purposely for research and your confidentiality is assured. In Section A below, you are required to provide information about your self which is titled, 'personal data.' In the questionnaire Section B you will be required to indicate your opinion and offer some suggestions on the causes of females' inability to study higher.

**Section A**

**Personal Data**

Please indicate your answers to each of the following questions by ticking ( ) the appropriate answer or by completing the spaces provided.

1. Gender of Respondent: Male ..... Female.....

2. Educational Background

a. Not Attended School .....

b. Dropped out from basic school .....

c. Completed JSS .....

**Section B**

**Basic School Leavers – None Continuing**

**School Related Factors that Prevent Females from Educating Higher**

- 3. Girls in this area walk long distances to school SA A D SD
- 4. Teachers in your community make discouraging remarks to  
Females in their schools discourage females in their  
education SA A D SD
- 5. Kindly indicate your views about how the education of the girl child can  
be improved.

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