

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**CHALLENGES AND COPING MECHANISMS OF WOMEN IN
LEADERSHIP IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE CAPE
COAST METROPOLIS**

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Faculty of Social Science, submitted to the School of
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**of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Ayensu Jemima, declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature.....

Date.....

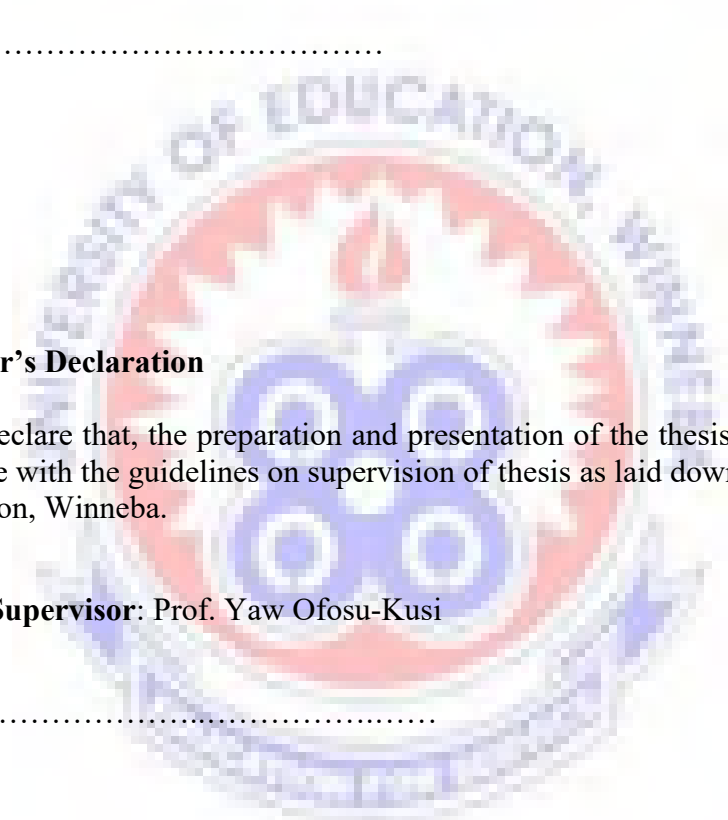
Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that, the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Prof. Yaw Ofosu-Kusi

Signature.....

Date.....



DEDICATION

To my dad Mr. John K. Ayensu and my mum Ms. Janet S. Donkor.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance and the help of several individuals who in one way or another contributed and extended their valuable assistance in the preparation and completion of this study. I would first like to thank my principal supervisor, Prof. Yaw Ofosu-Kusi for his continual support, thoughtful and prompt critique, and guidance, his knowledge and encouragement were invaluable. Indeed I have benefited immensely from the depth of his insights, experience and understanding. My sincere gratitude also goes to my family especially Stella Ayensu, Gloria Ayensu, Yvonne Ayensu and Faustina Ayensu and friends who supported me in diverse ways especially Mr. Eekeloo; and finally to Dr Lucy Attom and, Isaac Okpoti Tsakley who took the pains to thoroughly read through my work and offered constructive suggestions and guidance to enhance the quality of the study.

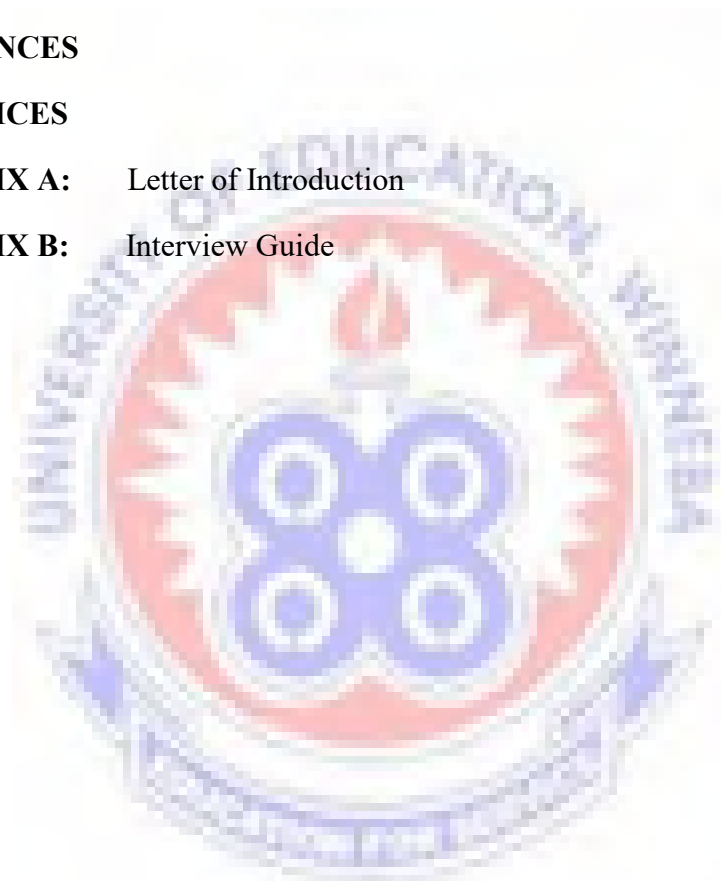
I would also like to thank the participants of this study. Without their willingness to share their experiences, this research would have not been possible.

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ABSTRACT

The role and contribution of women in modern organisations have been phenomenal. However, societal norms and other patriarchal values continue to stifle the progress of women leaders. The overall purpose of the study was to examine the challenges and coping strategies of women in leadership in the Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The study adopted non-numerical data and used purely qualitative research approach. Phenomenological design was used to support the study framework where the required data were collected through interviews. The target population for the study were female headmistresses and assistant headmistresses in the various Senior High Schools in the Metropolis. The study used involved all six female headmistresses and eight assistant headmistresses in the Metropolis. The participants were sampled using the census to meet the study objectives. The data were analysed thematically. The study revealed that no policies or programmes were in place to discourage women from enhancing their careers as women. However, in spite of the aforementioned provisions, there are few mentors occupying such positions and there are no training programmes available to train females who are interested in occupying leadership positions. It is recommended among many that Ministry of Education and Ministry of Gender and Social Protection provide policies that would enhance women capacity and skills towards leadership positions, the Ghana Education Service should design policies aimed at protecting women leaders from men egoism and insubordination by introducing strong punishment for those found culpable.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Modernization, civilization, globalization, and concomitant legislation for human rights and equity make the world look simpler, easier, and more democratic for the various domestic and international groups. Still, it is not a perfect world for all groups. Within this world context, countries are facing economic, political, and social challenges to improve situations within their boundaries; they compete with one another to gain success and profits (Mark, 2000). On a more micro level, various groups separated by gender, ethnicity, ability, or religious orientations are fighting their own battles to make their voices heard, and to achieve equity and equality in relation to privileges and dominant group(s) (Howard, 2006).

In the history of human development, women have been as vital in the history making as men have been. In fact, higher status for women vis-à-vis employment and work performed by them in a society is a significant indicator of a nation's overall progress. Undoubtedly, without the active participation of women in national activities, the social, economic or political progress of a country will deteriorate and become stagnant (Kumari, 2004).

The Fourth World Conference on Women (The Beijing Conference, September, 1995) sought to narrow the gap between men and women and to give equal opportunity to women. But only very small percentages of women hold leadership positions in businesses and public administration globally. There are many accounting factors, which hinder women from progressing to become leaders. Bierema and Opengart (2002) agree that equal access to career advancement of women remain a great challenge across the globe. Other barriers that militate against

women are marginalization, glass ceiling, glass walls, socio-culturally-ascribed-roles, occupational segregation, lack of expertise, inadequate career opportunities and physiological differences suggest that physiologically men are more inclined to want top jobs and positions of authority in society than women (Bierema & Opengart, 2002).

A recent study on female leaders in South Africa by Naidoo and Jano (2003) found that whilst 93 percent of their husbands/partners supported their careers, only 27 percent of the women had structured arrangements regarding the division of daily household tasks and 10 percent of the respondents received no assistance at all from their husbands/partners. These statistics indicate that women in most cases still assume primary responsibility for child and home care (Naidoo & Jano, 2003). As a result of this, Naidoo and May (2005) contend that many women will reassess their personal lives when planning for a lifelong career. Women become highly frustrated when they see where they could advance to, yet are unable to because of unexplained situations. This is confirmed by Flanders (1994) who uses the phrase glass ceiling to sum up the frustration of working women at every level who could see where they want to advance to but found themselves blocked by invisible barriers.

Having shifted more of their time from domestic to paid labour, women have had to assume the personal characteristics required to succeed in their role as leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The mental attributes and the associated behaviour of women have changed as they are entering into formerly male-dominated roles. This is evident in women continuing to aspire to and making great strides in leadership positions in all spheres of life, both in the public and private sectors, and in the face of different forms of challenges. According to Fels (2004), there are innumerable studies debating whether women lack the abilities and personality traits required of leaders.

In Africa and for that matter Ghana, where the status of women and their public participation has significantly improved over the last 17 years, the problem of not breaking through the glass ceiling and the gender-based challenges the few women in top positions face remains a topical issue (Agezo, 2010). According to Fagenson (2003), in spite of efforts at transforming both the country and the public service to embrace national priorities of development and economic growth, challenges persist for women across the public and private sectors. For example, while women have the potential and ability to be leaders, they often lack opportunities, resources and support for realizing their potential. The greatest challenge is in the educational sector, which is dominated by males who most often aspire and compete fervently with their female counterparts as equals.

Social-gender roles are clearly differentiated with men expected to be assertive and tough while women are supposed to be tender (Oduro, 2005). In view of this, women leaders find it difficult to make significant impact in their various organisations due to the prejudices that are prevailing in their societies. This stereotyping of leadership poses a major obstacle to women who are qualified to excel as leaders. Women find themselves doubly disadvantaged in the sense that they have to prove to the society that they are capable of leading and also to work harder than their male counterparts. In most cases they work in the environment that does not fully support them. Cultural construction of leadership in itself instigates the difference between men and women but this is now being transformed as women are gaining access to leadership positions. African women are beginning to challenge some of these deep-rooted socio-cultural beliefs.

According to Keene-Reid and Reynolds (2002), because of family and job responsibilities, women leaders especially those in the educational sector are at a disadvantage. Since family needs more attention, women leaders are forced to avoid overtime and are quick to absent from voluntary options that come with the job. In the highly acclaimed book, *Work and family: allies or enemies*, Freidman and Greenhouse (2000) espoused the fact that the friction between work and family has real consequences for women than their male counterparts and may include serious constraints on career choices, limited opportunity for career advancement. Most studies found women themselves admitting that domestic factors make it difficult for them to advance to higher jobs (Freidman & Greenhouse, 2000).

While a majority of the women still face discrimination and gender bias, in the last few decades, the number of women successful in education, politics, technology and business etc. is definitely on the rise. Society has started seeing women in a different perspective. They work as lawyers, nurses, doctors, social workers, teachers, secretaries, managers and officers. There is no profession today where women are not employed. However, it is true that working women have to face problems by virtue of their sex. Delgado and Canabal (2006) assert that women still perform majority of the care giving role and juggling of work in the family. Gender is seen as a significant determinant of negative job spill-over because employed women are expected to carry out the responsibility for family services and still be able to smoothly handle their work roles. However, Evertsson and Neramo (2004) are of the opinion that women have increased their participation in paid employment considerably during the past 30 years, but men have not increased their participation in housework to the same extent.

According to Neetu (2008), most of the problems that beset working women are in reality rooted in the social perspective of the position of women. This typecast role model continues to put obstacles on the working women's labour force participation creating a situation where women's participation in the economy is not given the same consideration as that of men. Despite the economic necessity impeding many women into the labour force, their work is often considered secondary and frivolous. Women face discrimination in pay, fringe benefits, and opportunities for advancement and access to interesting jobs.

It is a fact that women have to face problems just by virtue of their being women. And if they are working the problems are multiplied manifold, again women have suffered oppression and domination by the patriarchal society. Sexual harassment is another serious problem faced by working women. Whether in the organized or unorganized sector, whether illiterate, low paid workers or highly educated and highly paid executives, a large number of working women face sexual harassment at the workplace at one time or another. This is mostly from other male employees or their superiors. Women tend to hold lower-level positions than men even when they have sufficient skills to perform higher-level jobs.

According to Kimmel (2001), women could not have it all because men did; men had the fulfilling careers as well as a loving family to which they could come home to. According to Savage (2002), many able women find themselves quickly marginalized and barred from real influences as they are faced with the unexpected and acknowledged culture change, together with a gap whose criteria for power and influence are automatically masculine. Male dominance in the workplace has forced a number of women to adopt a more aggressive model. The constantly reinforced message is that women succeed only if they become more assertive, competitive,

dressed for success and more politically and socially astute” (Erasmus, Schenk & Van Wyk, 2000, p.394).

According to Ilagan-Bian (2004), women faced many challenges in moving up such as non-supportive bosses or colleagues, sexual discrimination and male chauvinism. Women still list male prejudice and the old boy network as the main obstacles to their progress (Clutterbuck & Devine, 1987; IlaganBian, 2004). To achieve equal status, the requirement level for women to achieve in the workplace, is set at a much higher standard, they are required to work harder, be more qualified, more ambitious and competent than their male counterparts (Bryce, 1989).

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) survey, 60 percent of employed women cited stress as their most serious problem at work (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2002). Even though men may face more immediate life threatening occupational hazards, women appear to be more vulnerable to stress-induced illnesses, which can lead to cardiovascular conditions (heart attacks are the number one killer of women), hypertension and stroke.

There are many reasons for this dilemma. One is that women are socialized to be caretakers and take on responsibilities that men may not consider. The National Institute for Occupational safety and Health (NIOSH, 1999) article —Stress at Work found that gender specific work stress factors, such as sex discrimination and balancing work and family demands, may have an effect on women workers above and beyond the impact of general job stressors. Working outside the home and balancing a family creates conflicts between work and family obligations, which become a leading cause of stress for women (Spielberger & Reheiser, 1995).

While constant stress may be a problem among women in general, it seems highly probable that women who function in leadership positions within education and governmental agencies may experience additional stressors. It is imperative that these publics understand and generate an awareness of the elements of stress affecting women in leadership. In order to implement preventive measures, they must develop and further enhance existing policies and practices concerning stress related issues. As more women gain work experience and the education necessary for them to be qualified as leaders, organisations have been subsequently called upon to re-establish and expand their notions of what constitutes effective leadership as it relates to gender, stereotyping, and role expectations. Rosener (1990) advocated for those reconsiderations and added that they should include “a valuing of diversity of leadership styles” (p. 125) if an organisation hopes to be successful in its mission.

Furthermore, leaders must collaborate and cooperate with others on a daily basis. Leaders communicate high expectations and provide acquired information to foster understanding and to maintain trust and confidence. Every organisation depends on capable leadership to guide it through its activities. Adusah-Karikari (2008) found that three attributes and strategies contributed to the successes of women leaders in Ghana. These are: determination to succeed, perseverance and planning.

The emergence and determined survival of women in high flying jobs today in corporations and organizations depends on their own willingness to confront and fight strong barriers and hurdles that stand their way, some too grave to confront and others less weighty. Given this background, especially for women in the educational sector, this quest to interpret the challenges women face and the coping processes that would ensure efficiency and effectiveness of women in leadership positions in these sectors is very needful.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite a widespread perception of freedom of choice and equal opportunities among the new generation of women, a number of studies demonstrate that inequality and a discriminatory gender culture still exist in the labour market and within workplace. For example the gender pay gap and a majority of women are employed in insecure, part-time positions where they earn a lower rate of pay. Furthermore, women remain under-represented in senior leadership roles (Boyes, 2012).

As Siemienska (2004) argues cultural factors influence the level of support for women candidates and they influence the electoral behaviour of men and women. Despite impressive stride towards mainstreaming / appointing more women into leadership positions through the Employment Equity Act and Affirmative Action in Ghana, women continue to experience challenges in dispensing their leadership responsibilities.

Although questions about women's leadership positions and roles have often arisen, their leadership styles, challenges facing women and the ways they develop coping mechanism to adapt to these challenges are understudied. To be concise, this study attempts to deal with broad questions around what challenges women in leadership positions face and coping mechanisms they adopt in managing the challenges in Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this research was to identify the challenges that women in leadership positions in Senior High Schools (SHS) in Cape Coast Metropolis face and coping mechanism they adopt in managing these challenges.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In meeting the overall purpose of the study, the following objectives have been developed. They are to:

1. ascertain the practices that discourage women's career progression in the Senior High Schools (SHS) in the Cape Coast Metropolis;
2. identify the leadership styles adopted by women leaders in the SHS in the Cape Coast Metropolis;
3. identify the challenges of women in leadership positions in the SHS in Cape Coast Metropolis;
4. ascertain the coping strategies adopted by women in leadership positions in SHS in Cape Coast Metropolis.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What practices discourage women's career progression in the SHS in the Cape Coast Metropolis?
2. What are the leadership styles adopted by female leaders in the SHS in the Cape Coast Metropolis?
3. What are the challenges of women in leadership positions in SHS in Cape Coast Metropolis?
4. What are the coping strategies adopted by women in leadership positions in SHS the Cape Coast Metropolis?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The research findings will provide insight into issues of women at work and provide vital information that can be used by the leadership of the Ministry of Education and other organizations to understand the factors that inhibit or challenge women's career and management abilities, especially in the Ghana Education Service. This will enable them strategize ways that will ensure that women can climb up the ladder to the top.

The study can help the Government understand how gender inequalities affect the community and the country as a whole so that they can put in place policies that will reduce inequalities especially to the disadvantaged (women). The study will recommend strategies to stake holders which when implemented will improve the number of women in leadership. The findings of the study will further suggest preventive measures, coping strategies, interventions that will build the capacity of female leaders, and to strengthen the ability of female managers in the Ghana Education Service to cope and manage stressors in the workplace.

To the academicians and scholars, the study would provide a useful basis upon which further studies on the impact of the challenges of women leaders in delivering on the mandate of their portfolios can be conducted.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Like all research work, this study has limitations. Therefore users and readers who take decision based on the findings in this study must take into account these limitations. One major limitation is the choice of study area. The present study is based on only one study area (Cape Coast Metropolis) and therefore the findings may be different if the study is conducted in other districts. Therefore, those who extrapolate the findings and conclusions should not ignore this limitation or caution.

There were some truths in the public domain that the schools were concealing. Some of these events are well known ones, which have even attracted media attention. The schools involved when contacted denied some of these events, fearing they may tarnish the image of the school. There were some cases that the heads admitted but did not want those cases to be on record for the fear of its implications on the service image. Since some of the respondents concealed the truth even though it was in the public domain, this could potentially affect the outcome of the research.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to headmistresses and assistant headmistresses who are females in the Cape Coast Metropolis, hence headmasters and assistant headmasters in the region were not considered in this research. Again, female heads and assistants from other Regions of Ghana were also not considered in this research.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research work is divided into five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction to the study which includes the background to the study, the statement of problem, research objectives, research questions, the significance of the study, limitation, delimitation and the organization of the study. Chapter Two reviews the relevant literature related to the subject under discussion and the empirical work done in the subject area. Chapter Three looks at the methodology. It considers the study design, study population, the sample size and sampling techniques, data collection instrument and data analysis. The Fourth chapter looks, at the analysis and discussion of findings and the last chapter; Chapter Five also examines the summary, conclusions, recommendations for implementation and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Reviewing literature gives anyone undertaking a scholarly work an insight and general knowledge of the subject matter under study. It involves the evaluation, classification critique and comparison of prior studies on the subject matter, the main authorities and authors in the area, the various research questions which have been raised and the extent of which they have been answered or otherwise, the existing theories and hypotheses and the general methodologies in use in investigating the subject matter.

It is therefore apparently clear that for any quality academic writing, it must have literature review. This chapter provides the detailed accounts on literature. The chapter specifically discusses theoretical background to justify the study and relationship between the study variables. It also accounts for empirical evidences as means of comparison and gap analysis. The key concepts drawn from the theoretical reviews are also discussed in this chapter. The chapter dealt with theoretical review section, empirical review, conceptual issues, lessons learnt and knowledge gap as well as conceptual framework.

2.1 Theoretical Review

This section of the study provides the theoretical foundations to the study. According to Baran and Davies (2011), a theory is any organized set of concepts, explanations and principles of some aspect of human experience. To the authors, theory also comprises propositions or postulations on interrelated concepts or constructs that specify relationships or associations among the concepts or relevant variables in the constructs for the purpose of providing the basis of predictions. It has

also been seen as a way of really understanding a concept in order to make an effective analysis and draw meaningful conclusions on a particular field of study (Baran & Davies, 2011). According to Lundvall (2010), theory makes it easier to establish a good relationship between variables of study and hence convince any reader why such study is worth undertaking.

Although research contributes immensely to the explanatory power of a theory (Gay & Weaver, 2011), to be able to widen or build knowledge effectively, a theoretical framework must be introduced in order to develop the research process. It provides justifications for proposed relationships to support empirical hypotheses in research and the findings of which contribute to widen the understanding of the theories upon which these hypotheses were developed (Gay & Weaver, 2011). Theory is thus a statement of a hypothesised relationship among or between variables. It also involves a series of interrelated constructs, concepts, abstraction, definition, variables, and propositions that have been hypothesised or assumed with a systematic view of phenomena, for the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena (Guillemette & Luckerhoff, 2011).

From the above discussions and observation, there is no doubt as to the relevance of theory to research. Therefore, since the focus of this study involves investigating relationships, theoretical justifications are required. Therefore, this section of the study discusses the various relevant theories which underpin the study that is the liberal feminist theory, intersectionality theory and the role congruity theory.

2.1.1 Liberal feminist theory

Liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminist theory, which focuses on women's ability to maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. Its emphasis is on making the legal and political rights of women equal to men. Liberal feminists hold that the exercise of personal autonomy depend on certain enabling conditions that are insufficiently present in women's lives, or that social arrangements often fail to respect women's personal autonomy and other elements of women's flourishing (Garland-Thomson, 2002). They hold also that women's needs and interests are insufficiently reflected in the basic conditions under which they live, and that those conditions lack legitimacy because women are inadequately represented in the processes of democratic self-determination. Liberal feminists hold that autonomy deficits are due to the gender system or the patriarchal nature of inherited traditions and institutions, and that the women's movement should work to identify and remedy them. As the protection and promotion of citizens' autonomy is the appropriate role of the state on the liberal view, liberal feminists hold that the state can and should be the women's movement's ally in promoting women's autonomy.

Liberal feminists hold that autonomy deficits are due to the gender system or the patriarchal nature of inherited traditions and institutions, and that the women's movement should work to identify and remedy those (Pateman & Grosz, 2013). As the protection and promotion of citizens' autonomy is the appropriate role of the state on the liberal view, liberal feminists hold that the state can and should be the women's movement's ally in promoting women's autonomy.

The information as presented above truly is a canker in almost all institutions for which women in leadership roles in the Ghana Education Service (henceforth GES) cannot be exempted. There is no denying the fact that women needs and

interests are insufficiently reflected in the basic conditions under which they live, and that those conditions lack legitimacy because women are inadequately represented in the processes of democratic self-determination. This poses a greater challenge in the execution of their duties and sometimes affects their overall performance within the position that they occupy. The consistent neglect in providing for the basic necessities that they need in the performance of their duties sometimes discourages in their leadership role. Moreover, the unfair treatment of meddling in the affairs of women leaders which take away their autonomy is also a serious problem that damp their spirit.

The liberal feminist theory further maintains that women should enjoy personal autonomy. That is, they hold that women should live lives of their own choice. Some offer procedural accounts of personal autonomy (Greer & Greene, 2003; Lorber, 2010). These accounts suggest to say that women should enjoy personal autonomy because they are entitled to a broad range of autonomy-enabling conditions. On this view, the women's leadership should work to identify and promote these conditions. Identifying these enabling conditions requires careful attention to the particular ways in which autonomy deficits are produced in different women's lives. Procedural accounts avoid judging directly the substance of women's choices or the arrangements that ensue.

One important means from the theory which gives women a strategic coping mechanism and the absence of which poses challenges on their position is being free of the limits set by patriarchal paternalistic and moralistic laws. Patriarchal paternalistic laws restrict women's options on the grounds that such limits are in women's interest (Greer & Greene, 2003; Lorber, 2010). Think for example of laws that limit women's employment options on the grounds that taking certain jobs is not

in women's interest (Hennessy, 2012). Patriarchal moralistic laws restrict women's options on the grounds that certain options should not be available to women because morality forbids women from choosing them. Think for example of laws that prohibit or restrict prostitution or abortion, or laws that favour certain kinds of sexual expression or family forms (Hennessy, 2012; Grant, 2013; Pateman & Grosz, 2013). Together, patriarchal paternalistic and moralistic laws steer women into socially preferred ways of life. These are unfair restrictions on women's choices, on the liberal feminist view, because women's choices should be guided by their own sense of their self-interest and by their own values (Madsen, 2000; Hughes, 2002).

The free limit from the paternalistic restriction as explained from the theory sets grounds for women leaders to duly make serious decisions devoid of fear and intimidation from their male counterpart especially when these males work under the women leaders. This goes to reason that for women leaders in the GES the presence of such patriarchal moralistic laws would make it cumbersome to exercise their duties and hence if there is going to be any strategic decision, such decision would be shielded. For instance, most men in Ghana see themselves superior to women and hence tend to look down upon women in leadership position. This leads to disobedience to the rules set out by the women in leadership.

Within the various challenges that women leaders face, one important thing the liberal feminist theory propose to put them on a higher pedestal is having access to options (Bryson, 2016; Dietz, 2003). Women's access to options is frequently and unfairly restricted due to economic deprivation, in particular due to the feminization of poverty (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010). Other sources of unfairly reduced options for women are stereotyping and sex discrimination in education and employment (Madsen, 2000; Hughes, 2002). Such stereotyping and discrimination affects some

racial, ethnic and cultural groups in particularly pernicious ways. Liberal feminists also point to the way cultural homogeneity unfairly limits women's options (Mann, 2012), for example when culture assigns identities and social roles according to sex (Bryson, 2016; Dietz, 2003; Garland-Thomson, 2002; Greer & Greene, 2003; Hennessy, 2012).

Globally, one distinctive feature of the liberal theory is what is termed or described as comprehensive liberal feminism (Madsen, 2000; Hughes, 2002). The assertions of this part of the liberal propositions are grounded in moral doctrines. It typically gives account of how state power should be used to feminist ends; so a comprehensive liberal feminism typically includes the claim that state power should be used to some particular feminist ends because some moral doctrine requires comprehensive liberal feminism typically gives an account of how part of associational life—beyond what is traditionally understood as ‘the political’—should be arranged, for example that the family should foster women's and girls' personal autonomy, or that domestic associations should distribute benefits and burdens fairly (Bryson, 2016; Dietz, 2003; Garland-Thomson, 2002). Some comprehensive liberal feminism focus primarily on associational life and only peripherally on the role of the state.

Comprehensive liberal feminist accounts of how associational life generally should be arranged may, but need not, include the claim that the state ought to enforce such arrangements. There is nothing about grounding in a moral doctrine that forces a comprehensive liberal feminism to include the claim that the state should enforce liberal feminist values outside of what is traditionally understood as the political (Bryson, 2016). To be sure, comprehensive liberal feminisms typically do this. The reason is that comprehensive liberal feminisms typically reject the traditional

public/private distinction, and hold that the political justice liberalism promises for women can be realized only when associational life—the family, for example—does not undermine girls' and women's personal autonomy, or distribute benefits and burdens unfairly. (But note that to reject the traditional public/private distinction is not to reject any and all such distinctions (Greer & Greene, 2003; Hennessy, 2012). The overall motive is that to really help women leaders to excel well in their endeavours, the state or the political state in general should give maximum protection to women leaders.

Summing the liberal feminist theory up, it could be concluded that various issues pose challenges to women in leadership positions while the same theory have given mechanisms that would help such women cope successfully. Some the issues are Patriarchal and paternalistic laws while others deny women of their rightful autonomy (Mann, 2012). These challenges serve as affront to the smooth running of the responsibilities that have been bestowed on women leaders within the GES which is the focus of the study. However, the theory presents mechanisms such as having right to different options and free restrictions as well as making autonomous decisions (Greer & Greene, 2003; Lorber, 2010).

2.1.2 Intersectionality theory

The intersectional theory is the concept that people are often disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression: their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and other identity markers (Lorber, 2010). This theory holds that the various social and cultural constructions which inform different forms of discrimination against women are for instance, influenced by intersections of race, gender, and ethnicity (Syed, 2010). Cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated, but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society, such as

gender, class, ethnicity [religion and culture] (Levine-Rasky, 2011). That is to say these factors are mutually constituted and not to be seen as fixed or distinct categories. The intersectionality theory provides a tool for analysing various systems of inequality as well as to develop a politics of resistance and empowerment (Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda & Abdulrahim, 2012). The theory of intersectionality helps to explain and understand the positions, barriers and steps of improving the status of women in leadership positions within the GES in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

An understanding of intersectionality is a vital element in gaining political and social equality and improving the democratic system. For Viruell-Fuentes et al. (2012), giving equal opportunities to women would be an attempt at liberation from dehumanization. Thus, to fully understand the positions of women in the GES, one must investigate and examine the ways in which leadership structures, social processes and social representations are shaped. For this study, the study tries to discuss among other things how gender, age, ethnicity and culture, class/socio-economic situation and gender equity in leadership positions influence and affect women's lives in the GES. The role of that human right activist and gender advocates play in this influence cannot be overemphasized. The study explores how these factors interact in empowering or disempowering circumstances to women in leadership position within the GES and how these women negotiate within the space they have. Other study has suggested that African women would have to challenge the cultural socialization by rejecting the assumption that the roles of men and women have been fixed either by the Creator or culture (Levine-Rasky, 2011).

Perceptions on gender differences about women in leadership positions is very important in this analysis as it is in the context of ethnic/cultural background, which has some religious limitations on women of childbearing age; to the extent that some

argued or hold the perception that older women are men (Best, Edelman, Krieger & Eliason, 2011). It is important to see how gender difference affects them in their leadership roles. The women being studied are middle aged; however, it would be important to know what opportunities they had when they were younger as well as whether younger and/or older women today have more opportunities. The kinds of opportunities they had and how they accessed those opportunities were also assessed.

These intersections that may be said to affect the positions and roles of women in leadership position within the GES in Ghana today may also have a background in post-colonialist thought that relate to women (Levine-Rasky, 2011). In most parts of Africa, the introducers of Christianity disregarded some aspects of the culture of the converts which they labeled as evil. Thus, Western culture was intended to replace the indigenous culture as well (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011). Missionaries had the support/security of the colonizers and they in turn implemented their (colonizers) agenda. Thus, as Kwok Pui-lan puts it, Christianization and Westernization became almost synonymous process in the colonial period (Veenstra, 2013). This form of institutionalized (Catholic and Protestant) Christianity and Westernization marginalized women (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011). In its history, the story of the various women in leadership have not been different, as the women who played vital roles remain mostly nameless.

The gender constructions of the Westerners and/or colonizers were such that women were not engaged in specialized and productive work outside the home. They were limited to accepting low-paid and unpaid domestic jobs (Best et al., 2011). This influenced the status of women in the colonized communities. It is no wonder that most of the history of missionary work has very little information on women, though some accompanied their husbands. Basically, the same discriminatory view has been

held for women in leadership positions across board and this has significantly affected either their ego or performance. Many people especially men hold the view that women should still be relegated to the background in everything (Veenstra, 2013).

Furthermore, in religion and most especially historic records in some Christian denominations in Ghana women leaders have less been discussed. For instance, some women who came as missionaries, to advance their course in religion and spearheaded significant progress had their names mentioned, because their work was limited to women and girls. In the history of the Pentecostal mission in Ghana, for instance, although Sophia McKeown, the wife of James McKeown played a significant role in the commencement of their missionary work in Ghana, her role is only mentioned in passing. However, like earlier white women missionaries of the time, because of the understanding that she had about the place of women, Sophia McKeown focused on the women and girls, teaching them vocational skills (Veenstra, 2013).

The indigenous religious and cultural system of Ghana has a gender system that includes both women and men in its spiritual and social structures. It is however, argued that some of the indigenous cultures experienced the imposition of some aspects of Western cultures at the time. One such aspect was the limitation of women to private or domestic roles (Veenstra, 2013). The missionaries enforced strict gender roles – training boys for priesthood and trade while the girls were taught domestic services such as European forms of cooking, cleaning, sewing and child care. This indigenous culture is not replicated in the GES where both gender can hold up to leadership positions. However, the society within which these women operate is infected with this gender biased thinking thus creating a challenging atmosphere for such women leaders (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011).

In the church as well as in the society there are changes in the roles of women and men and this, in a way, challenges the gender ideals for both men and women. These influence people's view of women crossing their boundaries and raise questions of gaining more space. The changing roles of women are also a challenge to those already in leadership, mostly men, with regards to accepting women as new entrants into their fold.

Issues of gender are usually related to questions of authority or power. Thus for these women, what sort of power do they have? How did they attain it and to what extent do they exercise the kind of power or authority they have? Some researchers discuss what they call the three levels of power as personal, cultural and structural (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013). The personal level is for the individual to develop confidence, sense of worth as well as enhancing skills. Power at the personal level gives one the ability to influence and develop others (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011). The cultural or discursive level exposes the framework in which people find themselves and how they question such stereotypes. The structural level looks at positions and the opportunities available and ways in which one becomes conscious of it (Viruell-Fuentes et al., 2012).

Power may also be looked at in terms of structure/political, agency and experience. Additionally, Cho, et al (2013) argues that no one owns power but rather a machinery and that power is everywhere and not within our control. Understood in terms of what power does, and not what it is, Foucault sees power from the perceptions of male ownership (Best et al., 2011). Thinking of power in this way takes it from the domain of that which is gendered. From this perspective it can be said that power is not limited to that which is coercive and domineering, but

encompasses the ability to influence and to act (Hancock, 2016). Women's roles can thus be considered as power relations.

The work is also set within Max Weber's (1864-1920) concept of charismatic leadership. This concept is based on divine origin and a form of heroism. He identifies three forms of leadership as bureaucratic, traditional and charismatic leadership. Weber defines charismatic leadership as, resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him. For Weber, charisma will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are not accessible to ordinary person but are regarded as of divine origin (Pateman & Grosz, 2013).

Weber distinguishes charismatic leadership from traditional and bureaucratic leadership in such ways that whereas traditional and bureaucratic leadership strive on permanence, rules and impartiality (Vardeman-Winter & Tindall, 2010), charismatic leadership is temporal (Grant, (2013) depending on the leader's ability to perform miracles (Veenstra, 2013). Thus, the followers have a personal devotion towards the leader (Hancock, 2016) which is based on the traits of the leader such as the demonstration of unusual insight and accomplishment. One hundred and one C charismatic leaders are sometimes transformational, bringing changes into the lives of followers. Weber's concept of charismatic leadership allows leadership opportunities to women.

2.1.3 Role congruity theory

The theory thrives on the premise that leadership has been predominantly a male prerogative in corporate, political, military, and other sectors of society. Although women have gained increased access to supervisory and middle management positions, they remain quite rare as elite leaders and top executives. To explain this phenomenon, public and scientific discussion has centred on the idea of a “glass ceiling”—a barrier of prejudice and discrimination that excludes women from higher level leadership positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

The theory follows that the potential for prejudice against female leaders that is inherent in the female gender role follows from its dissimilarity to the expectations that people typically have about leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Prejudice can arise when perceivers judge women as actual or potential occupants of leader roles because of inconsistency between the predominantly communal qualities that perceivers associate with women and the predominantly agentic qualities they believe are required to succeed as a leader. People thus tend to have dissimilar beliefs about leaders and women and similar beliefs about leaders and men. In Schein’s (1973, 1975) early empirical demonstration of this masculine construal of leadership, male and female managers gave their impressions of women, men, or successful middle managers.

The information presented about the congruity theory illustrates that prejudice against women and especially those in leadership position contributes to their challenges. It stands to reason from the theory that people perceive women as being unable to consistently lead affairs in any endeavour. This prejudice heavily affects women in the daily duties.

The three theories discussed so far have revealed from literature various circumstance and situations that entangle women leaders. Some of the issues cited have been morals, culture, religion and other socio-cultural constraints. However, modernity and technology dispel such cultural practices hence the need to forgo them and embrace modern trend of activity. The activity in question is the increase of women leaders in various capacities even to the point of political leaders. This means that even though women leaders face various challenges, they are able to climb to leadership positions and perform excellently.

2.2 Empirical Review

This section discusses some of the previous studies that have been done in the areas of women leadership and other gender equity related matters. Empirical review can be defined as research based on experimentation or observation. Moreover, it aids in the identification, exploration, confirmation and advancing the theoretical concepts to further improve educational design.

Within the tertiary education, Agezo (2010) conducted a study to investigate the coping strategies of female leaders in tertiary education administration particularly in the University of Cape Coast. A qualitative perspective was adopted in conducting the study. Out of the various approaches to qualitative studies, the study chose to adopt the case study approach for this research. This was because case study, as argued by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), aims at studying a single instance in action. It provides a unique example of real people in real situations in order for people to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles. The author adopted this particular approach for the study in order to have an in-depth knowledge about females in leadership. The study examined factors such as the leadership styles of females, gender stereotyping in Ghanaian

culture, gender-based leadership, females in leadership positions, challenges facing women in leadership position, and leadership strategies used by women leaders. This approach allowed the author to obtain in-depth information concerning the current status of women leadership in University of Cape Coast.

Ten female leaders participated in the study and in-depth interviews were conducted among the participants at separate times at the participants' convenient times. An introductory letter was obtained from the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) which encouraged the participants to grant interviews. One month was used to collect the data, and another one and half months for data transcribing, analysis and report writing. The participants revealed that they employed opened-door leadership strategies more than autocratic style of leading their colleagues and subordinates. It was thus recommended that the University Management should initiate an educative programme that will help females in leadership positions to cope with challenges relating to the combination of family duties with their leadership responsibilities.

It could be argued from the above study that it lacks certain key ingredients which make the conclusion unreliable hence its recommendation. This is because the author used a single institution as a case study which limits the scope of the study. Furthermore, the number of participants of the study was too small to engender any meaningful conclusions about the challenges that women leaders face in discharging their duties.

In another vein, Malie and April (2011) conducted a study to explore the challenges faced by executive women in financial services companies and their coping mechanisms in the United State. It also examined the representation of executive women in financial services. The study adopted the exploratory qualitative

research methodology and this was based on the semi-structured interviews with a non-probability sample of 20 respondents. All respondents were executive women in financial services companies listed on the main board of the Jordan Stock Exchange, further broken down into banking and insurance sub-sectors.

The research found that women are underrepresented in top management. Furthermore, the research suggested that even though gender equality legislation has been introduced to assist with addressing the inequalities of the past, some structural issues such as gender stereotypes and ‘boys club’ undermine their efforts. Women also indicated that due to salary penalties incurred when using organizational policies meant for work-life balance, they tended not to use them. However, some of the coping mechanisms used such as education, mentorship and support structures were noted as being very helpful. The study thus concluded that women are still underrepresented in top management. They face challenges before they get into and when they are in these roles. They however have developed that they utilize when necessary.

From the study by Malie and April (2011), it could be observed that it was conducted in the finance sector while the current study is being conducted in the educational sector. From the theoretical argument so far, the challenges identified seem to be deep rooted in literature. However, much as various findings were made towards challenges, the study failed to talk about the coping mechanisms.

In 2012, Gyaten conducted a study to examine the challenges and coping mechanisms of working women in the banking industry in Ghana, National Investment Bank Limited (NIB), Head Office in Accra. The research, specifically examined the characteristics of women that worked at NIB, the type of work they did, the challenges they faced and coping mechanisms they adopted to enable them cope

with the challenges. The study used descriptive design to determine the challenges and coping mechanisms adopted by the women employees of NIB. A total of 50 respondents made up of staff and management staff of the NIB Head Office answered a questionnaire on the challenges and coping mechanisms of working women in the Banking Industry in Ghana.

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The study revealed that characteristics of the working women in NIB fell in line with the country's categorisation of the working class and were also well educated. The nature of work was stressful and so demanding that they were unable to meet deadlines. They reported early for work and closed late limiting time spent used for household responsibilities which was bad for their families. The women adopted strategies such as sticking to their plans for each day, hiring house helps, depending on friends and family to assist with household duties, having the support and assistance of their spouses, relying on the strength of God and also being patient and tolerant with each other to cope with the situation.

It is obvious from the above study that it has a different focus from the current study. However, the study by Gyaten (2012) dealt with an aspect of the current study which is challenges and coping mechanisms. Though such challenges and coping mechanisms are not geared towards women in leadership position, the results present good strategies which could guide in framing up the instrument for the current study. The way that Gyaten (2012) constructed her questionnaire for identifying the coping mechanism is worth using in the current study.

In Ethiopia, Miressa (2012) intended to assess the practices and challenges of women in leadership and development activities of some selected woredas of Bench Maji Zone. The purpose of the study was to look into the depth of the nature of the

existing practices and challenges of women in leadership and development activities. In the review by Miressa, it tried to overview the concept of women in leadership and challenges of women in leadership position. It suggests women participation in leadership and decision making position can affect many areas of development. It further suggested that positive engagement of women in decision making positions and development in all demographic environments can increase economic achievement levels of the country.

The study employed a descriptive survey method. Five out of 10 woredas and one city administration in Bench Maji Zone were selected as a sample for the study by using simple random sampling techniques. Questionnaire, interview, focus group discussion and document analysis were the main instruments used to collect data. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed. SPSS version 16 was used for the quantitative analysis. The major conclusions made from the study were equal participation and representation of women in leadership positions and development activities would ensure better economic performance of the sector. Effects and sensitivities of women in leadership and development activities were high. The progress of women in leadership and development activities over the last five year was fast. However, still there was a gap when compared with men counterparts.

Looking critically at the study by Miressa (2012) it could be concluded that, most of the time women join mostly low level work conditions. Moreover, today women under representing in leadership position in almost all sectors due to relatively women have less freedom because of their family responsibility and lack of necessary qualifications and skills to fill position of responsibility. Major challenges influencing women have been cultural issues and lack of parental involvement which were common in female headed institutions.

Focusing on school leadership in Kenya, Kitele (2013) conducted a study to investigate and identify the challenges faced by female head teachers in the management of secondary schools in Kangundo district and to suggest strategies for coping with the challenges. The study was guided by the following objectives; to investigate and identify the challenges faced by female head teachers in the management; to find out the effectiveness of female head teachers with regard to time management; to find out if cultural and social barriers interfere with management of secondary schools by female teachers; to establish the attitudes of staff members and other stakeholders towards female head teachers; to find out the influence of psychological factors on women with regard to management of secondary schools; to establish the professional development needs of female head teachers on management of secondary schools and to find out the strategies devised by the female head teachers to cope with the challenges they face in management of secondary schools. The target population in this study was the female head teachers in Kangundo district, teachers, students and the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers in the District education officer's office. The researcher used questionnaires and interview guides for collection of data.

The study revealed that 338 (80.0%) of the teachers liked the way the head teachers managed the school. Again, 239 (56.7%) of the teachers noted that the head teachers were good in performing their duties with regard to time management, 338(80.0%) of them also noted that cultural and social issues interfered with the management of school affairs. Majority of the teachers 317 (75.0%) said that their perception towards their head teachers was good. Majority of the teachers 366 (86.7%) noted that psychological traits do not bar the head teachers from performing school duties effectively. About 338 (80.0%) of the teachers noted that the students

accorded male and female teachers the same level of respect. The following conclusions were drawn.

Female head teachers are positively viewed by their teachers and are approachable by the students since they encourage them to work to attain their goals in schools. Female head teachers are effective with regard to time management in the management of secondary schools since they are able to follow the laid down policies hence achieve the goals of their institutions. Cultural and social barriers interfere with the management of school affairs. Half 32 (50%) of the head teachers said there was no role conflict between domestic and professional roles while 32 (50%) of head teachers felt that there was conflict. On the psychological factors influencing the head teachers' performance, 366 (86.7%) of the teachers said that biological traits did not bar the head teachers from performing school duties. This was because they had a teaching experience, were assertive and aggressive. The training programmes on education management for teachers were not organized in schools. The schools lacked funds to organize training and only Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) organized training for head teachers.

The study recommended that since female headteachers were positively viewed by students and teachers, there is need to be given more posts of leadership in secondary schools. The female head teachers are effective hence, they are able to achieve the goals of their respective institutions. Although cultural and social barriers may interfere with the management of school affairs, there is need for female head teachers to be encouraged to achieve leadership positions since they can manage the roles of leaders through mentorship.

The forgoing study by Kitele (2013) seems to suggest that head teachers within the study area face little or no challenges and that both students and other teachers have positive perception towards them. This is what has been revealed in Kenya. The question is, could same be said among women leaders in Ghana? However, the study concluded that female teachers should be given more leadership positions because they are viewed positively. This assertion seems to differ from the problem in question. For someone to be viewed positively does not in any way mean that the person is without any challenges. Therefore the current study seeks to identify the challenge and the coping strategies.

Maseko, (2013) conducted a comparative investigation of challenges faced by women in leadership/management in the public and private sector, using Foskor and the Department of Labour in Mhlathuze Municipality as a case analysis in South Africa. Literature was sourced to support the study from the following areas: gender equity in leadership positions, gender and leadership in South Africa, gender inequality in management affirmative action and discrimination within organization, gender differences in leadership, gender stereotype, challenges to women in leadership, inequity in education, recruitment, employment and advancement, government policies supporting and promoting status and welfare, black women in management facing dual challenges, mentoring, and key issues pertaining to women in management

The theoretical framework used for this research was the transformational leadership. A descriptive design grounded on qualitative approach of interviews was used to elicit data from respondents with a sample size of 30. The method of data analysis was the use of Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS). Based on analysed data, the following findings were reached: from both sectors women are

suffering from domestic constraints, psychological factors, pressure at work and home, while some men said that the place for women is the kitchen. Women are suffering from cultural factors as such finding it difficult to take orders from men.

There are similar challenges faced by women in both sectors. The findings also indicate that women at Foskor are disproportionately represented, while in the Department of Labour they are proportionally represented. Foskor needs to follow the Employment Equity Act in terms of balancing gender in the working environment. From the foregoing findings, several recommendations were attained such as: that recruitment, selection and placement in organisation should avoid tokenistic patterns. When advertising for posts, organisations need to adhere to the Employment Equity Act.

From the study above, it is obvious that women leaders are suffering various setbacks owing to cultural discrimination against them and other gender inequality practices. The further expanded the scope to other areas which was not the focus of the study. Due to such coverage, the study extended the findings to cover other areas like advertising without any justification. The current study avoids this flaw by focusing strictly on women leadership in the GES and from the findings makes recommendations for studies to be conducted in other disciplines.

2.3 Conceptual Review and Framework

Conceptual review presents various analytical situations under different context in order to understand other variations in a research study. Therefore, this section reviews some of the context most talked about in women leadership and gender equity. It also provides a framework as developed from the theoretical and empirical analysis.

2.3.1 Leadership and gender

Leadership and gender has received attentions in literature (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Malie & April, 2011; Ritter & Yoder, 2004). Ritter and Yoder (2004) suggest there are three theoretical explanations for the types between male and female leaders: Biologically Different (hormones, temperament etc.), Culturally Different (socialized for different roles), and Structurally Determined (relative standing in organizational structures). However, practical differences yielded very few differences in actual leadership ability (Vardeman-Winter & Tindall, 2010; Maseko, 2013). Leadership styles vary, especially in request directness and therefore perceived politeness, but there is negligible difference in real leadership ability between men and women. Practical differences aside, the real problem with women in leadership positions seem to be the attitudes of those around them. Disparaging feelings toward women in the workplace consisted of attitudes such as, women lacked career orientation, leadership potential and were undependable and emotionally unstable – all of which made women unsuitable candidates for management (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013).

Even as recently as 2013, Cho and Co replicated the study, still finding little change in attitude. Polls about women in business said that despite executives more favourable view of women, the majority still think only a truly exceptional woman can succeed in the business world (Hancock, 2016; Veenstra, 2013). Why, if there is insignificant ability difference, are women perceived as less competent leaders? The unfounded attitudes we hold are the larger concern for our understanding of women in leadership.

According to Larwood and Wood (2007), a woman entering into a leadership position must decide the extent and the types of demands she is willing to accept, given the patriarchal nature of most societies and households and the double workloads that most working women experience (being responsible for domestic responsibilities despite entering the workforce), being in leadership is bound to have an impact on women's social and personal lives and in turn affect how they perform. Many religious leaders, some scholars, some writers, and even some women insist that women play their most significant role as wives and mothers in their own homes. Women who do participate in the workforce are concentrated in certain occupations because of the social structure of segregation between men and women, and the limited access to specializations for women. As a result, work opportunities for women are limited (AlMunajjed, 1997).

The concerns indicated above in respect to leadership leads to asking several questions. When it comes to leadership, does gender matter? Is there a difference between women leaders and men who lead? If so, what are the unique qualities of female leadership that the most effective women leaders possess, and are they unique to women? In 2005, a year-long study conducted by Caliper, identified a number of characteristics that distinguish women leaders from men when it comes to qualities of leadership. According to Caliper (2005), women leaders are more assertive and persuasive, have a stronger need to get things done and are more willing to take risks than male leaders. Women leaders were also found to be more empathetic and flexible, as well as stronger in interpersonal skills than their male counterparts. Since the focus of this study is grounded on the challenges facing women leaders in a comparative lens between both the public and private sectors, the reliance of the literature will rely on that line.

This evidence - that the leadership style of women is not simply unique but possibly at odds with what men practice - begs the question: Do these qualities have value in the marketplace? Is this type of leadership welcomed by society and by the public and private sector? These are among the questions that all issues related to gender seek to address. Apart from them, other studies also endeavour to assess whether women leaders in the private sector prefer a particular leadership style that is different from those of public sector, and whether there are any differences and similarities in the leadership style of women leaders in both the public and private sectors in society. These things are worth assessing since they add up in the quest to bridging the gender inequality gap.

2.3.2 Gender and leadership style

Over the past decade, many studies have been published on gender differences in leadership styles (Carli & Eagly, 2011; Herrera, Duncan, Green & Skaggs, 2012). The typical masculine leaders emphasize achievement of organizational goals, whereas typical feminine leaders emphasize people and relationships (Carli & Eagly, 2011). In support of this view, it is Powell (2011) belief that men tend to identify with - transactional leadership and view subordinate job performance as a series of transactions, which exchange rewards for services rendered or punishment for inadequate performance. Men, more often than women, tend to use power that comes from formal authority and their position within the organization. In this sense, it could be reasoned that men only thrives on their position to subject their subordinate to circumstances that emerges in their line of duty.

In contrast, many women possess leadership characteristics that are identified with - transformational leadership. Powell (2011) further stated that this type of leadership provides opportunities for subordinates to transform their own self-interest

into the interest of the group through concern for a broader goal. Powell (2011) believes this form of leadership is well suited to provide support during chaotic and uncertain times. Many women attribute their power to personal characteristics such as charisma, interpersonal skills, hard work, or personal contacts rather than organizational structure. From this character trait of women, it could be seen that their style is born out of personal courage rather than organizational favour. Knowing very well that organizational structure sometimes favour males more than females, women mount up different strategies to contain such unfair treatment. Similarly, women within the GES also face the same organizational treatment hence they need for coping strategies.

Powell (2011) recognized that men preferred leadership style is - command and control. Women prefer to work interactively, sharing power and information. When encouraged to identify the perceived differences between themselves and their male colleagues' leadership style, 458 (68%) of women agreed there was a difference in how women and men approached their work. The women surveyed associated their style with key words such as - consensus building and - cooperation. Many felt their style was less aggressive than their male colleagues. This less aggressive attitude of women though lessen their problems but sometimes subject them to the aggressive nature of their male counterpart who work under the women.

The National Foundation for Women Business Owners (2010) study found that women derive success from building relationships with their customers, employees, and having control over their own destiny along with the monetary gain. Men, on the other hand, derive success from the satisfaction of a job well done and achieving desired goals. Thus, women leadership approach brings about an environment that is a - web of inclusion (Ely, Ibarra & Kolb, 2011), while men's

leadership is more likely to encourage hierarchical organizations with a top-down approach.

Research continues to support past evidence that many senior women managers work in environments that are dominated by men. These environments can have an impact on women managers' leadership styles and stress levels. Quite often, women have found themselves pressured to use a —masculine style of leadership. Khan, Aslam and Riaz (2012) conducted a survey which revealed that 326 (74%) of women recognized that it is important to their professional success to develop a style comfortable for their male colleagues. The pressure for women to alter their leadership style has been proven to be a substantial challenge for them and may hinder them from moving into upper levels of corporate management.

However, women are starting to succeed, despite stereotypical characteristics that have been associated with being feminine and considered inappropriate as leaders. Powell (2011) in the article -The Way Women Lead for the Harvard Business Review, identified the second wave of women who are making their way into top management. Female executives who have reached the peak of their professions are starting to represent a new leadership paradigm. They are drawing from their own attitudes and skills and are not adopting the style and habits proven to be successful for men. Ayman and Korabik (2013) supports Powell (2011) belief that women leaders in the past used traditionally masculine leadership traits. These masculine traits consisted of women being domineering, authoritative, and - tough. In contrast to their male counterparts or successful women of the past, these women embrace their femininity and utilize it to their advantage in business.

Ayman and Korabik (2013) addressed the new approach by reflecting on past practices of copying male leadership styles, which did not steer women into the top jobs of America's leading companies. For example, power dressing and bulging shoulder pads for female executives during the 1980s produced minimal progress for women. Apparently, the topic of gender and leadership style has generated much debate. Yet, it has paid off for a few successful women leaders within corporate America, government agencies, and education.

Several women today appear to serve as powerful role models for women aspiring to hold visible leadership positions. For example, Condoleezza Rice exemplifies leadership in U.S. Foreign Policy, Oprah Winfrey is important in the entertainment world, Carly Fiorina of Hewlett-Packard serves as a former CEO of a Fortune 500 company, Mary Sue Coleman represents education as President of the University of Michigan, and Hillary Rodman Clinton represents women in politics. Some argue that as this trend continues, women will suffer more stress-related disorders as they move into high-pressure jobs and as they combine work and family roles. This notwithstanding, women leaders can excel in their endeavours if the challenges that confront them are minimized.

2.3.3 Gender stereotype

The widespread attitudes people have about women in leadership positions are apperception with no objective basis, hence called stereotypes. The Gender-Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) says that people develop expectations for their own and other's behaviour based on beliefs about what is appropriate for men and women. In a more concrete example, if a woman were to open a car door for a man before she walked around to get in the car herself, we might find her behaviour odd based on what we know of men and women's typical behaviour. It would be an example that is in

conflict with our expectations. The Correspondent Inference Theory states the less likely an act, given the actor's situation, the stronger are perceiver's inferences that the actor's underlying disposition corresponds to the actor's behaviour (Nosek, Smyth, Sriram, Lindner, Devos, Ayala & Kesebir, 2009). In other words, when behaviour is in conflict with our expectations, we seek to find a state of cognitive consistency.

Using the Fundamental Attribution Error to explain the cognitive inconsistency, it is assumed the behaviour is an outward show of underlying attributes or traits. These two theories also hold true in the workplace. A term known as Gender-Role Spill over is the idea that gender-based expectations of behaviour carry over from social interactions into the workplace (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). So in addition to the expectations and stereotypes people hold socially, when in an organizational setting they also rely on leadership and management stereotypes (Miller, Eagly & Linn, 2015). As women enter the workplace, stereotypes of women and leaders and gender role all must be taken into account to understand how they are viewed.

Stereotyping is one of the larger hurdles for women in leadership positions. As previously mentioned, leadership is as much (or more) an idea in the minds of followers as a reality of leaders themselves (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). When a person is perceived by a negative stereotype, it is very hard to change because one would have to change the co-workers' attitude. However, when provided with unambiguous and undeniable information about performance effectiveness, undervaluation of women does not occur (Ritter & Yoder, 2004; Malie & April, 2011; Berkery, Morley & Tiernan, 2013). For example, when a female leader's management success is proven and known to be outstanding, her performance will not be evaluated

using gender stereotypes but instead by the available known information. It is as if women leaders are assumed incompetent until proven competent. The stereotype of women in society is what researchers call Communal (Miller et al., 2015).

Women are seen as friendly, unselfish, concerned with others and emotionally expressive. Men on the other hand are stereotyped as “Agentic” (Bakan, 1966). They are independent, masterful, assertive and competent. The differences in these roles are obvious by the nature of the descriptions. What complicates them more is the similarity between the Agentic stereotype and the stereotype of a good leader. Strong leadership is also characterized as independent and assertive and competent. Women generally lead in a more democratic and participative style than men (Berkery et al., 2013; Booysen & Nkomo, 2010).

Men are autocratic in leadership style (Andreoni & Petrie, 2008). But when women don't lead in the style that is expected of them and lead in a more “manly, autocratic” style, the attributes, which were ascribed to them as, distinct from men and from successful managers, are hardly pleasant ones (Barreto, Ryan & Schmitt, 2009). Women are noted for negative qualities, such as bitter, quarrelsome and selfish, and others suggest they have an unbridled ambition for power and achievement. This description seems to conform to the “Bitch” role-type, which often has been alluded to in characterizations of high-power career women (Barreto, et al., 2009).

Men and women also differ largely in task orientation (i.e. perceptions of tendencies to have subordinates follow rules and procedure, maintain high standards and make leader and subordinate rules explicit (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011). Men are rated lower in task orientation and therefore more favourably. Women however are rated more highly in task orientation and therefore less favourably (Pateman & Grosz, 2013). These results occur even when the task orientation is at the same level

for both men and women. People only perceive a difference. Seeing women as more task oriented may be a reflection of the greater contrast between the leadership role and the gender stereotype (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011). Women with masculine leadership styles exacerbate their evaluation (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011).

With task orientation, communal and agentic stereotypes, it is logical that studies have found the scepticism of women's capability in leadership exaggerated when they take charge in an especially authoritative manner (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011). When women deviate as greatly as to seem autocratic where the stereotype would suggest they should be communal, the distance between the stereotype and the behaviour causes discomfort to the subordinate and they will try to reconcile the two. Best et al. (2011) would suggest the reconciliation takes place by using negative stereotypes. Female behaviour, when autocratic, is regarded as more extreme than men's, as a result of deviation from stereotypes (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011).

Yet another deviation amplification of the female stereotype results from fewer women than men in high-status positions (Best et al., 2011; Barreto, Ryan, & Schmitt, 2009). This connects logically to Donovan, (2012) stating the more masculine a stereotype a woman portrays in a business leadership position role conflict and increase the likelihood of unfair negative, the more at odds others will be with her stereotype and will seek to mediate their discomfort. Assertive and forceful behaviours when exhibited by a woman become negatively evaluated. Unfortunately there is a "lack of fit" perception between women and power (Dietz, 2003; Syed, 2010).

The more autocratic and directive mannerisms a female shows, the more negatively she is seen. Gender stereotypes cause women's behaviour to be interpreted differently than if a man were in the same situation. The very same behaviour that would have been deemed acceptable for a man is now unacceptable because the actor is a woman (Pateman & Grosz, 2013; McGibbon & McPherson, 2011). This gives men a much greater flexibility of management styles (McGibbon & McPherson, 2011).

2.3.4 Perceptions on gendered differences in leadership

In Ghana, perceptions on gender differences in the abilities of men and women as leaders are also sometimes marked by culture and beliefs. Most often than not, women leaders face stereotypes that is rooted in their historical employment as maids in the homes of white employers. In one of the few studies on the subject, Dako-Gyeke and Owusu (2013) observed subculture differences and similarities between Ghanaian men and women managers in retail banking. Wrigley-Asante (2012) stated that male Ghanaian managers concentrated on performance, competition and winning, power, control and directive leadership.

On the other hand, the author stated that Ghanaian women managers highlighted cooperation, empowerment, involvement, intuition and empathy. The study characterized the style of women in her sample of 216 retail managers as transformational and interactive. Wrigley-Asante (2012) also included racial differences in the behaviour of the managers in her sample. She found the organizational culture of white managers differed greatly from that of blacks. The black managers in her sample were more Afro-centric (male dominated leadership) in their approach to leadership. This canker was very much profound during the apartheid regime in the South Africa.

From the South African perspective, the Afro-centric model is centred on the concept of ubuntu. Ubuntu is not a leadership style but a philosophy of African humanism which values collectivism and group-centeredness in contrast to individualism (Parkes, Heslop, Oando, Sabaa, Januario & Figue, 2013). Booyesen and Nkomo (2010) using Hofstede's national culture model, gave higher scores for blacks on collectiveness, human orientation and gender equality compared to their white counterparts. They concluded that blacks are not as results-determined as whites. Although she measured leader attributes she did not report them.

Also, they observed differences in the cultural orientation of white and black women. Black women scored higher on humane orientation compared to white females. In general, black women emphasized concern for employees as well as collective mutual support and interdependence compared to whites' women's emphasis on independence and freedom, employees as workers and planning and future action. It should be noted that Booyesen and Nkomo (2010) sample did not include Asians and coloreds.

In sum Booyesen and Nkomo (2010) research suggests perceptions of leader behaviour should vary across race and gender. However in comparison to Booyesen and Nkomo (2010) findings, Thomas and Bendixen (2000) note that no cultural differences existed amongst the managers in their study. For them, management efficiency was independent of both ethnicity and race. By means of Hofstede's model of national culture, they observed the influence of racial/ethnic diversity on managerial effectiveness in South Africa. Regardless of managers identification with their ethnic group there was a common national culture at the management level. Aspects of that national culture including a high degree of uniqueness and a low

tolerance for hierarchical differences in power are similar to those found in the Netherland, England and the United States.

Thomas and Bendixen (2000) point out the historical impact of Dutch, British and American cultures on South Africa as well as the prevalence of British and American systems of management in business education and practice. On the other hand, they argued that apparent disagreements can be reconciled by the special nature of African collectivism in which individuals act autonomously but stay socially united; a concept that has been referred to as communalism. As a structure of collectivism, communalism can coexist with personal freedom or individualism. This is supported by cross-cultural leadership theory and research on gender and leadership in South Africa which indicates that there ought to be important differences in perceptions of ideal leadership behaviour across racial and gender groups.

2.4 Challenges to Women in Leadership

A range of issues arise in restraining women's potential to aspire to positions of leadership. Sadie (2005) maintained that at the bottom of the restrictions that women face is the patriarchal system where decision-making powers are in the hands of males. In this context, traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes concerning the role and status of women in society are still common and many women who are part of this system are finding it difficult to diverge from this culture and tradition because they may be ostracized. Regardless of women's education and access to the job market the woman's role is considered to be the typical one of homemaker. The man on the other hand is the bread-winner, head of household, and has the right to public life.

Confining women's identity to the domestic sphere is one of the barriers to women's entry into politics, and politics by its nature catapults one into public life. Commonly cultural attitudes are antagonistic to women's involvement in politics. Some women were capable of transcending cultural barriers and climbing to positions of leadership whether in politics or other spheres of public life, but more often than not it meant having to cope with cultural expectations with their leadership roles. Some African governments have adopted a policy framework which outlines Africa's vision for gender equality and how it intends to realize this ideal. The office on the status of women developed the policy framework, namely South Africa's National Policy Framework for women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (Kornegay, 2000). The Gender Policy Framework attempts to achieve the integration of gender consideration into the transformation process, which is currently occurring in most African countries including Ghana.

Leadership positions entail hard work and long hours. For women this stress is additional to their childcare, home and family responsibilities, a phenomenon referred to as the dual shift (Sadie, 2005). These considerations are also accurate of women in higher education. In addition to issues of family responsibility that do not make it easy for women to progress, cultural beliefs concerning the roles of men and women inhibit women's progression to top leadership as much it does in politics (Pandor, 2006) pointed out that women at senior level positions are not always helpful to other women who tend to want to sustain the status quo.

For many women, the time demands of such positions clash with the demands of the family, and this itself is an obstacle. This is in line with Ferguson (2001) as cited in Attom (2007) that most of the household labour, up to 80 percent is done by adult women. These include preparing meals, cleaning the house and laundering.

There are also other structural obstacles beyond culture and religion. Facts from the Danish sample of the Comparative Leadership Study indicate that certain admission situations and conditions of gender positioning appear to encode admittance to top leadership positions, in business, and in political and public leadership.

In the African perspective the work and family dichotomy is filled with many inconsistencies for women that incite pressure. African women have certain conventional roles to play. They are expected to tolerate and look after children as well as manage the home. At the same time today's African woman is likely to earn a living and contribute to the management of society. In short, Blumberg, (2008) referred to current African women as walking a political/gender tightrope, but it is also a leadership and gender tightrope.

Tsitsi Dangarembga from Zimbabwe in her interview with BBC News (as cited in Berkery et al., 2013)), said that one of the reasons there are few women in positions of power is a lack of unity among women themselves. She said that since women were vying for limited resources they have a tendency to see other women as a menace and are envious of one another. She further went on to say that women have the potential to bring about transformation, but they lack organization due to lack of time, given their multiple roles as bread winners, wives and mothers. African women also fear to raise their voices and speak out for fear of victimization, allegedly by fellow women, but also by men, given the cultural expectations of what a woman should or should not do.

Berkery et al. (2013) also found that regardless of the political progress made by women in the 1990s their efforts did not pay off in terms of women being allotted to public office. Women lack the essential financial support or resources often mobilized individually and publicly and this is another strategic measure applied to

include women from politics. In addition, they are said to lack too much political familiarity, coolness, education and connections to run for office (Berkery et al., 2013). The lack of time due to women's reproductive roles is also mentioned as a limitation to women's involvement in leadership (Andreoni & Petrie, 2008). These obstacles are not distinctive to African women. Analogous matters have been raised concerning educated Chinese women.

Expert women in managerial positions face many challenges and those in institutions of higher learning are no exception. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) argue that the socialization of women in the work place arises within a system of power and inequality and such systems tend to repeat a variety of forms of inequality. In South Africa traditional universities have had corporate cultures that override white male society

When women join such institutions as leaders they soon comprehend that they are expected to conform or be assimilated to the established culture. After all how can one be admitted to an exclusive club and then contradict the club's core values? McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that black women particularly in management are more noticeable, experience more adversity and suffer isolation. Women have to work extra hard as they do not seem to be given the latitude to make mistakes. In many institutions women's achievement of leadership positions has been facilitated by the execution of employment equity policies and affirmative action.

Leadership for women is not a simple task and so, as observed by Morna and Nyakujarah (2010), moving up and staying at the top is not necessarily filled with joy. Other literature on women's leadership in higher education discloses that women are less likely than men to take part in upper levels of leadership. Acker (2000) advances the theory that there is some sort of achievement prevention by women that influences

their leadership aptitude or curiosity in leadership positions. Advocacy in the higher education arena has tended to rely upon and react to government legislation on equity rather than being something that women in the sector actively struggle for.

Obviously lots of women do make sacrifices to achieve something whether professionally or individually. For instance, women are expected to take responsibility for bringing up their children, but less parental responsibility is expected of men. As observed by Polly (1998) if women do not care enough for their children they know their children risk neglect. If men do not care enough they know their wives will. This observation is true for lots of working Ghanaian women nowadays.

2.5 Coping Strategies

In the light of the challenges that women face in leadership positions which sometimes thwart their performance, the review of literature from both the theoretical and empirical perspective have given some coping strategies and mechanisms.

2.5.1 Participative leadership style

This is a leadership style where the leader consults with the subordinates and embodies their suggestions in decision making, (Agezo, 2010). When the female head teacher employs this type of leadership style, it will help her to cope with the subordinates stereotypes. Booysen and Nkomo (2010), hold the view that if a female manager tries to be more autocratic; subordinates are more likely to complain because they expect women to be participative. Mcshare and Glinow (2002), hold the view that women are evaluated negatively when they adopt a directive leadership style which is stereotypically male. Women principals should thus involve their deputies and other subordinates in the decision making process. Delegation of some duties goes a long way to break subordinates stereotypes of women leadership.

2.5.2 Transformational leadership style

This type of leadership style involves changing the institution (School) to become a better place. It involves creating a vision, communicating the vision and building commitment to the vision. Through this type of leadership style, women leaders can remain afloat in a masculine leadership world. Research by various scholars points out that, women tend to be more transformational in leadership than their male counterparts. Using their intuitive power, women principals can transform secondary school into centres of academic excellence. School women principals are becoming transformational leaders and this can be tested by the top 100 category of schools in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) results of 2010, several girls schools were in the top 10 (The Daily Nation, 5th March 2011). They are indeed becoming strategic managers of their schools and they are as competent as their male counterparts, it will help her to cope with the subordinates stereotypes.

2.5.3 Task oriented leadership style

According to research, males tend to be task oriented than female while women tend to be more relationship oriented. Powell, (1993), argues that there are real differences in leadership style between male and female managers. Women tend to negotiate, mediate, facilitate and communicate tasks to their subordinates clearly. Research shows that this feminine style reduces hierarchy, satisfies subordinates and achieves results. Women school principals would indeed succeed if they clearly set the task to be accomplished within certain time frames

2.5.4 Mentorship

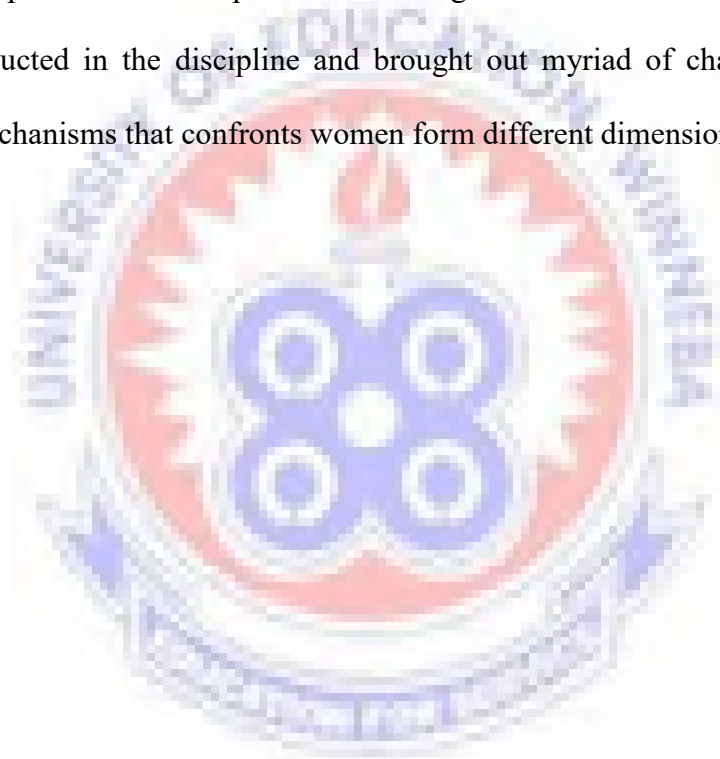
According to Okumbe (2001), mentorship is a close-long term work relationship between a senior manager and a subordinate. It implies ‘coaching’ a junior staff to acquire job competence required in a given profession. Women principals should therefore be mentors to young graduates entering the teaching profession. Similarly, they look up to other successful women leaders for mentorship.

2.5.5 Assertive leadership

As the contingency theory of leadership alludes to, leadership effectiveness depends on the situation. In the face of women discrimination based on gender stereotypes, women leadership can be embroiled with stress and anxiety. Subordinates may choose to refer to a female administrator by name, while male counterparts are often addressed by title (Wrigley-Asante, 2012). There seem to be evidence that a number of women leaders tend to adopt an authoritarian model of leadership (Kariuki, 2007). Faced with the minor assaults of daily administration, female administrators may choose to be assertive or outright very authoritative (Wrigley-Asante, 2012). This observation is backed by the fact that leadership in the Kenyan political and corporate world is a male terrain and hence women principals naturally seek mentorship from authoritarian and aggressive political figures and business tycoons. Barreto et al. (2009) describes one school principal in Kenya as a ferocious fundraiser and an aggressive gatekeeper in protecting girl children in Masaai land from early marriages. However there is a need to apply each strategy under the dictate of situation and environment.

2.7 Summary of Literature Review

The literature review has given insight into challenges facing women leadership and the coping mechanism from theoretical and empirical as well as conceptual perspective. The theoretical review highlighted the various mechanisms through which women are discriminated against. From the three theories, it is obvious that religion, culture, and other historical antecedents which have marginalized women still linger and these constraints adversely affect women including those in leadership position. The empirical review argued out some of the studies that have been conducted in the discipline and brought out myriad of challenges as well as coping mechanisms that confronts women form different dimensions of work.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a brief history of the study area, describes the methodology applied in the study and provides a rationale for the choice of method used in conducting the study. It also deals with the study design, study population, the sample size and sampling techniques, data collection instrument and procedure and data analysis.

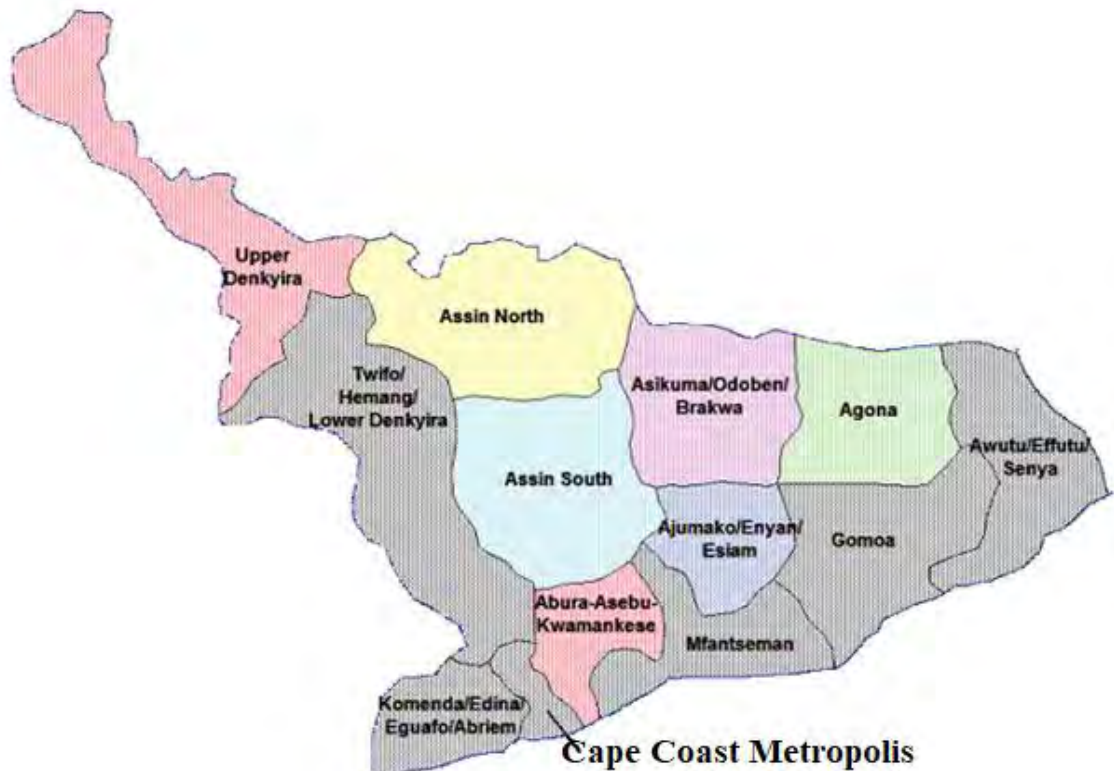
3.1 Brief History of the Study Area

History has it that Cape Coast was founded by the people of Oguaa, and this possibly earned the name ‘Oguaa’ township. Historically, Cape Coast is one of the cities in Ghana. The Portuguese colonists built a trading fort in the area. Formerly Cape Coast Castle was referred to as a lodge, which was built in 1650 by the Swedes. The Dutch took over the lodge in 1650 and extended it in 1652, which was later captured by the British in 1664. Most of the modern town expanded around the Cape Coast Metropolis. The British in their dominance in Ghana used the Coast, mainly Cape Coast as their base in their operations. This led to the building of lodges, forts and castles along the coast, particularly to boost their trading agenda. Cape Coast was a place where most of the slaves were held before they were journeyed on the Middle Passage.

The Cape Coast area is dominated by batholith rock and is generally rippling with steep slopes. There are valleys of various streams between the hills, with Kakum being the largest stream. The minor streams end in wetlands, the largest of which drains into the Fosu Lagoon at Bakano; and in the northern part of the district, the landscape is good for the cultivation of various crops. Cape Coast has a dry-summer

topical savanna climate with a humid area, which has mean monthly relative humidity varying between 85% and 99%. The population of the Cape Coast Metropolis currently stands at 227,269 (The Ghana Statistical Service, 2018).

When it comes to education, the Cape Coast Metropolis is well endowed. Cape Coast happens to be the seat of the University of Cape Coast (UCC), a leading university in the training of teachers and research. Cape Coast also has one of the best technical universities in Ghana, with other institutions of higher learning in Mfantseman Institute of Technology (MIT) and Institute of Development and Technology Management (IDTM). The city is also graciously endowed with the most prestigious senior high schools in the country. These senior high schools are: Holy Child School, Wesley Girls' High School, St. Augustine College, Mfantseman School, Adisadel College, Ghana National College, Holy Child High School, Ghana, Edinaman Senior High School. Other senior high schools include: Cape Coast Academy of Christ the King Senior High School, University Practice Senior High School, and Oguaa Senior High Technical School (Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cape_Coast_Metropolitan_Assembly&oldid=918176223)



Source: Ghanaweb.com

Figure 1: Map of the Central Region of Ghana

Clearly, from the map of the Central Region as shown above, the Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly is bordered by the Gulf of Guinea to the south, Komenda/Edina/Abirem Municipal District to the west, Abura/Asebu/Kwamankese District to the east and Twifo/Hemang/Lower Denkyira District to the north.

3.2 Research Design

The research was rooted in qualitative research approach. The choice of this research approach was informed by its appropriateness and suitability to this study. The researcher adopted this research approach owing to the aim of this research, which was directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the challenges that women in leadership positions face and the coping mechanism they use in managing these challenges in the Ghana Education. Thus, analysis of data

focused on the preset themes and emerging themes that were generated from the interview, with no recourse to frequency, quantity, amount or intensity, or the pervasive nature of the problems encountered by women in authority and the coping mechanisms they adopt in dealing with the challenges.

The focus of this research was to develop some themes and interview the leaders in authority and generate further themes from their responses. According to Reinard (2008) corroborated Denzin and Lincoln by stating that qualitative method of analysis helps an investigator to study naturally occurring phenomenon in all their complexities. Therefore, since the focus of this research was not to collect a large number of data from respondents in order to quantify results and examined experimentally, this approach became appropriate. This was done to allow the women leaders to provide a very detailed and rich information about the challenges they face in leadership positions and the coping mechanisms they adopt in dealing with the, and analysed thematically. The description of the use of the qualitative approach, as described earlier is justified by Snape and Spencer (2003) and Ogah (2013) when they assert that when the data are very detailed with rich and extensive information; analysis which is open to emergent concepts and ideas and which may be detailed description and classification, identify patterns of association or develop typologies and explanation as was the focus of this study, qualitative approach becomes the suitable paradigm or approach.

Snape and Spencer (2003) have indicated that qualitative research is a naturalistic or interpretative approach concerned with understanding the meaning people give to the phenomena within their social setting. They outlined a number of key elements, which distinguish the qualitative approach. Among these are the approach, which provides a deeper understanding of the social world; it is based on a

small-scale sample; it uses interactive data collection methods, i.e. interviews; it allows new issues and concepts to be explored. However, its weakness lies in its inability to generate objective and verifiable information. This approach has different types in conducting a research (Snape & Spencer, 2003; Ogah, 2013).

There are different types of qualitative designs to research. These are phenomenology, ethnography, case study, grounded theory and historical research (Ogah, 2013; Tewksbury, 2009; Auberbach & Silverstein, 2003; Baron, 2001). However, the phenomenology design was deemed appropriate for the study. The suitability of the phenomenology design is premised on the idea that the study seeks to elucidate the meaning of the lived experiences of women in authority. The Phenomenological design was particularly suitable for this study because I sought to bring to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individual women in leadership positions from their own perspectives, and therefore focus on the coping mechanisms they use in managing these challenges as well as determine their views on policies and programmes aimed at eliminating gender discrimination. Additionally, the study sought the views of the women in leadership positions about leadership training and mentorship programmes. On the basis of this description in using the phenomenology design, Patton (2002) has noted that a phenomenological study is one that focuses on descriptions of what people experience and how it is that they experience what they experience. He asserted that, in a phenomenological study, there is the need to conduct an analysis of the experience so that the basic elements of the experience that are common to members of a specific society can be identified. He furthers that Phenomenological method is particularly effective at bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives, and therefore at challenging structural or normative assumptions (statements that make

claims about how things should or ought to be, how to value them, which things are good or bad, and which actions are right or wrong).

According to Creswell (1998) phenomenological approach is done through interviews with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to illuminate the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation. In the human sphere this normally translates into gathering ‘deep’ information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participant observation, and representing it from the perspective of the research participant(s). Phenomenological approaches are based in a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, and emphasise the importance of personal perspective and interpretation. Therefore, since I interviewed women in leadership position about the challenges they face and the coping mechanisms they adopt in managing the challenges they face in their role as leaders, the phenomenology design became the appropriate design for this design. Also, with the interview, I sought to consider the in-depth perceptions and personal views or opinions and their experiences of women in leadership positions, the phenomenology design was deemed apposite for the study.

Many advantages of the phenomenological study as indicated by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002) are wide and varied and greatly impact the nature of this study significantly. The advantages include explaining change processes over time, understanding people’s experiences, deriving meanings, and gathering data, which is seen as natural rather than artificial. Apparently, the focus of this study was to tap into the experiences of the women in leadership positions, as identified through their own voice and interpretively and acted upon by the researcher in drawing

meanings and provide interpretive understanding, the design became unarguably suitable for the study, as it provides useful directions in the conduct of the study.

Phenomenological design is powerful for understanding subjective experience, gaining insights into people's motivations and actions, and cutting through the clutter of taken-for-granted assumptions and conventional wisdom. Pure phenomenological research seeks essentially to describe rather than explain, and to start from a perspective free from hypotheses or preconceptions, (Lester, 1999) and emphasize the importance of making clear how interpretations and meanings have been placed on findings, as well as making the researcher visible in the 'frame' of the research as an interested and subjective actor rather than a detached and impartial observer (Stanley & Wise, 1993).

3.3 Population

The population of the study comprised all female headmistresses and female assistant headmistresses in the senior high schools within the Cape Coast Metropolis in the Central Region of Ghana. In all, there are about ten (10) senior high schools including private SHS in the Cape Coast Metropolis. These are Holy Child Senior High School, Wesley Girls' Senior High School, Ghana National SHS, Oguaa SHS, University Practice SHS, Christ Academy SHS, Mfastepim, SHS, St. Augustines SHS, Adisadel SHS, Aggrey Memorial and.... Out of these senior high schools, six (6) of them had heads and assistant heads that were females. These schools consisted of Holy Child Senior High School, Wesley Girls' Senior High School, Ghana National SHS, Oguaa SHS, University Practice SHS, Christ Academy SHS.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

Since the study population was small and that every member of the population was included in the study, the census survey procedure was used to include a sample number of fourteen (14) Headmistresses and Assistant Headmistresses in the Cape Coast Metropolis. According to Cooper and Schindler (2000, p. 164), census survey involves the use of all members in any population of interest. They stated that a “census is feasible when the population is small”. Ogah (2013) equally asserted that if the population is small enough, it is possible to collect information about each member and this is referred to as census study. Ogah (2013) further opined that in using census survey procedure, the question of generalization does not arise, as the study is about every member of the population and therefore there is no problem of sampling error, that is, whether the group studied (sample) fairly represents the population from which the group was taken- external validity (Ogah, 2013, p. 114).. In all, six (6) headmistresses and eight (8) assistant headmistresses were drawn from six senior high schools within the Cape Coast Metropolis of Ghana. These schools are as follows: Holy Child Senior High School, Wesley Girls’ Senior High School, Ghana National SHS, Oguaa SHS, University Practice SHS, Christ Academy SHS.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

The main research instrument for this study was the interview guide. The choice of this instrument was informed by the purpose of the study and by extension the use of the phenomenology design. That is, the purpose of this study was to have an in-depth understanding of the personal experiences of the challenges women in leadership positions face and the kinds of coping mechanisms they adopt in managing the challenges. This precipitated the use of the phenomenology design, and by the use of the design, there was the need to ask these women for their personal experiences.

Specifically, the study relied mainly on the semi-structured interview guide for data collection. The use of the semi-structured interview guide enabled me to probe further during the interview process in order to have emerging themes, and generally gather deep information Creswell (1998) about the lived experiences (phenomenological approach) of women in leadership positions.

Thus, Qualitative interviews place more emphasis on the interviewee's standpoint in contrast to quantitative research, which rather reflects the researcher's concerns. Interviews are often used as instrument in qualitative research, it is expedient through their flexibility, although the interviews, transcription, and analysis are very time-consuming. The advantage of this method in relation to this study is its ability to obtain subjective information from the women in leadership positions (participants) and provide information regarding their feelings, values, attitudes, and beliefs by meeting them face to face and ascertain their views about the challenges they face in their positions as leaders. However, meeting participants face-to-face may create an atmosphere where some shy away from responding to direct questions (Stewart, 2002). However, in the interview process, an attempt was made to create an atmosphere (where cordial relationship was built through some funny ideas) in order to lower the intensity and rigidity of the interview process. By so doing, the limiting of using the interview guide, where participants shy away (Stewart, 2002) from providing information about the study was mitigated.

The interview guide was made up of six sections; demography of the headmistresses, challenges faced by women in leadership positions in the SHS in Cape Coast, policies and programmes aimed at eliminating gender discrimination, leadership styles, leadership training programmes and coping strategies adopted by women in leadership. These were pre-set themes and by following the structured

interview guide for the study, participants were asked to comment on their answers like what makes the identified areas a challenge, if yes what are some of the terminologies or expressions used and others.

3.5.1 Trustworthiness

In order to ensure that the findings generated from this study are true reflection of the participants of the study, the questions in the interview guide were considered to address the issue of ambiguity and double worded question or repetitions. In order to do this, the interview guide was shown to my colleagues for their academic contribution, after it was shown to my supervisor for expert consideration and judgement. Then, I tried to test it with some personalities to check clarity in the questions. That is, if the questions asked were directly responded to by the personalities without having to ask for clarification, the questions were deemed to be devoid of ambiguity and nebulousness.

Also, in addressing the issue of trustworthiness in the study, I relied considerably on literature in developing the research question as well as the development of the questions in the interview guide and the operationalization of the research questions. Also, the focus on the phenomenology design and by extension, the use of the structured interview guide enabled me to gather deep information from the perspective of the participants. This helped me to distant myself from the interpretation of the issues relating to the challenges women in leadership positions encounter and the coping mechanisms they employ in dealing with the challenges. In that regard, I followed only the personal experiences of the respondents with no recourse to bring to the fore my own understandings of the issues of that pertain to the challenges women in leadership positions encounter as well as coping mechanisms in

addressing the challenges. It was on the basis of this that the interview was recorded and transcribed so as to immerse myself in the issues as given by the respondents.

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

The interview of the respondents was preceded by a letter of introduction issued by the University of Education Winneba, which introduced me to the school heads. After sending the letter of introduction to the participating schools, a follow up was made to these schools in order to ascertain readiness of the various participants in granting me the interview. When I had been assured by the participants of their readiness to grant me the interview, I took their contacts and went back to gather some needed items (audio recorder and the interview guide).

Given their position and work schedules, the interview was conducted within one month by following their time frames, which took place at different times. In fact, I gave them prior notice of the kind of information I sought to gather from them so that they would be informed and think through about their personal experiences. Before the interview day, I called the various participants to determine their free day and time and their readiness, which I was given the nod to come. Almost each of the interviews lasted for 4-5 minutes excluding some informal conversation I had with them before the start of the interview. Before the interview started, the respondents were assured of confidentiality, anonymity of information given and guaranteed that information provided would be used only for academic purposes.

To ensure effective distribution and maximum responses and effective collection of the data, the researcher used a tape recorder to record the information for the purpose of transcription and accuracy of data gathered from the respondents.

3.7 Ethical Requirements

Mouton (2001) explained ethical requirements as what is wrong and what is right when conducting research. Similarly, Fanelli (2009) stated that it is a code or principle that expresses how or the appropriateness of the author's behaviour in relation towards the research participants. To Patton (2002), it is a philosophical term derived from the Greek word *ethos*, which means character or custom and connotes a social code that conveys moral integrity and consistent values. Therefore, the following ethical aspects were adhered in this research. The researcher explained to all the respondents the nature of study and stated that participation was voluntary. All participants were assured of their privacy and how confidential the data were kept. In addition, the confidential right and anonymity of the study was also highlighted. The study also reiterated throughout the data collection process that data supplied by the participants would only be applied for the study.

3.8 Data Analysis

Analysis of data was done by focusing on the preset thematic analysis. In using the preset thematic analysis, I first generated the themes (as suggested by Kusi, 2012) before the analysis. That is, data gathered from the interview was transcribed and analyzed thematically by organizing the data into manageable units, categorizing, comparing, synthesizing data, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned (see Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). I followed this by listening to each recording repeatedly to acquaint myself with the conversations after which I consciously wrote them down in the exact words of the participants.

For all the research questions one, two and three, analyses were done based on themes, but interpretations were based on information that emerged from interview responses, as each theme and interpretations were classified under each research

question; and then, I summarized the major themes. Again, direct quotations were used to support or clarify the qualitative data when necessary. The interpretation of the qualitative data made it possible to make appropriate inferences.

With the interpretation of data, I identified emergent issues as they were reported by participants, and considered how the issues connected or related to each other, as meanings were drawn and discussed from these. I also identified and extracted significant statements, which were quoted to support claims in the analysis. The data collected consisted of digital recording of the interview. The data gathered were given serial numbers to facilitate easy identification for scoring. After transcribing the data, an inductive approach was used to organize the data into various themes and categories based on the research questions and the objectives of the study.

The primary data gathered for this study was captured using descriptive statistics in frequency Tables and pie charts. The data gathered were given serial numbers to facilitate easy identification for scoring. This qualitative analysis helped themes and categories to emerge during three phases of data analysis that is- i} Discovery ii} Coding and iii] interpretation. The headmistresses from the ten Senior High Schools used for this research were given pseudo names for the purpose of this research. Hence the use of WL#1, WL#2, WL#3, WL#4, WL#5, WL#6, WL#7, WL#8, WL#9 and WL#10.

CHAPTER FOUR

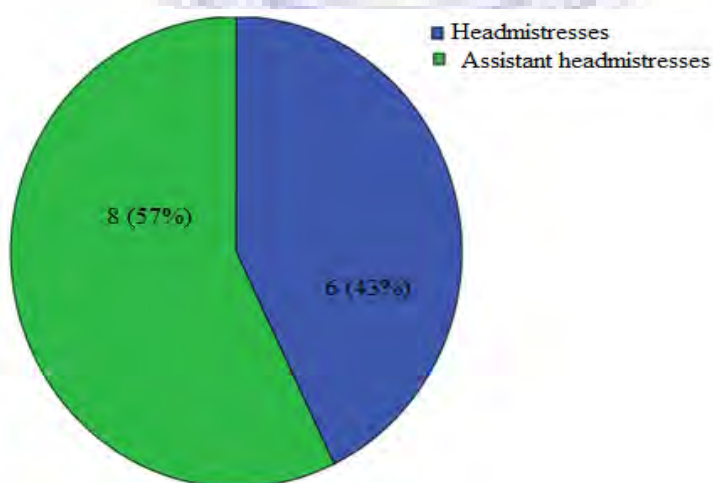
RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This is the fourth chapter of the thesis and presents the results of the qualitative data collected, interprets and discusses the findings. The chapter reports the results from the respondents interviewed as they relate to a particular research questions formulated in this study. The results are based on the content and the thematic analysis of data collected. This chapter is presented in several sections. These sections include the background information of the participant and other sections based on the specific objectives of the thesis. In reporting the results in this chapter, some operational conventions are used. For instance, –WL- woman leader.

4.1 Background of the Respondents

Fourteen respondents from ten Senior High Schools within the Cape Coast Metropolis participated in the collection of data for the analysis of the study. Six of the respondents were headmistresses and the remaining eight assistant headmistresses. This is represented in Figure 2.



Source: Field data, 2018

Figure 2: Respondents

Figure 2 represents the total respondents who were interviewed. Eight of the respondents representing 8 (57%) were assistant headmistresses while 6 (43%) were headmistresses. Again, all the 14 respondents have obtained a masters degree in educational administration. The second demographic feature of the respondents was their age and marital status. Their responses are indicated in Table 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 1: Age distribution of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
40-50	5	36
51-60	9	64
Total	14	100

Source: Field data, 2018

Table 1 indicates the age distribution of the respondents. Majority of them 9(64%) were between the ages of 51 to 60 years. Significantly this age group represents highly experience individuals in the Ghana Education Service. Their input into this research will therefore carry enormous contribution. Respondents were further asked about their marital status. Their responses are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Marital status of respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	2	14
Married	10	72
Divorced	1	7
Widow	1	7
Total	14	100

Source: Field data, 2018

Table 2 indicates that majority of the respondents were married. This was represented by (10) (72%) while one respondent each were divorcee and a widow. It is important to note that the married majority of the respondents have a significant contribution towards the dual role women play as managers of the home and their leadership roles. This assertion is however confirmed by Larwood and Wood (2007) who indicated that a woman entering into a leadership position must decide the extent and the types of demands she is willing to accept, given the patriarchal nature of most societies and households and the double workloads that most working women experience (being responsible for domestic responsibilities despite entering the workforce), being in leadership is bound to have an impact on women's social and personal life.

Thematic analysis and reporting

The thematic analytical technique is applied through an in-depth reading, recording and listening of the responses from the interviews conducted. This data analytical procedure followed just after the actual interviews were completed. Some of the audios recorded through the interview were converted into text data. The development of the relevant themes from the data began from continuous reading of the text data and listening to the audios. The interpretation also looked the data gathered from the interview in categories.

The data was sub-grouped into responses into 14 sub-themes. These were: policies and programmes aimed at gender discrimination, training programmes for leadership, mentoring women into leadership, use of gender terminologies, support from NGOs on gender advocacy, success in leadership positions, adopted styles in leadership, best leadership styles, conflict management procedures, enumeration of challenges, anticipation of challenges, measures of curtailing the challenges, coping

mechanism for leadership, adoption of unique coping mechanisms, individual means of coping with challenges, success of such mechanisms. These sub-groups or themes were reclassified into four (4) themes, which guided the analysis of the research questions, namely, ascertain the practices that discourage women's career progression, examine the leadership styles adopted by female leaders, challenges of women in leadership positions and coping strategies of women in leadership position. All these objectives were geared towards female leaders within the Senior High School in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Figure 4 presents the framework for the identification of the common themes.



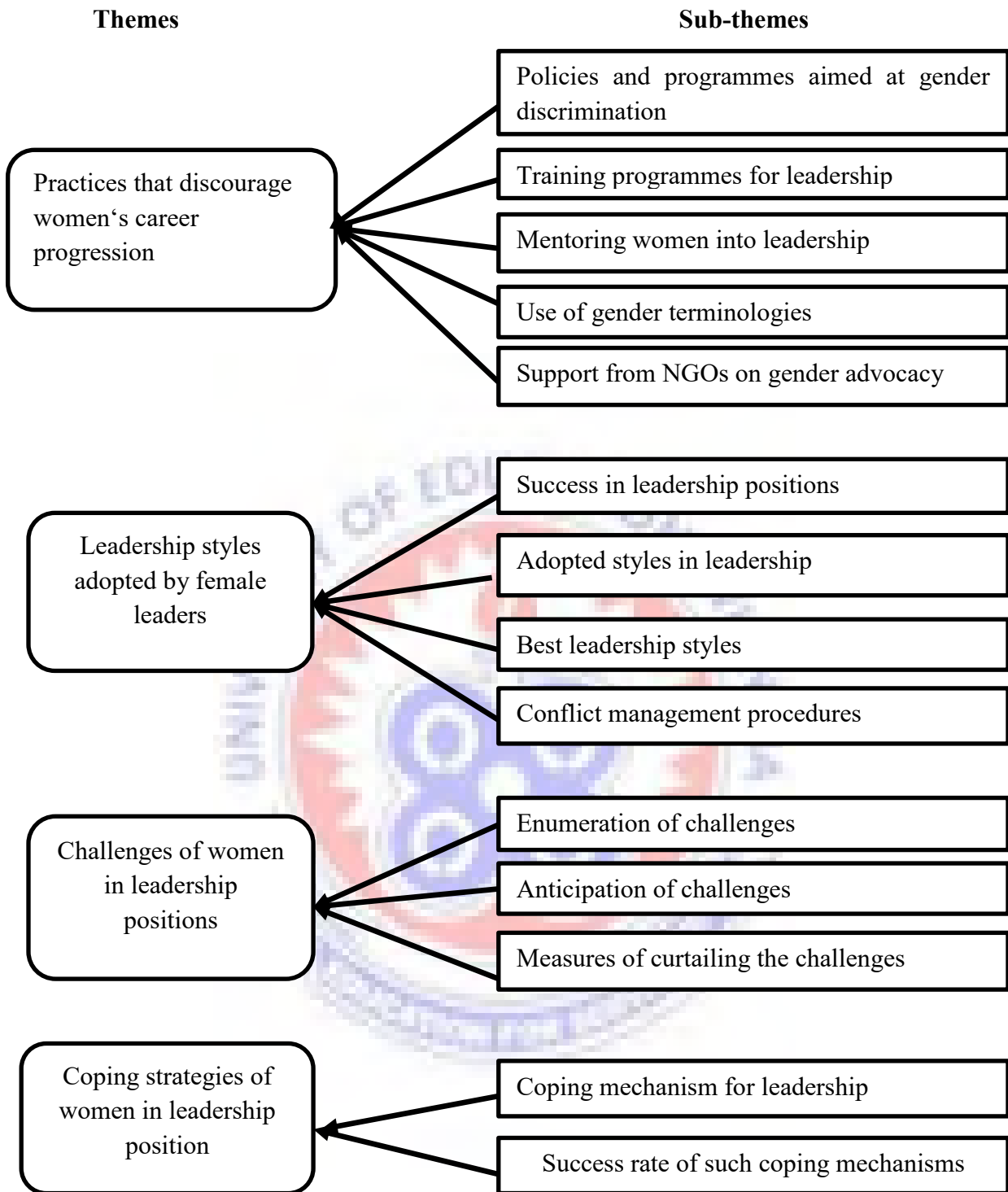


Figure 3: Thematic analysis framework

4.2 Research Question 1: What practices discourage women's career progression in the SHS in the Cape Coast Metropolis?

This question sought to reveal some of the practices within the Ghana Education Service which may discourage women within the organisation from aspiring to top positions. That is policies and programmes aimed at gender discrimination, training programmes for leadership, mentoring women into leadership, use of gender terminologies and support from NGOs on gender advocacy.

4.2.1 Policies and programmes aimed at gender discrimination

Participants revealed that there are no policies, practices or programmes with GES which could be described as discriminatory. All policies within the institution are open to the benefits of both males and females and thus everyone has equal opportunity to whatever service available. And throughout the study, I tried to consider whether the age of women in authority as well as their marital status could influence their lived experiences, but findings of the study suggested that in terms of the information of the policies and programmes aimed at gender discrimination, there was no such differing views. The responses are given below:

“I have not yet come across any programmes or policies which favour only the men or policies that sideline women in any way” (WL # 3)

“Throughout my career, I have not seen any document or policies which are geared towards favouring women” (WL # 14)

“I cannot specifically point out any practice within the service or any policy that put women ahead of men” WL # 11)

It worth pointing out that the extracts above span across the age distribution and marital status. Thus, WL#3 and WL#14 are within the age range of 51 to 60 while WL#11 was within the age range of 40 to 50. Also, WL#14 is married while 3 and 11 are single. Quite clearly, as can be seen from the responses in the extract above, there

is no significant differences in terms of their views on policies and programmes aimed at gender discrimination, as they all agree (irrespective of age and marital status) that there is no policy document aimed at discriminating against gender. It however emerged from the interview that, though there are no specific policies and programmes which discriminate against women, GES does not provide any measures to ensure that women are at par with their male counterparts with regards to leadership. Most often, males dominate in numbers in leadership as compared to women. For instance, statistics from the GES indicates that about 63% of the schools are headed by males with the remaining 37% headed by females (Ohene, 2010). Again, McMillan and Schumacher (2001) argue that black women particularly in management are not noticeable, experience more adversity and suffer isolation. Women have to work extra hard as they do not seem to be given the latitude to make mistakes. Hence, the participant proposed that GES should specifically design programmes that would make sure that women leaders are even if not equal to men in number, closer to them.

—Though there are no such policies in place but all the time the males are more than us and sometimes when we go for meetings most decisions go in their favour ...(WL # 4) —..GES could even make it compulsory that if we have say 100 schools in central region 40% should have female headmistress and the rest could be headed by males I think that would be very good for us the women” (WL # 5).

In the extract above, while 4 within the age range of 40-50, 5 is within the age range of 51-60, and 5 is married but 4 is single. Therefore, it can be said WL#4 (40-50; single) seem to advocate for either equal gender distribution in leadership position or female outnumbering male leaders. However, WL#5 (51-60; married) only seeks to recommend an appreciable increase of female leaders, not necessarily outnumbering male leaders or better still, being equal to males regarding their numbers. In view of

this, it can be opined here that married female leaders and those that are far advanced in age would not want to be equal or rub shoulders with males in terms of the number of male and females in leadership positions. That notwithstanding, those that not married, or single and within the age of 40 to 50 seem to advocate for equality in terms of the number of gender in leadership position. This dichotomy in the responses could be to the influence probably some of these women get from home, preferably from their husbands and that their age seems to influence their thinking as they had had significant influence from culture and tradition.

4.2.2 Training programmes for leadership

Participants further indicated that training programmes are usually held in their various schools and also at some workshops. However, these training programmes not specifically geared towards empowering women either into leadership or solely for women in leadership. The training programmes offered for both males and females in leadership positions to handle the affairs of the schools to meet the mission and vision of GES. However, since during these programmes the males outnumbered the females, explanations and examples all made in favour and in direction of males leaving the females as mere observers. Moreover, practical illustrations in these programmes handled by males to the disadvantage of the females. It was further revealed from the interviews that very few programmes are held to sharpen leadership skills of women exclusively. Most often than not, all programmes were to ensure that policies enacted by the institution implemented with little recourse to the manner in which such policies could be implemented successfully in a congenial atmosphere.

As stated by (WL # 12) “...as for GES, they do not care how you implement a policy, the stress and difficulties and all that, what they are interested in is making sure that the policy is implemented”

(WL # 1) *→Sometimes it is very easy at meetings and workshop when new policies are being introduced but when you come back to the schools things become very different”* (WL # 1).

As indicated earlier, I try to find out if age and marital status have influence on the responses of the participants for the study. Clearly, as can be seen from the extracts above, once age and marital status did not have influence on the responses as there was no differing views on training programmes for leadership.

4.2.3 Mentoring women into leadership

The aim of this theme was to find out whether or not women mentored into leadership positions. The purpose of the question that when women are mentored into leadership like any other mentoring programme, they would gain the confidence and the needed expertise to excel. Moreover, mentoring prepares the person to overcome most of the challenges that may be faced in the course of duty. It emerged that, such mentoring programmes not available within the institution. Most women just rise through the in the institution and thus, when qualified for leadership positions and are given the opportunity, they sometimes lack the courage to perform. The importance of mentoring is to help women to gain strong grounds for leadership. The rationale is not that men are being mentored to the disadvantaged of women but it is because women according to Parker (2013) women leaders face difficulties from their male subordinates making their work cumbersome. Therefore, preparing them would through mentoring enlighten them more on the dangers that lie ahead.

It was however revealed from the interview that some of the women leaders have taken the initiative to introduce mentoring programmes that would prepare other women for leadership. This initiative according to the participants boosts the morale of the female teachers and other female non-teaching staff to aspire for leadership positions. Leadership for women is not a simple task and so, as observed by Morna and Nyakujarah (2010), moving up and staying at the top is not necessarily filled with joy. Other literature on women's leadership in higher education discloses that women are less likely than men to take part in upper levels of leadership. Acker (2000) advances the theory that there is some sort of achievement prevention by women that influences their leadership aptitude or curiosity in leadership positions.

“I have paired some of the young women with the experienced senior house mistress and assistant headmistresses so that they can learn from them” (WL #5)

“Personally when I am going for programmes I make sure one of the females follow me so she can also learn some of the things I learn” (WL # 2).

“...Sometimes I even invite some of them to my office and have discussions with them on how they can progress to qualify for leadership...” (WL #5).

It also emerged from the interview that because society is gradually accepting women's role and competence in leadership, some of the participants have been calling on leadership of the GES and writing proposals to the Ministry to introduce mentorship sessions in the various schools to sensitize the students especially females to strive for leadership positions. However, these proposals have not received any immediate attention from the authorities. As a matter of fact, from the information as revealed by the participants, there is the urgency in suggesting that in terms of matters arising from the mentoring of women into leadership position, there is no variations in the views of the participants as each and every one of them seem to favour the idea of

mentoring women into leadership position. However, in terms of the approaches they themselves adopt in mentoring women into leadership position, but I do not consider such difference a vital tool in justifying a possible variations as akin to the demographic data of the respondents. For me, what is crucial is the fact that they all have the same of favouring women into leadership position, and quite succinctly, this is to be expected as they are all women and would not want defray from their own identity in occupying leadership positions.

According to Powell (2011), in the article—“The Way Women Lead” for the Harvard Business Review identified the second wave of women who are making their way into top management. Women are starting to succeed, despite stereotypical characteristics that have been associated with being feminine and considered inappropriate as leaders. Female executives who have reached the peak of their professions are starting to represent a new leadership paradigm. They are drawing from their own attitudes and skills and are not adopting the style and habits proven to be successful for men.

4.2.4 Use of gender terminologies

Participants were asked whether GES used gender sensitive terminologies in their services and operations. Each of the participants were of the view that if gender terminologies are used, it brings out the gender preference of the individual or the institution using such terminologies. For instance, if someone uses he/she, male/female, then usually such person rates males ahead of females and the reverse is true. Thus to put both males and females on the same platform, the use of gender terminologies should not be entertained in the GES. However, it was observed that such terminologies have become conventional in almost all institutions so they some

sometimes gloss over it. Some of the terminologies are headmasters, assistant headmasters instead of head teachers

On the other hand, it emerged from the interview that GES does not use any genders terminologies. For instance during advertisement of positions, statements are made in the broad manner which could include either males or females. One of the participants stated:

*“I quite remember before I was appointed headmistress of this school, the vacancy announcement was **–Vacancy for teachers**” so I quickly applied and was given the position” (WL # 1) she continued **–If such generic gender expressions are used, it spurs some of us on to strive for even higher positions”** (WL # 1)*

“In fact, GES does not make use of any generic terms as in headmaster or headmistress. They leave it open for everybody, especially when there is a vacancy. I think it becomes discouraging when generic terms are used” (WL#6).

The implication of this responds is that if the advertisement was to be **–vacancy for headmasters**”, she would have not applied for the position. It can be inferred from these responses that GES seems to be quite aware of emerging gender related issues and has therefore endeavoured to detach the office from encouraging gender related issues. As shown in the responses above, the idea of the use of generic terms does not matter in terms of age and marital status of the women in leadership position as they all seem to share the same opinion. Quite expectantly, women will not want men to continue to subjugate and denigrate them by the use of some generic terminologies.

4.2.5 Support from NGOs on gender advocacy

The researcher sought to find out whether participants have practices of male preferences, exclusiveness and discrimination of participants from organization like NGOs whose aim is to build capacities of women in leadership. It emerged from almost all the participants that no such advocacy from NGOs exists in the various schools within the GES. Thus any attempt to sharpen their leadership skills is borne through the resources of the women themselves. The participants argued that if NGOs had helped them, many of their challenges would have been reduced. In view of the demographic data of the participants, I was not interested in considering the variations in their responses in that this information requires a straightforward answer and therefore does not depend on being far advanced in age or not, or better still married or not married.

“Ever since I came here, no NGO has ever been here with the aim of helping me or any of the senior house mistresses to build our capacity” (WL # 2)

“Many time we hear of these NGOs in news and other civil society organisations, organising programmes and other workshops to equip women in leadership but same has not been experienced yet in my current position” I think it is high time they concentrated on some of us too (WL # 4)

It emerged that though there are no defined deliberate attempts to discriminate, and show male preferences, most of the female leaders in SHS did not get assistance from organizations like NGOs to assist in their development as leaders. Most of the women leaders perceived that if good policies and programmes aimed at equipping women in leadership are enacted, women in leadership could perform even better than their male counterpart. The participants reiterated that usually some female leaders underperform due to inadequate training and less exposure.

It was evident from the result that there was actually no policies and programmes within the GES which discriminates against women. This was evident from the fact that none of the participants cited a single policy within the institution that puts males ahead of females with regards to leadership. The findings of the study also revealed that gender terminologies which underpin people orientation on women was not used within the institution. It however, emerged from the findings that much as no such discriminatory policies exist, the number of female leaders in the institution not encouraging. This is because many of the leaders are males. The findings also show that there were no training programmes with the aim of promoting women into leadership positions.

There were no mentoring programmes which could help shape the women into leadership positions. This sometimes contributes to fear and less confidence that is exhibited by women leaders. Many of the participants in the interview suggested that if training programmes exist to train and coach women in leadership, their challenges would reduce and they would have the full power and autonomy to work. The findings revealed the few training and mentorship programmes which existed were initiatives taken by the female leaders themselves to help groom the young women for future leadership positions.

The findings have theoretical significance especially from the liberal theory's perspective. The liberal feminist theory maintains that women should enjoy personal autonomy. That is, they hold that women should live lives of their own choice. Some offer procedural accounts of personal autonomy (Greer & Greene, 2003; Lorber, 2010). These accounts suggest that to say women enjoy personal autonomy means they are entitled to a broad range of autonomy-enabling conditions. On this view, institutions are expected to work, identify and promote enabling conditions like

policies that could make women progress in their roles as leaders. Identifying these enabling conditions requires careful attention to the particular ways in which autonomy deficits are produced in diverse women's lives. Procedural accounts avoid judging directly the substance of women's choices or the arrangements that ensue.

The need for advocates is also consistent with the intersectionality theory. The theory argues that the role human right activist and gender advocates play in influence cannot be overemphasized. This is because these factors interact in empowering or disempowering circumstances to women in leadership position within the GES and how these women negotiate within the space they have.

Besides the theoretical contributions, the results confirm the findings of Agezo (2010) on his study to investigate the coping strategies of female leaders in tertiary education administration particularly in the University of Cape Coast. The study recommended that the University Management should initiate an educative programme that will help females in leadership positions to cope with challenges relating to the combination of family duties with their leadership responsibilities.

4.2.6 Summary

It is therefore concluded that much as there are no policies and programmes that discourage women in leadership positions, little is being done to train and promote women into leadership positions. This is evident by lack of training programmes, absence of NGOs and lack of mentorship programmes to build the capacity and confidence level of women into leadership. It also, emerged from the findings of the study that most significantly, age and marital status does not affect once lived experience only that when it comes to advocacy for gender equality in leadership positions, those who are married and are far advanced in age, say between 51-60 do not wish equal measure but recommend that women are given a significant

quota, but those who are not married and are between 40-50 would want equal number of women in leadership position as compared to men in leadership position.

4.3 Research Question 2: What are the leadership styles adopted by female leaders in SHS in Cape Coast Metropolis?

This research question aimed at identifying the adopted leadership styles used by women in leadership position in SHS to perform their duties, Women have been observed to have various leadership qualities and exhibit different styles which moves them forward in their organisations. All the women leaders interviewed had a peculiar leadership style that help in the running of the schools they headed. It emerged from the interview that all the participants have spent at least 5 years in their current positions and have used different approach where necessary to manage a particular situation. Hence this was looked at in relation to success in leadership as a woman, adopted styles in leadership, best leadership styles and conflict management procedures. Also, I try to understand women leadership styles in relation to their age and marital status.

4.3.1 Success in leadership as a woman

The participants revealed that to be successful as a woman in leadership, one should have self-confidence and build the “can do” spirit in themselves. Women in leadership positions should not look down upon themselves neither should they allow anyone to intimidate them. It is important to obey rules and regulations guiding one’s positions and be principled. It also emerged from the interview that, it is necessary to continue learning and training to be abreast with current procedures of handling issues. If these qualities of self-confidence and being top of issues are in place as well as paying due diligence to issues and being principled, then the possibility of women

becoming successful in leadership would be high. Some of the comments are given below.

“I always believe in myself and my abilities, I really know that I was put in this positions as a result of my hard work and hence I am always ready to deliver” (WL # 3)

“I do not stay idle with the intention that once I am the head things will be alright; I regularly study and try to upgrade myself. I am not an accountant, but as the head of the school I have to be familiar with all finance procedures. Therefore I try as much as possible to learn some sort of financial management so that I can competently supervise some of the financial issues that arise from the account section” (WL # 7)
— .it is not easy but once I know doing that would make me succeed and move the school to achieve its vision I do not have any option” (WL # 7)

“GES has been enacting many regulations which are to be used in running the affairs of the school. So what I do is that I make sure those regulations are properly implemented without circumventing the core areas of the policies” (WL # 6)

It emerged from the interview that, though some challenges may hinder progress, with determination and self-sacrificing spirit, one can be very successful in their positions. Furthermore, in relation to the issue of age and marital status, I deem it pertinent to admit that both WL#3 and WL#7 are single, WL#6 is married. Also, it is needful to add that WL#3 and WL#7 are between the age range of 51-60 but WL#6 within the age range of 40-50. This means that while those who are married and those who seem a little bit farther from 60 strive for success in leadership position by strictly adhering to or following religiously the laid down rules and regulations set for them by GES, those that are single and are nearing 60 years try to know more about their role and what is expected of them as well capitalise on sustained confidence. So, married women and women farther from 60 who are in leadership position focus on the given to achieve success those that are single and nearing 60 use epistemological stance and character to achieve success.

4.3.2 Adopted styles in leadership

Apparently, all the participants use hybrid leadership styles in their duties. Almost all leadership styles; democratic, transformational, participatory and sometimes autocratic leadership styles were adopted. According to the participants there is the need to blend these styles in order to achieve a desired target. It was also clear that in order to properly use all these leadership styles, one has to be dynamic and quickly anticipate problems. The participants indicated that in similar or same situations, different styles could be used depending on the nature of people involved and the history of their conduct. Some stated:

–Some of the students are very troublesome while others are not, so you have to be very vigilant when applying sanctions and so I try to consult my staff on the appropriate sanctions to give” (WL # 10).

–Usually I become autocratic on issues that I feel may be detrimental to the progress of the school and that when I see the need to proffer sanctions, do not hesitate and therefore instruct my staff to implement my orders (WL # 11)”

–Usually I personally participate in activities; I could go to the dormitories since it is all female school and teach the girls how to scrub even though their housemistress would be around. You could see that the girls become very happy and ready to do whatever they are asked to do” (WL # 1)

It also emerged that if the women leaders become too flexible or complacent on critical issues, people especially male teachers tended to indulge in all sort of acts, which contradict the virtues of the school. Therefore, to maintain the virtues and integrity of the schools women leaders sometimes applied coerciveness in their decisions making. From the ensuing extracts, it should be learned that WL#10 and 1 are married and are between 51-60 years but WL#11 is single and within 40-50. Then it can be offered here that the women who are married and are nearing 60 years adopt participative and transformative leadership style and are relationship oriented. However, the one who is single and farther from 60 seem to be assertive. This could

be premised on the fact that such a woman who is single and is farther from 60 does not have any influence from home as in the husband as to make them want to authoritative; but women who are married seem have some influence from home and therefore place a barrier on their authority.

–Some male teachers could sometimes behave insubordinately and in order to clear their mischief you have to apply autocratic and arbitrary decisions so that sanity could prevail” (WL # 6)

4.3.3 Best leadership styles

This question sought to unveil from the participants the best leadership styles that could be used in the performance of duties. All the participants indicated that most often than not arbitrary and autocratic means of dealing with issues are not appropriate. Aside these styles which sometimes come to the fore due to the circumstance, all the other styles were deemed appropriate. Some of the numerated styles in this regard include as participatory, democratic and transformational as already stated. According to the participants, there are no fast rule to these good leadership styles and many others that were not mentioned. For instance, they indicated that democratic and participatory styles lead to transformational leadership as such styles bring greater transformation to organisations.

It further emerged that most of the participants liked the idea of participation. In the application of this style, all stakeholders are given the opportunity to contribute to a given situation. In this regard students, teachers as well as non-teachers feel part of a decision and become ever ready to ensure successful implementation of those policies or decisions.

“I have always tried to involve all hands in a decision making process so that after a final determination have been made, people upon knowing that they were part of the process would make it work” (WL # 4)

“Listening to peoples” views on issues is very good in leadership, sometimes you just have to sit down and just regulate as stakeholders in a situation discuss means of resolution” (WL # 8). “With this trajectory, stakeholders lessen the blame on me if there is any failure along the line and the pressure on me becomes less” (WL # 8).

Following from the extracts above, it becomes clear that all the participants of the study seem to agree on the same leadership style to be the best leadership style, which from the study emerged as a participatory leadership style. Even though they all agree on one leadership style to be best form of leadership style but it appears they use different leadership style. This could be explained from their biographic data, as some are free from any assumption of a different role (being a subordinate) at home.

4.3.4 Conflict management procedures

As part of the leadership styles adopted by the women leaders in the performance of their duties, it was found out through the interview how they manage issues of conflict. It also emerged that conflict resolution forms a good part of their day to day administration. The participants employed different procedures or strategies by the women leaders to resolve conflicts. In some of the cases, the headmistresses asked both sides to air their grievances in a private conversation with an impartial party in order to make sure that no one is felt cheated or discriminated. It also emerged that sometimes, the two parties are brought together in the presence of others who can be objective mediators and allow them to air their grievances. From the findings of the study, it was realised that almost all the participants seem to adopt the same conflict management procedures and so, there was no need to provide any further analysis on the participants’ age and marital status. On the issue of conflict

management procedure, I try to provide a unified information as given by the respondents. This is given below.

“I do not permit behaviour or words that are overly hurtful and mean. Moreover, I make sure by asking for apologies after words used or interrupt to prevent that manipulative, controlling behaviour and words that are unacceptable in dealing with conflict” (WL # 10)

It further emerged from the interview that it is not easy to get entrenched in one's own reality and not consider any other points of view. Therefore the participants indicated that they sometimes have to step outside of themselves and make a genuine effort to perceive life from the position of the other person. One stated

“...this is not a natural inclination...” (WL # 2)

The implication is that ordinarily; such participant would not have put up such effort but for the sake of leadership position. It was revealed that, this conflict management strategy usually requires outside guidance from someone not invested in the conflict. However, if the parties are trained in this strategy, they can step away, take time to analyse the other person's position and then come together to build a workable solution.

It also emerged that within the schools, conflict resolution occurs more quickly when the parties work toward crafting a win-win solution instead of battling in a zero-sum game where the winner takes all. The interview revealed that, all too often, people enter into conflict thinking that if the other side wins, they lose and vice versa. Therefore with more communication, time and compromise the choice of win-win approach becomes helpful.

As usual there is no one fast rule with regards to leadership styles and their choice. The objective sought to explore some of the frequently used styles by these women and identify how they correspond to reducing the challenges that they face as women leaders.

The study found out that first of all, women have to wield self-confidence and determination before they can succeed in their positions as leaders. Moreover, continuous training and learning about the role of leadership position is essential for success. Some of the identified personal traits were self-discipline, being diligent and principled. Some of the adopted leadership styles found in the study were participatory; which was widely used, followed by democratic, and transformational.

It was also found that in some situations, autocratic leadership style was the best in order to deal properly with issue which when not confronted with such approach may be detrimental to the success of the organisation. Arguing from the adopted leadership style, it emerged that all styles were situational. That is, depending on which issues are brought up, a specific style is adopted to deal with it. This view however contradicts the ideals of Powell, (1993), who argues that there are real differences in leadership style between male and female managers. Women tend to negotiate, mediate, facilitate and communicate tasks to their subordinates clearly. Research shows that this feminine style reduces hierarchy, satisfies subordinates and achieves results.

These findings are consistent with the literature. According to Vardeman-Winter and Tindall (2010) and Maseko (2013) leadership styles vary, especially perceived politeness, but there is negligible difference in real leadership ability between men and women. Practical differences aside, the real problem with women in leadership positions seem to be the attitudes of those around them. The findings are

also consistent with that of Powell (2011) who stated that women exhibit a type of leadership that provides opportunities for subordinates to transform their own self-interest into the interest of the group through concern for a broader goal. Powell (2011) believes this form of leadership is well suited to provide support during chaotic and uncertain times. It is therefore not surprising that most of the participants attributed their power to personal characteristics such as charisma, interpersonal skills, hard work, or personal contacts rather than organizational structure.

4.3.5 Summary

It was therefore concluded that though women in leadership positions with the SHS in the study area employ situational leadership styles, most of them apply the participatory style of leadership. This is also affirmed by Mcshare and Glinow (2002), who hold the view that women are evaluated negatively when they adopt a directive leadership style which is stereotypically male. Women principals should thus involve their deputies and other subordinates in the decision making process. Delegation of some duties goes a long way to break subordinates stereotypes of women leadership. Also, in terms of age and marital status, it panned out that women in leadership position who are married and are farther from 60 years adopt the given in order to achieve success but those who are single and nearing 60 years dwell on epistemological stance and character to achieve success. Also, in terms of leadership styles, while married women in authority and those that are nearing 60 years adopt participative and transformative leadership styles, those that are single and farther from 60 years are rather assertive. On the issue of the best leadership style, all the women acceded to participative as being the best and also they all seem to use the same conflict management style.

4.4 Research Question 3: What are the challenges confronting women in leadership positions within Senior High School?

This research question assembled the challenges that female leaders face in their positions in the schools. As women leaders, there is a high possibility of facing myriad of challenges especially from the males and social responsibilities as wives and mothers. The participants revealed that most of the challenges come from the males in the schools, and sometimes from other females in various departments. Others also expressed the view that pressure from the house and most especially from their spouses makes it difficult to fully discharge their assigned duties. Similarly in the view of Attom (2007) most of the household labour, up to 80 percent is done by adult women. It also emerged that conflict among teaching staff and other employee and how to control such conflicts sometimes become a hurdle to jump. These and many other challenges were cited by the respondents. This was looked at in relation to the challenges with regards to leadership in the school, anticipation of challenges and measures of curtailing the challenges.

4.4.1 Some of the challenges with regards to leadership in the school

Since all the participants have been in their positions for more than five years, many of the challenges were seen as problems that they have been dealing with over and over again. It emerged that, the women leaders affected by the African male dominance rule (i.e. the unwritten rule where males turn to dominate with regards to leadership. For instance with the exception of Liberia which once had a female presidents all presidents of African countries are males) and the social threat against women in leadership. Therefore, in a bid to draw age and marital status in the discussion of the challenges women face in leadership position, the idea can be conceived that no woman is to be treated differently whether older or younger;

married or not married, there seems to similar measure of challenge as captured in the extracts that follow.

–We always find it challenging dealing with males who think we as women need not to control them. Sometimes they come very strongly opposing virtually all decisions that we bring on board. In an attempt to make sure that you do not control them, they will sabotage your effort so that you would not succeed. ...it is always difficult dealing with men egoism...” (WL # 3)

–When someone is sabotaging you, every thought, action and deeds are always against you and it becomes very difficult to handle such problems ...the pull him\her down syndrome is everywhere” (WL # 7)

–Sometimes when I tell my husband that I am going for workshop and last like three days or more outside of the home, various concerns would be raised with regards to who would keep the house and other responsibilities” (WL # 6)

–I remember a male teacher telling me one day that there is no way a woman could control him and that he would not sit down for me to be pushing him here and there. In issues like this it becomes intimidating when there is the need to assign such a person some duty to perform” (WL # 2)

It was also identified that most of the women do not get the necessary support from the SHS to help them execute their duties in the midst of such hostilities from the males. From the information as revealed in the extracts above, it appears age does not matter as well as marital status, only that marital status informs the challenges women in leadership position from the point that the challenges do not only emerge from the egoism of men at the work place but also from home, specifically the husband.

Another leader talked about facing sabotage from even females within her institution and this does not resonate with age or marital status.

–Even some of our females are of the view that for a fellow woman to control or lead her it would be better for a male to lead ...you see such a thought....So they would display all sort of in-ward hatred and jealousy towards everything you do” (WL # 8).

It further emerged that, the necessary respect deserving of them is not usually accorded them because of the pompous nature of men. Meanwhile, these men form majority of direct employees that need direction from the female leaders.

–Some of the men are not respectful at all especially in the way they talk and respond to assignments” (WL # 5).

–Though I have been calling for this mentorship for quite some time now, I have not received any positive feedback from the authorities ... it is very disappointing ... ” (WL # 13)

Clearly, from the responses, it be seen that the greatest challenge that all women in authority whether older or younger or better still whether married or single is the issue of men challenging their authority as women.

4.4.2 Anticipation of challenges

Participants revealed (without prominence on biographic information) that most of the challenges are anticipated before they occur while others occur randomly. Challenges like the ones faced from male teachers and other male employees within the institution with regards to men’s egoism are always anticipated. However, much as these challenges are anticipated, the way and manner that they would rear their ugly head on these female leaders are not usually certain. Moreover, conflicts among workers are not anticipated. It was revealed that most of the workers within the institutions practice the habit of backbiting. This conduct always landed at the offices of the female leaders, and the constancy and the consistency of having to use different approach in resolving these conflicts become a challenge.

4.4.3 Measures to curtailing the challenges

Aside the coping strategies that the next research question discusses, it was observed from the interview that, in order to solve some of the challenges in the house, the participants gave prior notice to their spouses of upcoming conferences. This makes it easier for the entire family to prepare towards it to reassign family duties to other people in the house. It also emerged that from the interview that participants do not pay serious attention to all conflicts that arise among the employees of the various schools.

–Sometimes I leave issues to be settled by those involved without interference so I can concentrate on matters that have serious concern” (WL # 9)

–For me, I try to firm and resolute in my decision so that my gender does not limit me as my duties as a leader. This I do through proper sanctioning procedures” (WL#3).

–As for the men, they usually think that we the women cannot live up to expectation, so I always prove my worth through hard work and determination. Thus when my decisions give the needed results to the school, all the criticisms are quashed” (WL # 7)

In order to understand the methods aimed at curtailing the challenges in relation to the participants' biographic information, I refer to my earlier discussion (refer to discussions on leadership styles), which revealed that women who are single seem to be more autocratic or assertive than those who are married. This is reflected in the methods used in curtailing the challenges they face in leadership position. Thus, from women leader 3 and 7 who fall within the single category as noted above, they try to prove their worth to the men and thereby suggesting their authority. This therefore explains why such women leaders try to be autocratic and assertive. However, with woman leader 9 who falls within category of married, it becomes clear that once they use the participatory and transformative as not earlier, in managing the challenges they face, they allow things to happen by themselves without interfering.

The study found that, most of the challenges that they face was coming from societal and cultural discrimination against women in leadership. Moreover, the women leaders suffer from male subordinates who sometimes refused to listen to instructions and directives given by the female leaders. This is because many of the males do not want to be controlled by women. Additionally, it was revealed that, training programmes and other helps in terms of encouragement is not offered by the GES to boost the morale and the capacity of women in leadership positions.

Beside the challenge from their male subordinates and the little training that the institution offers, the study found that women leaders face sabotage from their other female colleagues out of jealousy and hatred. Moreover, they also face problems with their spouses as they had to travel for duties and workshops which require that they spent some number of days outside of the house. These challenges sometimes leave the women leaders no option than to abide by the directions and duties of their matrimonial homes.

These findings are consistent with the view expressed by Powell (2011). Powell indicated that, men tend to believe and identify with - transactional leadership and view subordinate job performance as a series of transactions, which exchange rewards for services rendered or punishment for inadequate performance. Men, more often than women, tend to use power that comes from formal authority and their position within the organization.

The foregoing challenges have various theoretical and empirical significance. The liberal feminist theory by Garland Thompson (2002) indicates that patriarchal, paternalistic, and moralistic laws steer women into socially preferred ways of life. These are unfair restrictions on women's choices, on the liberal feminist view,

because women's choices should be guided by their own sense of their self-interest and by their own values (Madsen, 2000; Hughes, 2002).

The free limit from the paternalistic restriction as explained from the theory set grounds for women leaders to duly make serious decision devoid of fear and intimidation from their male counterparts especially when these males work under the women leaders. This goes to reason that for women leaders in the GES the presence of such patriarchal moralistic laws would make it cumbersome to exercise their duties and hence if there is going to be any strategic decision, such decision would be shielded. For instance as indicated from the findings, most men in Ghana see themselves as superior to women and hence tend to look down upon women in leadership position. This leads to disobedience to the rules set out by the women in leadership (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010).

Empirically, the findings are also consistent with Miressa (2012) whose study concluded that, most of the time women join mostly low level work conditions. Moreover, today women are under-represented in leadership position in almost all sectors because relatively, women have less freedom because of their family responsibility and lack of necessary qualifications and skills to fill position of responsibility. Major challenges influencing women have been cultural issues which were common in female headed institutions.

The challenges of sabotage are also consistent with stereotyping which is one of the larger hurdles for women in leadership positions (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). When a person is perceived by a negative stereotype, it is very hard to change because one would have to change the co-workers' attitude. However, when provided with unambiguous and undeniable information about performance effectiveness,

undervaluation of women does not occur (Ritter & Yoder, 2004; Malie& April, 2011; Berkery, Morley & Tiernan, 2013).

The challenge of sabotage and hatred from fellow women line with a study in Zimbabwe. Tsitsi Dangarembga from Zimbabwe in her interview with BBC News (BBC News, 2014), said that one of the reasons there are few women in positions of power is lack of unity among women themselves. She said that since women were vying for limited resources they have a tendency to see other women as a menace and are envious of one another. She went on to say that women have the potential to bring about transformation, but they lack organization due to lack of time, given their multiple roles as bread winners, wives and mothers.

4.4.4 Summary

Thus, it can be realised from the foregoing discussions that the major challenge women in leadership position face has to do with the egoism of men and sabotage from men as well as in some cases from their fellow women. Drawing in the issue of age and marital status, it was ascertained that irrespective of once age and marital status, there is the possibility of encountering the challenge as previously discussed. However, what was significant in relation to marital status was that such women who are married seem to encounter a stern challenge than their counterparts who are single. That is, such women in leadership position who are married do not only encounter sabotage from men at the work place but also from their husbands at home.

4.5 Research Question 4: What are the coping strategies of women in leadership positions in SHS in Cape Coast Metropolis?

This research question sought to identify the various coping mechanisms that the women leaders use in dealing with the myriad of challenges that they face in their leadership positions. That is coping mechanism for leadership and success rate of such coping mechanisms.

4.5.1 Coping mechanism for leadership

One interesting thing that appeared from the interview is that, due to their religious affiliation, all the participants indicated they heavily rely on their God for help, guidance and assistance through prayers. Among the many comments were;

“God is my ultimate strength and has been my comfort all through these years” (WL # 1)

“What can one do without the help of God? ” (WL # 6) she continued to say “I couldn’t have achieved much in a society dominated by men showing they can do it all if God had not been my support”

“When confronted with issues I always seek the face of my God because His book says in Matthew chapter 7:7 ask, seek and knock and he will come to our aid ” (WL # 10)

“ As part of my education I went to missionary school and have not left out my education to lean on God at all times and this has been my source of strength in my day to day activities ” (WL # 13)

It further emerged that participants adopt the culture of “let go”. This is the situation where people glossed over issues instead of being overwhelmed with anxiety and pressure. With references to specific coping strategies, it was revealed that most often than not participatory leadership style helps in dealing with the problems. It was realised that, to a larger extent, use of the leadership style as a coping mechanism contributes significantly towards achieving set goals. The theme also had sub-themes which are coping strategies, unique strategies, individual means of coping with

challenges and the success rate of such coping mechanisms. In furtherance of this issue of coping mechanisms, all the women interviewed are certain on one thing and that is their faith in God to guide through. This really is not informed by their age or marital status. This is so because all of them have or encounter challenges in one way or the other and by virtue of the society we live in, there is nothing they can possibly do as human beings except God changes the situation. This brings to the fore the ideology of ethnography in the consideration of the coping mechanisms towards the challenges women in leadership position face.

4.5.2 Success rate of such coping mechanisms

The participants revealed with no particular influence of demographic information that, the choice of leadership styles is what allows them to judiciously deal with challenges. Moreover, it was revealed that, the participatory leadership style and the democratic styles were some of the main coping mechanisms that the women leaders adopted in their various positions. It was further revealed that to a larger extent, these coping mechanisms have helped calm things down within the institutions. It was also revealed that the participants employed opened-door leadership strategies more than autocratic style of leading their colleagues and subordinates. It was further revealed that participant try to build good relationship with subordinates and hence creates a congenial atmosphere where people could freely air their grievances and resentment.

The findings suggest that largely, the coping strategies depended on the choice of leadership style adopted. The findings indicated that the use of participative and transformational leadership style makes it less cumbersome to deal with the challenges. The findings also revealed that, hard work and determination play pivotal

role in coping with challenges. Many of the female leaders work hand-in-hand with their subordinates and involve them in decision making.

These findings are consistent with coping strategies in the literature. As already indicated, Agezo (2010), argued that when the female head teacher employs participative leadership style, it will help her to cope with the subordinates stereotypes. Additionally, Booysen and Nkomo (2010) hold the view that if a female manager tries to be more autocratic subordinates are more likely to complain because they expect women to be participative. Mcshare and Glinow (2002), hold the view that women are evaluated negatively when they adopt a directive leadership style which is stereotypically male. Besides the participative style Booysen and Nkomo (2010) indicated that transformational type of leadership style involves changing the institution (School) to become a better place. It involves creating a vision, communicating the vision and building commitment to the vision. Through this type of leadership style, women leaders can remain a float in a masculine leadership world

According to Caliper (2005), women leaders are more assertive and persuasive, have a stronger need to get things done and are more willing to take risks than male leaders. Women leaders were also found to be more empathetic and flexible, as well as stronger in interpersonal skills than their male counterparts. These leadership skills also help women leadership to easily cope with challenges in their workplace.

4.6 Summary

This research question sought to consider the coping mechanisms women in leadership position adopt in dealing with challenges women in leadership face. It became obvious from the discussions that they all resort to God to guide and direct them so as to be cope with challenges they encounter in their discharge of duties as women in authority. This was realised from the fact that they have no power to change what seems to be a norm from time in memorial. This explains their ethnographic understanding of the issues of the kind of challenge they face as women in authority.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This is the concluding chapter of the study. The chapter basically has three main sections. As the chapter heading provides, the sections include summary of the thesis, conclusions drawn from the key findings and recommendations.

5.1 Summary

The overall purpose of the study was to examine the challenges and coping strategies/mechanisms of women in leadership in the Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. To achieve this overall purpose, the study categorized the main objective into four distinctive research questions. The first research question was to find out what the practices or policies that discourage women's career progression within the general institution of the Senior High School in Cape Coast Metropolis? The second research question of the study was what leadership styles were adopted by women leaders in SHS in Cape Coast Metropolis? The next research question dealt with what challenges women leaders face in their leadership role in the senior high schools? Finally, the last research question was to identify what coping strategies/mechanisms that women leaders use in dealing with the challenges that they face in their duties?

The study required non-numerical data and therefore used purely qualitative research approach. Phenomenological design was used to support the study framework where the required data were collected through interviews. The target population for the study was female headmistresses and assistant headmistresses in the various Senior High Schools in the Metropolis. The study used sample size of all six female headmistresses and eight assistant headmistress in the Metropolis. The

participants were selected using the census sampling technique to meet the study objectives.

Immediately after the field interview, a thorough in-depth reading, re-reading and listening of the responses from the interviews were undertaken. Some of the audios were converted to transcribed text. Data reduction was conducted where the responses were summarized and classified.

The key findings from the study are as follows:

1. No policies or programmes were in place to discourage women from enhancing their careers as women. Moreover, equal opportunities existed within the GES for both males and females who would want to climb high on the leadership ladder regardless of age, cultural background or belief. However, in spite of the aforementioned provisions, no training programmes are available to train and mentor women into leadership. This meant that the women leadership themselves have to sponsor their training programmes and other studies to sharpen their leadership skills. The study further revealed that, NGOs and other gender advocates do not extend any helping hand to the women leaders within the GES to empower and build their capacities for the enormous duties that they have to perform. Additionally, it was identified that lack of training and mentorship programmes contributed to the vast difference that exist between the number of male leaders and that of female leaders within the schools. It also, emerged from the findings of the study that most significantly, age and marital status does not affect once lived experience only that when it comes to advocacy for gender equality in leadership positions, those who are married and are far advanced in age, say between 51-60 do not wish equal measure but recommend that women are given a significant quota, but those who are not married and are between 40-

50 would want equal number of women in leadership position as compared to men in leadership position.

2. The leadership style adopted by the female leaders in their duties was the participatory leadership. This enabled them to involve stakeholders in decisions making process and lessen their burden. It was also found that sometimes situational leadership style is adopted where autocratic, democratic and transformational leadership styles are used to deal with issues specifically when they arise. Also, in terms of age and marital status, it panned out that women in leadership position who are married and are farther from 60 years adopt the given in order to achieve success but those who are single and nearing 60 years dwell on epistemological stance and character to achieve success. Also, in terms of leadership styles, while married women in authority and those that are nearing 60 years adopt participative and transformative leadership styles, those that are single and farther from 60 years are rather assertive. On the issue of the best leadership style, all the women acceded to participative as being the best and also they all seem to use the same conflict management style.
3. The study revealed that most of the male subordinates do not provide good environment by displaying disobedience and belittling the effort of the female leaders. This was evident by the fact that most male staff usually do not perform their assign duties. Moreover, women in leadership faced opposition from the house as their spouses sometimes not accent to their going out for workshops and other programmes. This is because the women in leadership who doubled as wives are expected to perform their household chores and their responsibilities required of married women. The study further found that female leaders were also sabotaged by their fellow women who may feel jealous that such top positions are

occupied by a woman. In this regard, these females join their male counterparts to boycott the implementation of decisions which would be geared towards development of the schools. Drawing in the issue of age and marital status, it was ascertained that irrespective of once age and marital status, there is the possibility of encountering the challenge as previously discussed. However, what was significant in relation to marital status was that such women who are married seem to encounter a stern challenge than their counterparts who are single. That is, such women in leadership position who are married do not only encounter sabotage from men at the work place but also from their husbands at home.

Furthermore, there are always conflicts among staff which need to be resolved by female leaders and this hampers their progress since most conflicts require that the women in leadership position use the best mediation in order not fuel the already existing hatred that staff have for them. From the study, it was realised that the absence of training programmes and gender advocacy sometimes reduces the confidence level of the females.

Moreover, it was revealed that the African male dominance culture and women stereotype is always manifest in most of the decision making process at the leadership level. This is where due to the male dominance, women views are not taken into consideration during meetings of head teachers or school administrators.

4. The last objective sought to identify the coping strategies and mechanisms that the female leaders use in their work. Female leaders used win-win approach to deal with issues of conflicts to reduce the animosity and hatred that people have against them. Aside this, all the respondents indicated that they find solace in God as coping mechanism. The study also revealed that largely that the leaders

used the participative and transformational approach in dealing with problems while leaving issues of trivial nature to be settled between the stakeholders involved. It was further revealed that the leaders work hard to prove their worth while maintaining friendly atmosphere and effective communication among their subordinates. This reduces the tensions and create congenial environment for peaceful relationships. It also became obvious from the discussions that they all resort to God to guide and direct them so as to be cope with challenges they encounter in their discharge of duties as women in authority. This was realised from the fact that they have no power to change what seems to be a norm from time in memorial. This explains their ethnographic understanding of the issues of the kind of challenge they face as women in authority.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concludes from the findings that:

1. Since the study revealed that there are no policies or programmes or practices put in place to discourage women from enhancing their careers as women and that equal opportunities exist within the GES for both males and females, it can be concluded that Ghana has now understood gender issues and is discouraging gender bias. This can therefore mean that in the next generation the issue of gender discrimination will be a thing of the past and the women will be empowered. Also, most women seem to propagate a great deal of women in leadership position, they are more likely to have issues with their husbands at home and this explains the caution with which those women in leadership position who are married advocate for the increase number of women in leadership position.

2. In the study it emerged that all the women interviewed favoured participative leadership style as the best leadership style but from age and marital status variation, those who are married use the participatory leadership style but those who are single use the assertive style. The conclusion that can be drawn from this finding is that women leaders who are single and are farther from 60 years are more likely to have problems in the discharge of their duties as leaders since men per the societal influence will always try to resist the control of women leaders as revealed by one of the interviewee during the interview.
3. It emerged, as one of the key findings of the study that women in leadership positions are fiercely resisted by men, and what is even worse are those women in authority who are married as their husbands also compound to their woes. The ramifications or the conclusions that can be drawn from this finding is that there would be possible and varied forms of conflicts and insubordinations from males and sometimes from females in different institutions as more and more women continue to assume leadership role. The intensity of the conflict would arise even as it was identified from the interview results that such women in leadership, particularly those that are single and are a bit farther from 60 years try to resist all forms of insubordination from men, and possibly from their fellow female.
4. From the findings of the study, it came out that the coping mechanism or strategy adopted by most women in leadership position, especially in SHS in Cape Coast was they adopt the epistemological stance of ethnography and thus, find solace in God to intervene. It is therefore apt to conclude that the women interviewed seem to understand the societal influences or norms (ethnographic stance) of gender related issues and so such women will in turn

educate young and incoming women leaders to understand and appreciate some of the issues that confront women in authority. The anticipation from this is that in years to come, women in leadership position will understand and accept the challenges of their position and as such adopt a more accommodating measure, more importantly those who try to prove their worth to the men by resisting the egoism of men at all cost. They will possibly bring a closure to the internal rift that normally ensue between some women in leadership position and their subordinates.

5.3 Recommendations

The study presents recommendations from the major findings and conclusions drawn. The suggestions are directed to the Ministry of Education and Gender and Social Protection, Ghana Education Service and the women in leadership positions in the Ghana Education Service.

As Ghana is beginning to understand and appreciate women in leadership position, as there is not policy and programmes that aim at gender discrimination, it becomes expedient for me to put forward that GES should also try as much as possible to develop policies and programmes that seek to encourage young girls in considering taking up leadership positions. GES should again look into resourcing the Ghana Education service to take proper steps to increase the number of women leaders in the schools. Again, provide policies that would enhance women capacity and skills towards leadership positions. The ministry is also informed that bringing more women advocacy programmes to equip women leaders in their quest to sharpen their leadership skills to be expedient in women empowerment. Finally, the ministry can liaise with NGOs to channel their resources into women leadership in the educational sector.

Further, the Ghana Education Service is advised to design policies aimed at protecting women leaders from men egoism and insubordination by introducing strong punishment for those found culpable. Again, regularly organise training and workshops specifically for women leaders to boost their confidence and build their capabilities. Introduction of mentorship programmes in the schools to train and coach young women to be leaders in positions will also be expedient. Also, they can institute a committee to check how the school leaders in a particular region could be spread between males and females to get a balance representative during conference of heads meetings. Moreover, regularly appraise the performance of female leaders and award them for their hard work to encourage other females to take up responsibility of leadership. Finally, the GES can establish a constitution which clearly defines the limits of male staff in the schools where females are heads in order that males would not encroach the assigned roles of the female leaders.

Again, the Ghana education service should package special incentives for women who aspire and achieve the outmost leadership role of becoming heads of senior high schools as it will serve as a motivation for the young women generation.

Also, women in leadership position in the Ghana Education Service are advised to learn by updating their skills and competencies to grow in confidence and also share ideas with colleagues in the same field to adopt and adapt leadership styles that have worked in other institutions to handle institutional challenges. Again they can take up mentoring programmes by themselves to equip female teachers and educationist who aspire to such height as theirs.

The researcher admits that there are many ways to promote female leadership, of which some are more time consuming and complex and others are more easily conducted. If societal factors are considered, attention should be paid on the raising of children by giving boys and girls more possibilities to get to know different fields and professions in order to balance the gender division in the labour market. Also, changing traditional gender roles by emphasizing equality in all matters would towards female leadership and women's own doubts about their abilities. At an organizational level, companies can adapt equality plans and aim for diversity by hiring competent women and men equally. Networking, sponsoring and mentoring are all good ways to promote female leadership as well.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

The research findings provide some suggestions for future research. Since the sample of this research was delimited to only headmistresses and assistant headmistresses of Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis, future research should be conducted seeking similar information from the perspective of teachers and other related educational administrators within the Ghana Education Service.

Again, it could also be broadly researched into other sectors of the economy like the banking sector, the agricultural sector and the Ghana Football Association.

Furthermore, this study focused mainly on the qualitative approach, future study can consider the use of quantitative approach in understanding the challenges women in leadership position encounter and the kinds of coping mechanisms they use in managing the challenges.

It emerged from this study that there were some differences in the responses of the women leaders interviewed, it is therefore suggested for future researchers to consider adopting inferential statistics like ANOVA, regression and the like to better

appreciate the differences that pertain to matters of the challenges women in leadership position encounter as well as their coping mechanisms by focusing on their biographic data like age, marital status and others.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



23rd January, 2018

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MS. AYENSU JEMIMA

We write to introduce Ms. Ayensu Jemima to your outfit. She is an M.Phil Social Studies Education student with index number 8160140011 from the Department of Social Studies Education, University of Education, Winneba.

As part of the requirement for the award of master of philosophy degree, she is undertaking a research on the topic *Challenges and Coping Mechanisms of Women in Leadership in Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis*.

We wish to assure you that any information provided would be treated confidential.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Effeh Attom'.

Lucy Effeh Attom (Ph. D.)
Ag. Head of Department

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

This interview guide is meant to find out challenges and coping mechanisms of women in leadership in Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Demographics

One: What is your age range in years?

30 - 40 ()

41 - 50 ()

51 - 60 ()

Two: What is your marital status?

Single ()

Married ()

Divorced ()

Widow ()

Three: What is your highest educational qualification?

Four: How long (in years) have you been in service?

Five: How many years have you been in your present station or school?

Challenges Faced by Women in Leadership Positions

Six: Can you enumerate some challenges faced by women in leadership positions?

Seven: What makes each of the identified areas a challenge?

Eight: Do you anticipate these challenges in the discharge of your duties or they occur randomly?

Nine: What means do you think can be used to curtail these challenges?

Ten: Do you for see or think these challenges becoming hindrances to upcoming women in leadership positions?

Policies and Programmes aimed at Eliminating Gender Discrimination

Eleven: Are there policies and programmes of the school aimed at eliminating gender discrimination?

Twelve: Are there policies and programmes of government aimed at eliminating gender discrimination?

Thirteen: Does Ghana Education Service (GES) use gender terminology when advertising vacancies?

Fourteen: If yes what are some of the terminologies or expressions used?

Fifteen: Does your institution receive support from other organizations like NGOs of women in leadership advocacy?

Sixteen: If yes, what are some of the organizations assisting your institution in championing women in leadership agenda?

Leadership Styles

Seventeen: How can women best enter and succeed in leadership positions?

Eighteen: Which leadership style do you practice?

Nineteen: In your view has this leadership style helped your school?

Twenty: How do you manage conflict in a working environment?

Leadership Training and Mentorship Programmes

Twenty-one: Are there any training programmes in your school?

Twenty-two: Are women mentored into leadership positions in your school?

Twenty-three: If yes how is this mentorship done?

Twenty-four: Do you organize in-service training for workers in the school especially women?

Twenty-five (a): If yes, what types of in-service training?

Twenty-five (b): If no what were the challenges in organizing the in-service training?

Coping strategies adopted by women in leadership

Twenty-six: What coping mechanisms exist for leadership?

Twenty-seven: Have you adopted any method of coping with leadership challenges in general?

Twenty-eight: How do you cope with the challenges in your position as a female leader?

Twenty-nine: Have the coping mechanisms worked for you?

Thirty: If the coping mechanisms worked, how were they effective?