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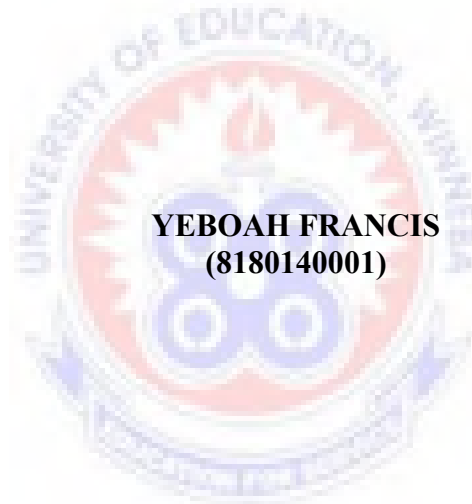
PERCEPTION OF TUTORS OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ON GENDER EQUITY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THEIR CLASSROOM PRACTICES IN THE ASHANTI REGION

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Francis Yeboah declare that this dissertation, with exception of quotation and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my 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 this project work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Simon Kyei

Signature……………………………..

Date…………………………….……..

DEDICATION

To my lovely wife, Mrs. Jemima Oppong Yeboah and my children Nhyira, Ayeyi and

Aseda I dedicate this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the perception of tutors of Colleges of Education in the Ashanti Region on gender equity and how their perceptions influence their classroom practices. It was also meant to explore how tutors' own practices create gender biases and stereotypes and how tutors can do away with these biases to promote equity in the class to effect social change and development. Four research questions were raised to guide the study on how college tutors perceive gender and gender equity, the extent to which tutors' perceptions translate to their classroom practices, the benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom, and the challenges of achieving gender equity in the classroom. The embedded exploratory sequential mixed method was adopted with sample size of 132 chosen using Yamane's formula from four public mixed colleges. In order to get some lessons observed, twelve (12) tutors comprising five (5) females and seven (7) males of the sampled population volunteered for their lessons to be observed. A questionnaire with a five-point Likert Scale was used to gather quantitative data while observation data were used to validate qualitative results. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse quantitative data with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while thematic analysis and coding were used to analyse observation findings. The study revealed that tutors perceive gender as a social construct and these constructions breed inequities and create biases in major sectors of the community. It further revealed that tutors understand gender equity as fairness and justice that are given to individual males and females in education more importantly the classroom and that tutors own actions breed biases and stereotypes in the classroom. Tutors classroom practices were seen to contain some level of biases and stereotypes. The study further indicated that greater attempts are made to promote equity in the classroom through tutor pedagogies, language usage, teaching and learning materials selection and usage and provision of counselling services to males and females during classroom interactions. The study recommended that educational planners and deliverers should put much emphasis on gender equity and inclusivity in the school curriculum so that it will induce tutors to strive hard to promote gender equity in their classroom practices in order to achieve gender equality in education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The issue with gender in education has been a concern to countries, organisations and the world at large. This is because education has the power to reduce inequalities, break the cycle of poverty, foster tolerance, reach gender equality, and empower people to live more healthy lives and attain more productive livelihoods. The difficulty of having education for all people without barriers has been a major challenge over many centuries (Daro, 2017). Inequalities, marginalisation, discrimination, and other disparities continue to exist in providing education to boys and girls and people with various forms of disadvantages. In order to deal with the situation, treaties such as the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 1976 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the 1999 Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC), the 2000 United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the 2000 Dakar Declaration on Education for All, the 2000 UN Millennium Declaration, the 2015 UN Transforming our World, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the 2015 Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 have been signed globally to deal with gender disparities and inequities, particularly in education (Daro, 2017).

UNESCO (2005) cited in Acedo, Ferrer, Pàmies and Prospects (2009) contends that equity, equality and inclusion are seen as processes of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing the eliminating exclusion within and from education. This involves changes and modifications in content, approaches,

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structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that enable all children to realise their full potentials. Realising the achievement of full potentials of every child by no means require the active involvement of schools and teachers in particular. Gender itself has been variously defined. For instance, WHO (2011) refers to ―gender as the socially constructed characteristics of women and men such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men" The World Health Organisation – WHO adds that gender varies from society to society and can transform at any time. The concept of gender includes five important elements: relational, hierarchical, historical, contextual and institutional.

The United States Institute of Peace (2018, p. 4) and UNESCO, (2003) explain gender as a dynamic organizing principles in society and it is more than individuals‘ biological sex (male/female). They add that gender is a learning pattern of behaviour in everything we do at the individual, community, and institutional level. This assertion is postulated strongly in the framework for Gender Mainstreaming Implementation in 2003 by UNESCO which describes gender as the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our families, our society and cultures. It contends that ―Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, attributes and opportunities that any society considers appropriate for girls and boys, and women and men. The implication is that when society creates gender, it is rooted through learning by the members of the society.

This background will most significantly determine how tutors of the various colleges of education will actually deal with gender differences in their classrooms. In the assertion of West and Zimmerman (1987) and Butler (1990) ―gender is not something

we are born with, and not something we have, but something we do– something we perform". In their opinion, gender is imitational and starts from infancy. In sharing their opinion on what constitutes gender, Forum for African Women Educationalists – FAWE (2004) contend that many people conceive gender as ‗women's issues' but in reality, gender refers to socially determined roles and relations between males and females". They conceive gender to include the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men and that gender roles and expectations can change over time and they vary within and between cultures.

Equity has be defined by UNESCO (2018, p.14) as ─the social justice ramifications of education in relation to the fairness, justness and impartiality of its distribution at all levels or educational sub-sectors". It focuses on need and requirement of an individual. Thus, equity adopts need based approach to help individuals reach their full potentials. In explaining gender equity, FAWE (2004) opines that it is the giving of equal treatment to both girls and boys, women and men to access resources and opportunities in ensuring that girls and boys have equal access to enrolment and other educational opportunities. Equity therefore removes all forms of barriers in education for boys and girls.

According to UNESCO (2013), and USAID (2008), gender equity in education is a special treatment/action taken to reverse the historical and social disadvantages that prevent female and male learners from accessing and benefiting from education on equal grounds. For example, equity measures can favour girls in order to empower them and help them overcome disadvantages of chronic discrimination and catch up with boys. UNESCO refers to these equity measures as ‗positive

discrimination' or _affirmative action', but not _fair' per se, and when implemented, will ensure fairness and equality of outcome. This is possible through incentive packages like providing scholarships to increase access to education by boys and girls. When these provisions are made, equality will be achieved in all aspects of live (UNESCO, 2003) and leads to fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between women and men UEW-W Gender Policy Framework (2009, p.15)

In providing equitable opportunities for boys and girls, Martin (1998) believes that teachers may monitor and discipline boys' and girls' differently right at the beginning of the child's schooling. This contributes to the embodiment of gender in childhood, making gendered bodies appear and feel natural. However, numerous studies have shown that a number of teachers believe that boys and girls have diverse academic abilities, behaviours, and inspirations (Anderson-Levitt, Bloch & Soumare, 1998; Chudgar & Sankar, 2008; Kirk, 2004; Lloyd, Mensch & Clark, 2000; Rawal & Kingdon, 2010). But as teachers interact with students, they may draw on normative gender practices which may be discriminatory, biased and stereotyped. For instance, in a number of contexts, male teachers were described as adopting a relaxed tone with male students, teasing them and challenging them but they did not interact with female students in the same manner (Francis, 2008; Humphreys, 2008; Hurtig, 2008). However, female teachers could not do same for the fear of losing their respect just to stamp their authority (Hurtig, 2008). In fact, UNGEI (2010) sees education as the right of the child and nothing should be done to deny them these rights.

Undeniably, teachers may be so open about their attitudes on gender roles. Johnson-Hanks (2006) gives explicit picture on how certain teachers explicitly espoused that it is supreme that women cook for their husbands, regardless of their level of education, showing their biases towards female education. Thus, teacher characteristics, attitudes and behaviours are central to the school environment. Sahin (2014) believes that education generally deals with formation of habits of human beings, hence the need to focus on promoting equal participation of women and men in all aspects of education including decision making in order to reduce the artificial gap created between women and men in education throughout the teaching and learning process. Dewey (1954, p.6) cited in Sahin (2014) postulated that education in its broadest sense, is the means of social continuity of life and so cannot only address to men but also have to take women into consideration. Teachers' roles in this direction becomes very critical and crucial. Actions and inactions of teachers can either fuel inequities or enhance equity in the classroom and in education as a whole. Armstrong, Hamilton, & Sweeney (2006) acknowledge how individuals, traditions, and institutions create gender inequities and said to exterminate gender inequity and the disparities that result from it, interventions must emphasis on both the individual and the structural levels concurrently, paying particular consideration to institutions where gender inequities are moulded and replicated.

Ghana as country has also been hit by inequities in education and many steps have been taken to address them over the years through reforms and educational policies. For instance, Beeko (2005) in Kumi and Seide (2017) asserts that the Basel Missionaries in the pre-colonial era had a policy for equal access to education, and after the European left the shores of Ghana, the governments have continued to maintain the educational policies implemented in the country by the Europeans. The

Article 38 of the 1992 constitution of the republic of Ghana obliges the government to provide free compulsory basic education access, and depending on the availability of financial resources, apply same in senior secondary, technical schools, tertiary institutions and lifelong learning. This is based on the principle that to obtain a more equitable society, all individuals should, ideally, have access to equivalent learning opportunities, regardless of their socio-economic background, social origin, age or sex. Equity of access provides a strong base for developing social cohesion (Kwapong, 2010). This is to make education a right to all citizens of Ghana.

To ensure that every child receives quality education without barriers, a number of educational policies and interventions have been instituted in Ghana. The 1987s educational reform policy, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) program in the 1990s, the 2007 Anamuah Mensah Educational Reform, the 2014/2015 progressive Educational policy, and the 2017 Free SHS educational policy were all aimed at providing accessible, equity, and equal educational opportunities to all Ghanaians without barriers. For instance, at the launch of the Free Senior High School Education Programme, the Minister of Education Dr. Mathew Opoku Prempeh, asserted, ―as a nation, we are determined to bring education to the doorsteps of our children because it is worth it. We dare to do this because we ardently believe that the Ghanaian child deserves it". He further intimated that the move is supported by Article 25 1b of the 1992 Constitution and also in line with Sustainable Development Goals target 4 which states that by 2030, all boys and girls must complete free equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. These policies and reforms are geared towards provision of equal and equitable education to Ghanaian people (Ghanaweb, September 11, 2017).

However, a critical look at the policies implementations shows that more emphasis are laid on accessibility and enrolment than how equity is ensured in the school and in the classrooms. In the recent pre-tertiary curriculum prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) and Ministry of Education (2019), the emphasis has been shifted from mere accessibility to equity, equality and inclusion in so far as the classroom activities are concerned (Ministry of Education/NaCCA, 2019). Per this policy teachers at all levels are expected to have a level of knowledge on gender equity and inclusion as professional requirement and incorporate these gender issues in their teaching and learning, while students are enlightened to deal with the various conceptions on gender. Since the colleges prepare teachers for the basic schools it is only appropriate to explore how the tutors perceive gender issues and how these influence their classroom practices.

Although teachers play very critical role in ensuring gender equity, inclusion, equality and help eliminate all forms of discrimination in the school and classroom, attention has not been given to how they do this as part of their classroom practices. It is against this background that the researcher decided to explore how Colleges of Education tutors perceive gender equity and how this perception influences their classroom practices. According to Towery (2007) teacher's role is so important that it invariably determines the extent to which gender justice and fairness can be realised in the school setting more especially in the classroom.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The issue of gender inequalities in education has been a concern to governments, organisations and businesses world. Although many steps have been taken to eradicate theses inequalities, much has not been achieved especially in the developing countries. Countries as a way forward have in their educational policies the need to promote gender equality and social inclusion in all aspects of society. In fact, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) adopted in September, 2015 dabbed Agenda 2030, devoted as many as six (6) goals for inclusion, equality and equity. The goal 4 states that all countries must ‑ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by the year 2030 (UNESCO, 2018). However, studies have shown that in sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that only 23 percent of poor rural girls finish primary school. Gender gaps widen significantly in many countries in secondary and tertiary schools and Ghana is no exception. However, equity according to USAID is the building block of equality in education (USAID Report, 2008). This means that gender equality can only be achieved if equity is promoted

To achieve SDG goal 4 therefore, Ghana's educational reforms have incorporated equity, equality and social inclusive education as one of its goals. It is expected that the student teachers in the colleges of education will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to deal with all manner of inequities and promote equality and inclusivity in education (NaCCA/MoE, 2019). It is expected therefore that the tutors of colleges of education will have clear understanding of gender equity and create learning atmosphere that will promote fairness in the learning process. Thus, tutors are expected to exhibit high sense of fairness in their classroom practices. This will adequately prepare the pre-service teachers to exhibit good gender practices in their classrooms when they become substantive teachers.

Notwithstanding what teachers could do to promote equity between boys and girls and men and women, research has shown that gender stereotyping and biases continue to manifest themselves in schools and classrooms in particular and these are exhibited through teaching materials presented, teacher attitudes and pedagogies (Mhlauli, 2010; Aikman, Unterhalter and Challender, 2010; Mazile, 1998). The problem therefore is that much study has not been done on how tutors of Colleges of Education perceive gender equity and how their perceptions influence their classroom practices. As there are equity biases among teachers, it is interesting to ask if tutors are able to teach to impact positively in their students' gender equity for development and social change. This study therefore sought to explore the perceptions of college tutors on gender equity and how these influences their classroom practices.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find out how the college tutors could do away with gender equity biases in their teaching and practices to ensure gender equity and equality in classroom for development and social change.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study is guided by the following objectives. They are to:

1. explore how tutors of colleges of education understand gender and gender equity.

2. explore how the tutors' perceptions influence into their classroom practices.

3. ascertain the benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom by tutors.

4. ascertain the challenges of implementing gender equity in the classrooms.

1.5 Research Questions

These research questions have been designed to guide the researcher in the study. They are:

1. How do tutors of Colleges of Education in the Ashanti Region perceive gender and gender equity?

2. How do the Colleges of Education tutors perceptions influence their classroom practices?

3. What are the benefits of promoting gender equity practices in the classroom?

4. What are the challenges of achieving gender equity in the classroom?

1.6 Assumption

The study assumes that tutors of colleges of education in the Ashanti Region have adequate knowledge on gender issues especially gender equity and that tutors are striving very hard to ensure equity in their classrooms through their practices and that they aim at achieving equality for all learners in their classrooms in the long run.

1.7 Delimitation

Educating both men and women demand that fair environment is created in the classroom so that the potentials of each individual can be harnessed and developed. Teacher educators are so essential in the Ghanaian Education setting such that their perceptions of gender equity have the potential to influence their classroom practices. The scope of the study therefore was to specifically explore the relationship between colleges of education tutors' perceptions of gender equity and their influence on their classroom practices in the Ashanti Region. It focuses on how tutors perceive gender equity and strategise their classroom practices to create a fair atmosphere for both

men and women to realise their potentials in order to achieve gender equality in their classrooms.

1.8 Limitations

The study was constrained by time for the distribution and collection of questionnaires. Instead of the anticipated three weeks of getting the data from the respondents, it took the researcher close to two months due to the cumbersome nature of methods involved and respondents' poor attitudes towards the questionnaires. To solve this problem, series of travels were made to ensure that tutors responded to the questionnaire at the least opportunity obtained. Tutors who agreed to have their lessons observed kept on postponing scheduled periods for meetings and this prolonged the anticipated time to complete the work. It was anticipated that tutors could be extra careful after being informed of the observation of their lessons. To solve this problem, the researcher made sure areas of observation were not made known to tutors.

Another big bane on the study was the insurgence of Covid-19 and its subsequent effect of lockdown. All schools were closed down making it extremely difficult to get tutors to observe and answer the questionnaire. Tutors and students returned in batches and that was when the researcher could get respondents to attend to the questionnaire. The researcher himself suffered a lockdown with a strange vertebral disease which nearly made him abandon the research entirely.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study is expected to have these significance. It is envisaged that the findings and the recommendations will be beneficial to all the stakeholders in education. It will help them identify ways of getting on board to articulate gender and its attended issues in all levels of education. Teachers will find it useful to delve into their perceptions on gender and how they can improve on their classroom practices to promote equity and equality in the classroom environment.

The study will further be a reference material for policy makers in education and other administrative bodies on issues of gender in colleges especially the classroom. It will help such bodies to realise that gender inequalities can best be dealt with if gender equity is promoted in schools and in classrooms so that educational policies will not only think of access and enrolment but much attention will equally be given to how teachers promote equity in all levels of education. A policy direction which will induce educational players to make teachers incorporate gender equity methods, techniques and strategies in the teaching and the learning process will be drawn basing on the findings and the recommendations of this study.

The Ministry of Education will also out of the findings and recommendations have a clear picture of how gender issues are carried out in the colleges of education which has been tasked to prepare and train teachers for the pre-tertiary levels of education. For this, seminars and workshops will be frequently organised for tutors to equip them on various gender issues in education.

Finally, it is hoped that the findings and recommendations will make it a major reference material for future research into other areas of gender such as gender exclusion, gender mainstreaming, etc.

1.10 Organisation of the Study

The study explores teachers of colleges of education perception of gender equity and how their perceptions influence their classroom practices. It is organised into five chapters. The first chapter talks about the introduction, the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose, objectives, assumptions, significance, delimitation, limitations, and the organisation of the study.

The second chapter captures the review of related literature which was written on such themes as the theoretical framework, the concept gender, gender and sex, gender equity and equality in education, factors that promote gender equity, tutors perception of gender equity, tutors classroom practices and gender equity as well as how gender equity promotes gender equality in the teaching and learning process. The links among these concepts are established and summarized as such.

The third chapter focuses on the methodology, research design, philosophical assumptions, population, sampling techniques and procedures, sample size, research instruments, data collection procedures, instrument for data analysis, and validity and reliability of instrument.

The fourth chapter on the other hand looks at interpretation, analysis and discussion of the results and findings while the last chapter, chapter five deals with summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations as well as suggested areas for further research.

1.13 Operational Definition of Terminologies

In this research the following terms shall be operationalized as follows:

Equity: refers to the fair, just and impartial distribution of opportunities at all levels of learning in the classroom.

Gender equity: means fairness and impartial treatment of women and men according to their respective educational needs and abilities.

Equality: is treating everyone the same and giving everyone access to the same opportunity in the classroom setting.

Gender equality: is a state in which all people enjoy equal rights, opportunities and rewards, regardless of whether they were born females or males.

Attitude: is the individual's mental and emotional disposition towards people

Perception: the mental picture towards concepts, people and situations

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

A study of this nature requires a form of extensive reference to related literature and previous research studies. A clear and focused literature review determines the level of engagement with and understanding of essential body of knowledge underpinning a research study. This chapter is therefore dedicated to reviewing relevant literature on the study. The literature review has been considered under the following themes:

i.   Theoretical framework

ii.   Relevance of the theory to the study

iii.   The concept of gender

iv.   Relationship between gender and sex

v.   The concept of equity and gender equity

vi.   Gender equity in education

vii.   Relationship between gender equity and gender equality

viii. Gender equality in education

ix.   Teachers perception of gender equity in education

x.   Teachers classroom practices

xi.   Teachers attitudes and behaviours towards gender equity

xii.   Significance gender equity in education

xiii. Challenges to achieving gender equity in the classroom

xiv.   Summary of the chapter

2.1 Theoretical Framework: Social Construction Theory

It has never been easy to understand human behaviour and attitudes without considering theories that explain these behaviours and attitudes. The issue of gender has evolved so many years and in trying to explain the genesis and future direction and attributes, varying theories have been propounded to delve into issues that boarder on discrimination, oppression, stereotyping, power sharing, and property acquisition among others. For the purpose of this study, the social construction theory is chosen to give direction to the study. In opposition to the realist or the positivists' paradigm which posits that reality exists and that whatever happens is a response to nature or reality, the Social constructionists hold that what we consider to be knowledge is a justification of reality which is a product of collaboration by a community of knowers. Such justifications are as a result of a process of social interchange and negotiation. In fact, social constructionists are interested in the terms and forms in use among the members of a social group. According to Parlee (1998), when social constructionists, say that gender is ―socially constructed,‖ they mean that it is a product of social negotiation and therefore not universal or fixed. What this implies is that society constructs gender based on socially negotiated agreed structure which assigns roles and responsibilities to males and females based on their biological characteristics.

For social constructionists, concepts and categories are not direct, unequivocal, and unproblematic reflections of reality. Rather, what people consider to be reality takes its form and meaning from the concepts and categories available to them (Lindsey, 2015). A major aspect of the constructionists' theory in consonance with gender is that ‗gender is something that is performed in a range of settings and activities in relation to other people' (Connell, 1995; Courteney, 2000). Through these

performances, gender is made accountable, something that takes place in the context of assessment by others so that certain aspects of gendered identity are normalized (Zimmerman, West & Candace, 1987). Social constructionists emphasize that knowledge is a collective character and therefore sees it as a product of collective and collaborative mental process. Pleck, Klu and Sonenstein, (1994) cited in Payne, Swami and Stanistreet (2008) posit that social constructionists' ideas focus on gender as something that is done as opposed to biological sex that is ascribed at birth according to external genitalia. In this view men and women's identity, behaviour and expectations placed on them reflect socially constructed ideas about feminity and masculinity. From a social constructionist perspective, meanings are not fixed, but are always emergent in human interactions. Social constructionists often are interested in how people shift among different accounts as they move through differing situations and relationships. People produce meanings of gender, sex, and that are provisional, contingent, and specific to particular settings. Therefore, social constructionists do not attempt to assert universally applicable or enduring claims about gender, sex.

Social constructionist perspective also sees schools as complex gendered arenas where students observe, participate, and learn ―how gender relations work and how to navigate among them" (Connell, 2002, p.81). It works with the social reproduction and practice theory that emphasize schools as principal agents in reproducing existing social hierarchies of gender as well as race, caste, and class. Heyneman and Loxley (1983) believe that effect of school and teacher's quality strongly plays a major role in the promotion of gender equity between boys and girls, and are the greatest determinants of the academic outcomes of boys and girls. Other studies in support of the social constructionist theory reveal that effects of school factors such as teacher

knowledge and availability of supplies on achievement breed social change which makes gender social construction and changing with time (Fuller & Clarke, 1994; Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage & Ravino, 2011).

2.1.1 Relevance of the theory to the study

The social constructionism is closely associated with this study because researchers globally agree that gender is nurture rather than nature. Societies do negotiate, interact, and craft norms which espouse what roles individuals can play in the social structure of the society. Arguably, gender is seen as cultural specific and that it varies from time to time. UNESCO (2009) argues that gender is described as a social and constructed differences in women's and men's roles and responsibilities, which are learned, vary from culture to culture and change over time. This argument gained a support from the World Health Organisation (WHO) which defined gender as the ‒socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships between groups of women and men (World Health Organisation, 2019). This notion is shared by the Federation of African Women in Education (FAWE) which defines gender as a ‒socially and culturally constructed notion about the roles of women (femininity) and men (masculinity) within a society. These roles are context-specific and therefore vary across cultures" (FAWE, 2013). In line with the Social Constructionist Theory, since gender is socially constructed, inequities may arise and therefore teachers as agents of change must have in-depth knowledge as what constitute these inequities so that they can employ practices that will ensure gender equity in their classrooms in order to promote gender equality among students they teach. The theory is very relevant to the study as it unveils how tutors of Colleges of Education perceive gender and gender equity as human constructs born out of interactions among humankind. It further gives a clear understanding as to why

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different people perceive concepts differently and the impact these perceptions have on their daily activities. It also helps to test responses of responses against research objectives and questions against theory to authenticate the findings of the study.

2.2 The Concept of Gender

Gender as a concept has been looked in different ways as differs from society to society. Societies see gender as playing a significant role in the entire social structure of society. Gender defines what duties and responsibilities individual members of the society is expected to perform to ensure stability and cohesion in the society. In the words of UNESCO (2003, and 2009) gender is considered as the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in our families, our societies and our cultures and these roles are socially constructed. UNESCO further argues that gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity) and changes over time. Systems of social differentiation such as political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental disability, age and more, modify gender roles. The concept of gender is vital because it reveals how women's subordination or men's domination is socially constructed.

The World Health Organisation (2011, 2019), in looking at the relationship between gender and health explained that gender is the ―socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed". WHO contends that gender interacts with sex and that while individuals are born females or males they are taught appropriate norms and behaviours – including how they should interact with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities and

work places. When individuals or groups do not ‗fit' established gender norms they often face stigma, discriminatory practices or social exclusion – all of which adversely affect health. This may increase the risk of seeking health when one is engrossed in gender practices and norms. It is imperative to note that gender roles, norms and relations in one way or another influence people's susceptibility to different health conditions and diseases and affect their enjoyment of good mental, physical health and wellbeing.

Certain scholars also believe that the definitions of the term ‗gender' pivot around a social dimension and plug to the inter-relatedness and dependency of the concept on power relations in society (Chodorow, 1978; Elliot, 1986; Beall & Sternberg, 1993; Bonthuys & Albertyn, 2007). In the opinion of Elliot (1986), people use the term gender to differentiate between the sexes, but to Beall and Sternberg (1993) gender refers to a social construction by which people define social roles. Beall and Sternberg's position was in line with UNESCO (2003) and WHO (2011) which agreed that gender is socially constructed. Rennie (2000) indicates that the construction of gender is dependent on social variables like race, ethnicity, religion, class, language and lifestyle. To Bonthuys and Albertyn (2007:21) gender is used primarily as a sociological label in relation to sex that is assumed to be biological in the following words:

> ―….gender signifies the differences which societies and cultures ascribe
> to people on the basis of their sex.‖

In all these, McDowell and Pringle (1992, p.11) think that the term ‗gender' has acquired a greater dimension from just being used to differentiate between the sexes to having a ―wider understanding … as a set of meanings and discourses‖. The ideas expressed by these researchers reveal that gender is constructed by society to define

roles for individuals but these constructions are based on the sexes which are biologically determined. Mogamad (2011) puts forward that ―social constructs about gender are the vehicles through which society's expectations are confirmed and these constructs limit the thinking of both girls and women and boys and men as regards their roles in society and their place in education, the world of work, economics and politics, thus reproducing gender divisions and the unequal power relations that these underline and facilitate"

In the opinion of UEW (2009), FAWE (2013) and Lindsey (2015), gender refers to the socially and culturally constructed roles assigned to men and women in particular society at a particular time. For instance, UEW believe that such roles, and the differences between them (women and men), are conditioned by a variety of political, economic, ideological and cultural factors and are characterised in most societies by unequal power relations. FAWE also posits that the roles are content specific and vary across cultures while Lindsey concludes that while sex is ascribed gender is achieved status because it is learned. The literature clearly shows that gender is society created and therefore has no or little to do with the biology of the persons involved. However, a deep reflection of the findings and opinions expressed by these individuals and organisations suggests that there is a relationship between gender and sex and for this reason, the next review is to ascertain the relationship between gender and sex.

2.3 The Relationship between Gender and Sex

The works of UNESCO (2002, 2009); UEW (2009); Lindsey (2015), etc clearly show that there is a relationship between gender and sex. The use of the terms ‗gender' and ‗sex' by researchers and different gender writers demands that a critical look is taken to locate the distinctions and relationships between the two concepts or terms. Many

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scholars believe that the definitions of the term ‗gender‘ hinge around a social dimension and point to the inter-relatedness and dependency of the concept on power relations in society and its determination is based on one‘s sex (Chodorow, 1978; Elliot, 1986; Beall & Sternberg, 1993; Bonthuys & Albertyn, 2007).

West and Zimmerman (1987) in Butler, (1990), opine that ‗gender‘ is not something we are born with, and not something we have, but something we do, something we perform. They demonstrated this by studying how the boy child will imitate the father in the way he swages as he walks and the girl child imitate the way the mother dresses and performs the household chores, and conclude that the children are juxtaposing these into their adult lives in future. They further intimate that as the children grow up they will not be doing exactly the mincing and swaggering but the chances are that their childhood performances may contain elements that may well surface in their adult male and female behaviours. Occasionally, the girl might adopt that swagger while the boy might also be mincing as well. However, the admiration the girl child will receive from the adults in her childhood when swaggering will not be the same as she grows older since she cannot perform it better as the boy. This consolidates the fact that gender is learned and has connotation with sex. This is where gender and sex come together, as society tries to match up ways of behaving with biologically based sex assignments.

West and Zimmerman (1987) explain that ‗sex‘ is a ―biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas ‗gender‘ is the social elaboration of biological sex. They establish the relationship between gender and sex and assert that gender builds on biological sex. They show clear indication that there is no biological reason, for example, why women should mince and men should swagger, or why

women should have red toenails and men should not. People tend to think of gender as the result of nurture – as social and hence fluid while sex is the result of nature, simply given by biology (Lindsey, 2015). However, nature and nurture interweave, and there is no obvious point at which sex leaves off and gender begins. This implies that one's ability to perform a particular task does not depend on his or her sex type but a combination of the social and biological factors will propel the individual to meet the societal demands. Lindsey asserts that any sharp demarcation between sex and gender will fail because there is no single objective biological criterion for male or female sex. Thus the very definition of the biological categories male and female, and people's understanding of themselves and others as male or female, is ultimately social. Fausto-Sterling (2000) sums up the situation as follows:

> Labelling someone a man or a woman is a social decision. We may use scientific knowledge to help us make the decision, but only our beliefs about gender – not science – can define our sex. Furthermore, our beliefs about gender affect what kinds of knowledge scientists produce about sex in the first place (p. 3).

It is commonly argued that biological differences between males and females determine gender by causing enduring differences in capabilities and dispositions and this attributed to hormonal differences between males and females. For instance, the aggressive nature of men is attributed to higher levels of testosterone which is missing in women. Females are more emotional than men due to lack of brain lateralization. It has therefore been shown that hormonal levels, brain activity patterns, and even brain anatomy can be a result of different activity as well as a cause. For example research with species ranging from rhesus monkeys (Rose, Robert, Gordon, Thomas, & Bernstein, Irwin, 1972) to fish (Fox, White, Kao, & Fernald, 1997) has documented changes in hormone levels as a result of changes in social position. The argument therefore projects that construction of gender roles was based on what men and

women can do at a particular point in time according to hormonal displays. It can be concluded that gender though social construct is based on one's biological and physical appearance (sex) and therefore establishes a strong relation with sex type.

According to Basow (1992), ―sex is a biological term referring to people, animals, etc., being either female or male depending on their sex organs or genes". She continues by saying that sex also refers to the differences between individuals that make them male or female. These differences are biologically determined, e.g. men have no developed uterus and cannot become pregnant or give birth to children but women have a developed uterus and can become pregnant and give birth to children. Sex is therefore biologically determined. According to Stoller (1968) cited in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2017), ―...to determine sex one must examine the following physical conditions: chromosomes, external genitalia, internal genitalia, gonads, hormonal states and secondary sex characteristics....One's sex, then, is determined by the sum of all these qualities, and as is obvious, most people fall under one of two separate bell curves, the one of which is called 'male' and the other ―female' (Cited in Oakley, 1985).

In the words of Stroller ―gender contrary to sex has social, cultural and psychological rather than biological connotations. It is defined in terms of femininity and masculinity. Stroller adds that ―gender' is the amount of masculinity or femininity found in a person. Gender also refers to ―subjective feelings of maleness or femaleness irrespective of one's sex'. Sex in the assertion of Diamond (2002), cited in Hines, Sally and Tam Sanger, (2010) refers to physical or physiological differences between males and females, including both primary sex characteristics (the reproductive system) and secondary characteristics such as height and

muscularity. Gender is a term that refers to social or cultural distinctions associated with being male or female. Gender identity is the extent to which one identifies as being either masculine or feminine (Diamond, 2002 cited in Hines, Sally & Tam Sanger, 2010). A person's sex, according to Diamond (2002) as determined by his or her biology, does not always correspond with his or her gender.

Gagnon and Simon (1973) distinguished between gender and sex by looking at the difference between gender roles and sex roles and posited that gender role refers to society's idea of how boys or girls or men and women are expected to behave and should be treated. A display of gender, as with a gender role, represents a public manifestation of gender identity. It can be said that one is a sex and one does gender. A sex role usually involves the acting out of one's biological predisposition. In young males this is associated typically with their greater aggressive, combative, and competitive nature than is usual with young females. In young females their sex roles are usually manifest by nurturing and compromising behaviour, less frequently seen in boys.

Lucy on her part distinguishes between sex and gender when she opines that ―sex is assigned at birth and refers to the biological and physiological characteristics existing in continuum, with male and female on either end. Gender is a social construct. It varies from society to society and can change over time and vary across different contexts" (Lucy, 2018). In the arguments, one thing can be deduced and that is, sex is determined by nature while gender is constructed by society through socialisation and that sex cannot limit the abilities of performing certain gender roles as a male or female. Other studies have defined sex as those biological differences between women and men, and it is typically categorised as ‗male' or ‗female' while gender

entails the social meaning related to a determinate sex, and it is also referred to as _masculine' or _feminine' (Nobelius, 2004; USAID, 2008; UNGEI, 2010; American Psychological Association, 2011; UNESCO, 2014).

Gender has also been described as one's social identity. This is evident in the description given by Ester, Vincent, Runyowa and Raviro (2013) that gender describes the differences between women and men which are based on socially defined ideas and beliefs of what it means to be a man or a woman. It is important to note that sex refers to a person's biological makeup and gender describes their social definition. Gender is thus culturally constructed and gender roles are socially prescribed and not given by nature. Gender is thus one's social identity (Ester, Vincent, Runyowa & Raviro, 2013). It can be concluded that sex and gender relate so well despite the distinction between the two and that assigning gender roles are significantly influenced by sex.

2.4 The Concept of Gender Equity

Research over the years has concentrated much on gender equality which saw to place women and men on the same scale and provided them with equal opportunities without regards to fairness and justice being it economic, social, political, religion, and educational, etc. With regards to ensuring equality in education, there has been a lot of treaties and agreements developed to promote right to education and gender equality (Daro, 2017). For instance, the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 1976 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the 1999 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the 2000 United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), The 2000 Dakar Declaration on Education for All, the 2000 UN Millennium Declaration, the

2015 UN Transforming our World; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2015 Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 are examples of treaties and developmental agreements designed towards achieving equal opportunities in education for boys and girls and men and women. However, much attention has not been paid to equity – justice and fairness which is the surest way of achieving equality in education (Daro, 2017).

In recent times, the focus has shifted from equality to equity which is the surest way of achieving equality in many international summits. UNESCO (2017) posits that equity is about ensuring that there is a concern with fairness, such that the education of all learners is seen as having equal importance. This implies that people cannot always be treated as if they have equal concerns, experiences, needs and opportunities. There is the need to identify their differences so that in a more just and fair manner, they can be assisted to reach the height that will make them equal in the educational process. The World Health Organisation – WHO (2011) considers gender equity as catering for the differences of men and women regarding their health when it posits that ―more than formal equality of opportunity, gender equity refers to the different needs, preferences and interests of women and men. This may mean that different treatment is needed to ensure equality of opportunity to quality health care. This is often referred to as substantive equality or equality of results and requires considering the realities of women‗s and men‗s lives. Gender equity is often used interchangeably with gender equality, but the two refer to different, complementary strategies that are needed to reduce gender-based health inequities. The organisation goes further to say that gender equity is the process of allocating resources, programs, and decision making fairly to both males and females without any discrimination on

the basis of sex, race, cast or ethnicity and addressing any imbalances in the benefits available to males and females.

This definition is supported by Staurowsky, Watanabe, Cooper, Cooky, Lough, Paule-Koba, Pharr, Williams, Cummings, Issokson-Silver and Snyder (2020) which sought to define gender equity in sports and said that gender equity requires ensuring that everyone has access to a full range of opportunities to achieve the social, psychological and physical benefits that come from participating and leading in sport and physical activity. They further contend that gender equity does not necessarily mean making the same programmes and facilities available to both males and females. Gender equity requires that girls and women be provided with a full range of activity and program choices that meet their needs, interests and experiences as men. Therefore, some activities may be the same as those offered to boys and men, some may be altered, and some may be altogether different.

According to Vitello and Mithaug (1998) cited in UNESCO (2017) ―inclusion and equity are overarching principles that should guide all educational policies, plans and practices, rather than being the focus of a separate policy. These principles recognize that education is a human right and is the foundation for more equitable, inclusive and cohesive communities". UNESCO (2015) writes that by making sure all learners have access to quality education acknowledges how we place premium of diversity and respect for human dignity. This makes us realise that differences can be seen as stimulus for fostering learning among children, young people and adults, and for promoting gender equality. The principles of inclusion and equity are, then, not only about ensuring access to education, but also about having quality learning spaces and pedagogies that enable students to thrive, to understand their realities, and to work for

a more just society. When adding its voice to what constitutes gender equity, The University of Education (UEW) –Winneba's Gender Policy Framework (2009:15) posits that –gender equity refers to the fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between women and men". To Reeves and Baden (2000) gender equity is the equivalence in life's outcomes for women and men, recognizing their different needs and interests and requiring a redistribution of power and resources. Implicitly, women and men can be treated equally when their differences are identified, harnessed by creating opportunities for them to develop according to their needs and differences. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 identifies inclusion and equity as key principles for education systems. Built around the idea that –every learner matters and matters equally", this guide highlights the vital role of inclusive and equitable education in transforming education systems worldwide.

McMahon and Geske (1982 cited in Ester *et al.,* 2013) see equity as encompassing justice, equality, humanity, morality and right. They go on to say that the goal of equality is a basic standard against which equity is judged. Thus gender equity is more than just equality as it is founded on the precepts of justice. Whereas equality conveys an element of prescription and measurability, equity according to Kant in Moris (1971) in Ester *et al.* (2013) is founded not on any principle of generosity, benevolence or charity but upon right. Thus gender equity has a broader meaning and greater implication than gender equality. According to FAWE (2004), and Braveman (2003) gender equity is simply giving equal treatment to both girls and boys, women and men to access resources and opportunities in order to ensure social and educational justice and fairness. For instance, Braveman operationalises equity in health as he contends that equity can be defined as the absence of systematic disparities in health between social groups who have different levels of underlying

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social advantage/disadvantage—that is, different positions in a social hierarchy (Braveman, 2003). By implication, Braveman puts forward that society can breed inequities in the social structure per gender and this may lead to discrimination and other injustices towards access to health. On his part Blumberg (2009) opines that gender equity denotes the equivalent treatment of a person regardless of gender or sex. It is the ideology that women have the same opportunities as men in life. The phrase expresses that males and females have different needs and interests, however, despite this, they receive the same treatment at all times which will bring them apart.

Gender Equity also requires an examination of organizational practices and policies that may hinder the participation of one sex over the other. For example, this requires service providers to assess: hiring and recruitment practices that ensure that both men and women have equal leadership roles, and involved in decision-making, and that women are available as role models for other girls and women; resources are allocated fairly and justly; ensure that both females and males have access to prime time slots and prime facilities; evaluate current programs and services to identify potential barriers to ensure active participation of men and women; assess the types of activities offered for males and females; and ensure girls and women in particular are not excluded or stereotyped in pictures or language. Positive initiatives that promote gender equity must be the target of every organisation or institution to grant equality for men and women to develop their potentials.

2.5 Gender Equity in Education

Education is very important in the development of an individual and the society at large. It is often said that education is key to success and that a society with most of the citizens educated is likely to experience a very huge development. In general, education has been accepted to deal with formation of habits of human beings. If so, we need education seriously to focus on promoting the equal participation of women and men in making decisions; reducing enrolment gap between women's and men's access; giving equality in learning process, educational outcomes and external results; and providing equal benefits for both sexes (Sahin, 2014). However, the issue of giving opportunities to boys and girls and men and women to develop their full potential has been a bigger challenge globally and Ghana in particular. Policies have been geared towards equal opportunities to education to the neglect of equity. Boys and girls have been treated equally without regard to their different backgrounds, needs, opportunities and difficulties in the learning process. It is no wonder that Sahin (2014) posit that gender equity in education must ensure that males and females have equal opportunities in terms of economic, social, cultural, and political developments, and that if gender equity is exactly achieved it will contribute to future of girls and boys and girls will get benefits from public and domestic life as much as boys. He adds that when importance is attached to gender equity in formal or informal education, the vital issues such as gaps, divisions and conflicts between sexes in society are reduced.

Opportunities offered to boys and girls and men and women are far from equality, many women are illiterate as results of poverty, discrimination, incomplete schooling, and inadequate education or denied education. While girls are kept at home as idle creatures, housekeepers, or servants helping their mothers; boys enjoy fully of

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privileges offered by traditional norms of society. Loshe in 1884 as cited in Sahin (2014) postulated that ―the boys are looked up as the future bread-winners, and consequently every effort is made to fit them for an honourable career in life". These typical images of men and women as inheritance of centuries still are among the most important problems of our age. That is to say, women are depicted as mothers and housewives, nevertheless men are not only fathers and bread-winners but also owners and protectors of women. These kinds of approaches causing inequity between sexes produce negative results for families and societies as well. These traditional notions and claims continue to bleed serious inequities in all aspects of life especially in education. Nordensvard (2014) believe that traditionally, men mostly make important decisions in domestic life and public one while women must obey whatever men say, and male sex has great power over female sex, this inequality poisons from generation to generation for ages. Besides this some families choose the boy over the girl to have high education when there is financial difficulty. For this reason most girls end their education at Junior High School. This was evident in the 2012 ministry of education report which was contained in the 2014 educational policy of Ghana.

Over the years, policy of education in Ghana has mostly focused on access and enrolment rather than quality and equity; equality to the detriment of the means of attaining the equality. The Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy in the 1990s, the School Feeding Program and Capitation Grants in 2004s and the recent Free Senior High policy in 2017 were all geared towards increasing access and enrolment. However, according to Sahin (2014), understanding gender equity in education enables students and educators to recognise and remedy the constraints and inequalities that may result from not understanding constructions of gender. Equity can do this by ensuring equal, just and fair access to participation in outcomes from

the education provided for female and male students. In order that all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the development of Ghana, men's and women's aspirations, achievements and life choices must not be constrained by gender. Equity in education is said to be maintained where there is no discrimination (Nordensvard, 2014). Discrimination here means treating the sexes differently in ways that suggest that one is inherently inferior to the other. This according to T-TEL (2019), it is referred to as unfair treatment and opines that _unfair treatment – whether it is related to race, class or gender is completely unjust because it is based on hugely false assumptions about intelligence, ability and that one group is superior to another'.

Undoubtedly, the long term effect of ensuring equity of girls and boys in education increases productivity in economy, provides higher incomes, delays marriages for teenagers, reduces unconscious fertility rates, brings up fewer and decreases discrimination in our society but healthier individuals. UNESCO (2013) contends that gender equity in education is a special treatment/action taken to reverse the historical and social disadvantages that prevent female and male learners from accessing and benefiting from education on equal grounds. For example, equity measures can favour girls in order to empower them and help them overcome disadvantages of chronic discrimination and catch up with boys. The same measure can also be adopted to help boys who are discriminated against to catch up with girls as well. UNESCO refers to these equity measures as _positive discrimination' or _affirmative action', but not _fair' per se, and when implemented, will ensure fairness and equality of outcome. Gender equity in education therefore, is a means by which the totality of individuals rise up with the needed knowledge to effect positive change in society.

2.6 Gender Equality in Education

Ensuring equality between men and women in all aspects of life is something that cannot be negotiated. It is not only a democratic right but also a necessary precondition for sustainable development. This is because it expedites the application of all obtainable resources in order to promote development. The marginalization of some groups on the basis of social roles creates serious defect in the mobilization of human resources for national development. Unless women and men have equal opportunities to education, capabilities and voice, gender equality will remain indefinable and challenging to achieve. Gender equality in education is therefore very paramount in Ghana and the world at large.

UNESCO (2013) expresses that gender equality in education must be ultimate goal in every educational policy. It continues to add that gender equality in education is achieved when female and male learners have equal access to learning opportunities, are treated and benefited from education equally so that they can fulfil their potential and become empowered to contribute to and benefit from social, cultural, political and economic development equally. In this respect, gender equality in any life's domain including education, can be achieved only when all types of discrimination are eliminated and equal conditions, treatment and opportunities are provided to both girls and boys, women and men. Education institutions are therefore expected to take pragmatic steps to achieve wider gender equality by promoting new patterns of beliefs and attitudes and avoid the reproduction or reinforcement of social inequalities. The education system must be sensitive to the physical, psychological and social differences between male and female learners, but should value and respect both equally and provide equal opportunities to all learners.

Subrahmanian (2005) considers a link between gender equality and gender justice (equity) and says that equality in education can be seen in three ways. 1. The right to education which he equated to access and participation; 2. The right within education which meant gender-aware educational environments, process, and outcomes; and 3. The rights through education equated to meaningful education outcomes that link education equality with wider processes of gender equity or justice. By implication, gender equality in education starts with enrolment where every child, no matter the sex, race, ethnicity or gender is given the chance to be educated and remain in school to develop their potential and ends at where the educational aims have been achieved. This requires educational institutions to create enabling atmosphere for boys and girls to go through their education successfully without any hindrances. UNGEI (2010) and USAID (2008) believe that a talk on educational equality should not concentrate only on enrolment but attention has to equally be geared towards the quality as well. The bodies agree that if attention has often been given to the progress mainly based on the number of girls and boys enrolled to education, a shift of focus from merely ensuring the access to education for all girls and boys, to also considering the quality of this education and its impact in broader society is very necessary.

Similarly, UNESCO (2014), contends that gender equality in education involves an education which promotes equal roles, treatment and opportunities for girls and boys, within and through it. This education must not be interested in enrolment alone but must be of quality. Adding to the discussion, Aikman and Unterhalter (2007) understand that the equality of genders in education entails boys' and girls' freedom to attend school, to learn and participate in a safe non-discriminatory space, to develop gender-sensitive and democratic values, and to enjoy a range of economic, political, and cultural opportunities and valued outcomes. Likewise, UNESCO (2003,

p.5) states that gender equality in education will be fully reached when girls and boys are offered the same opportunities to go to school, with a teaching method and curricula free of stereotypes, enjoy counselling free of gender discrimination, equality of outcomes, learning achievement and academic qualifications, and overall equal job opportunities based on having the same conditions for similar qualifications and experience, regardless of the gender. This implies that, gender equality in education can only be achieved if schools create opportunities that identify the needs and potentials of boys and girls and promote fair and just ways of which these potentials can be developed. Equal opportunities will ensure total development of human capital needed for national growth and development.

Wilson (2003) contends that gender equality in education can be expressed in three ways; the right to education, which aims for the equality of opportunities where girls and boys are offered the same chances to access school; the right in education, which envisages the equality of pedagogy, where girls and boys receive the same treatment and attention, follow the same curricula, and enjoy teaching methods and tools free of stereotypes and gender bias; and the right through education, aiming for the equality of outcomes as a result of education and beyond, in society more generally. Wilsons' contention was in line with that of Subramanian who also looked at gender equality in education as right to enrolment, right to stay and participate in all learning situations and right to attain personal and education aims in totality.

However, USAID (2008) suggested a fourth-dimensional approach to gender equality in education and said such education is composed by: the equality of access, the equality in the learning process, the equality of educational outcomes, and the equality of external results (5-6). Gender equality, in general and in education in particular, is

a priority on the international development agenda and should remain a central issue in the post-2015 discussions as enshrined in the SDG goal four. Education, especially the one devoid of gender discrimination is considered to be one of the most effective investments for development. Educating boys and girls equally is decisive not only for improving their own living conditions but also because it yields personal, social and development benefits. For instance, it empowers both men and women to improve their life chances, those of their families and their communities; it reduces poverty and violence, diseases and child mortality.

2.7 Relationship between Gender Equity and Gender Equality

In most of these cases, it has been assumed and suggested that equality and equity mean the same and there is no clear distinction between the two concepts. However, UNESCO (2003) indicate that gender equality means males and females have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights and contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political development and argue that parity and equity are the building blocks of equality. It concludes that parity and equity are the building blocks of equality in education. Parity according to UNESCO is attained when the same proportion of boys and girls relative to their respective age groups enter the education system, achieve educational goals, and advance through the different cycles (UNESCO 2003). Equity is the process of treating girls and boys fairly. To ensure fairness, measures must be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent girls and boys from operating on a levelled playing field (Subrahmanian, 2005).

The International Labour Organisation (2000) opines that equity does not imply treating all learners the same because many factors could disadvantage students in having a chance to achieve equitable outcomes. The organisation further explains that responses may include ―equal treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities". A basic principle of equity is equality of opportunity among people and ―that a person's life achievements should be determined primarily by his or her talents and efforts, rather than by pre-determined circumstances such as race, gender, social or family background" (World Bank 2005).

According to UEW (2009, p. 14) gender equality refers to ―a situation where women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential; are able to contribute equally to national political, economic, social and cultural development; and benefit equally from the results. Gender Equality entails that the underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and removed in order to give women and men equal opportunities". On gender equity, the policy explains it as fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between women and men (UEW Gender Policy, 2009 : 15). By implication, equal opportunities can be created for men and women when society recognises the need to promote just and fair society.

Gender equality, between men and women, entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men

have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equity on the other hand means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Genderlinks (2010) describes gender equality as the concept that all human beings, both males and females are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report (2009) adds to this definition by saying that gender equality is a mechanism that is put in place to ensure that the different behaviours, aspirations, and needs of females and males are considered, valued, and favoured equally. According to Genderlinks, gender equity refers to a practice of fairness of treatment for females and males according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment, or treatment that is different but considered equivalent, in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of females. From the above discussion, gender equity values fairness of treatment for both sexes which will bring about gender equality.

From the above discussion gender equality promotes the idea that males and females are free to develop their abilities and supports equal opportunities and aspirations for both sexes. Gender equality is an often-used but infrequently defined term. Translating the concept of gender equality in education into a practical framework will assist education programmers in better designing, managing, and evaluating

education projects. Gender equality means that males and females have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights and contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political development. Equity is the building block of equality in education (USAID Report, 2008).

In order to address inequities that tend to impede equal utilization of resources by both men and women, measures will have to be put in place. Gender equity therefore constitutes those measures directed to redress prior inequalities that impede women's access to and utilization of resources on an equal basis with men (Subrahmanian 2005). These measures may involve different treatment of women and men in order to reach their equality of outcomes (UNESCO 2014). Thus, gender equity in education are those strategies or processes which provide equal chances for boys and girls to pursue and benefit from educational opportunities, such as scholarships, gender-sensitive teacher trainings, curriculum reviews, facilities adapted to both sexes, etc. (USAID, 2008).

Gender equality on the other hand, is the situation where men and women have equal rights, freedoms, conditions and opportunities for realising their full potential and for contributing to and benefiting from social, cultural, economic and political development. It also entails men and women, with their similarities and differences, are being equally valued by society (OECD, 1998, in USAID 2007, p. 11; UNESCO 2014, p. 60). USAID (2008) translates it as the situation where ―females and males have equal rights, freedoms, conditions and opportunities for realising their full potential in society".

The Reviewed Gender Equity in Education of Vanuata (2018) establishes the relationship between gender equality and gender equity by stating that gender equality between men and women involves the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid sex roles and prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equity on the other hand means fairness of treatment for boys and girls, men and women, according to their respective needs.

The above opinions and write-ups clearly shows that gender equality and equity are used interchangeably. However, it is generally agreed that to achieve gender equality and equity, there is the need to remove deep-seated barriers to equality of opportunity for both sexes – such as discriminatory laws, customs, practices, and institutional processes. This process of working towards equality is sometimes called practicing equity.

2.8 Teachers Perception on Gender Equity in Education

Before we consider teachers perception on gender equity, it is extremely important to understand how perception has been defined and explained. The Collins Essential Dictionary (2006) describes perception as 1. Insight or intuition. 2. Way of viewing and comprehending phenomena. The Merrian – Webster Online Thesaurus (2009) adds this to the description of perception. 1. The ability to understand inner qualities or relationships. 2. The knowledge gained from the process of coming to know or understand something. In the words of Schacter (2011), perception comes from the

Latin word *„preceptio"* which means the organisation, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the presented information or environment. ―Perception may be defined as a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment (Kashyap, 2018). According to Joseph Reitz cited in Bele & Wasade (2018), ―Perception includes all those processes by which an individual receives information about his environment; seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling. The study of these perpetual processes shows that their functioning is affected by three classes of variables; the objects or events being perceived, the environment in which perception occurs and the individual doing the perceiving."

Hwang, Wang and Pomplun (2011) believe that perception of objects in the visual world is influenced by features such as shape and colour as well as the meaning and semantic relations among these objects. From the above explanation it becomes clear that perception is something more than sensation. It correlates, integrates and comprehends diverse sensations and information from many organs of the body by means of which a person identifies things and objects. Perception is therefore determined by both physiological and psychological characteristics of the human being whereas sensation is conceived with only the physiological features. Thus, perception is not just what one sees with the eyes, it is a much more complex process by which an individual selectively absorbs or assimilates the stimuli in the environment, cognitively organizes the perceived information in a specific fashion and then interprets the information to make an assessment about what is going on in one's environment.

Perception is a subjective process, therefore, different people may perceive the same environment differently based on what particular aspects of the situation they choose to selectively absorb, how they organize this information and the manner in which they interpret it to obtain a grasp of the situation. Perception is very important in understanding the human behaviour, because every person perceives the world and approaches the life problems differently. Whatever we see or feel is not necessarily the same as it really is. In studying how gender issues are dealt with in the classroom, it is imperative to explore how teachers perceive gender equity so that we can best be informed as how their classroom practices will influence ways they promote equity or otherwise. Allport (1954) contends that, ―the human mind must think with the aid of categories" (p. 20) and suggests that the categories and labels assigned to people are unavoidable and aid in daily interactions. Yet overgeneralizations and assumptions can also limit the way we perceive and interact with others. Teachers who attribute students‘ academic achievement or behaviour to external factors such as race, ethnicity, or gender may be more likely to deny learners their entitled educational opportunities (Auwarter & Aruguete, 2008; Diamond & Spillane, 2004).

Various studies have revealed the importance of teachers‘ observations and recommendations on learners‘ placement in advance level courses, a decision that has significant influence in terms of learners‘ educational and career opportunities (Bianco, Harris, Garrison-Wade & Leech, 2011; Constantinou, 2008; Hallahan, Kauffman & Pullen, 2009). Bianco *et al.* (2011) observe that, ―teachers‘ judgements and recommendations . . . often become the first step in the identification process. As such, gaining access to gifted/talented identification and services is often dependent on teachers‘ perceptions". Other research works have also revealed that teachers‘ judgements of learners can be influenced by personal values and cultural assumptions

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(Brophy & Good, 1974; Davis & Rimm, 2004; Erbas, Turan, Aslan & Dunlap, 2010), with various studies indicating that teachers' biases are at least partly responsible for the underrepresentation of certain groups of learners into higher-tracked classes. Researchers like Harrison (2011); Riley and Ungerleider (2008, 2012); Tenebaum & Ruck (2007); Ewijk (2011), have argued that the colour, race or cast of individuals and ones learning abilities or disabilities may influence teachers interaction in their classroom practices.

In the opinions of Bianco and Leech (2010), the socio-economic background of boys and girls may influence teachers' biases on how they treat them in their class. They content that people from a lower socio-economic status may particularly be vulnerable to teachers' unchecked biases and stereotypes. McBee, (2006), and Riley, (2014) think that those who are linguistically diverse may be particularly vulnerable to teachers' unchecked biases and stereotypes.

When discussing gender equality in schools, researchers agree that there is often the misperception among both teachers and students that gender parity has been achieved (Spencer, Porche & Tolman, 2003). However, studies by such researchers as Auwarter and Aruguete (2008); Constantinou (2008); Legewie and DiPrete (2012); Maynard (2002); Sadker and Sadker (1994); Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman (2009); Tatar and Emmanuel, (2001) illustrate that disparities still exist as a result of teachers own biases. Studies conducted by researchers like Burusic, Babarovic and Seric (2012) and Clark, Thompson and Vialle (2008) reveal that teachers regard female learners as more agreeable or more likely to exert effort in the classroom in comparison to male peers.

However, females as stated by some authors, that they are also less likely to be perceived as having academic potential (Bianco *et al.,* 2011; Constantinou, 2008; Gunderson, Ramirez, Levine & Beilock, 2012; Sanford, 2005). This perception denies females the opportunity to receive time and attention in class (Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Sadker & Zittleman, 2009). On the contrary, other studies reveal that teachers regard male learners as detached from their studies, compared to their female peers, Auwarter and Aruguette (2008); Legewie and DiPrete, (2012) and more likely to misbehave making them potential markers for disciplinary practices (Clark *et al.,* 2008).

Based on the assumption that perception affects actions (Scherp & Scherp, 2016; Weick, 1995) this study focuses on the teachers' perceptions, which may shape the prerequisites, requirements, and opportunities for learning in the classroom. Teachers and teaching are crucial to student learning. Teachers undoubtedly have been described as the facilitators and architects of students learning and academic achievement. Therefore, an increased understanding of the relationship between teachers' expectations and perceptions and boys' and girls' performance in schools will enable an understanding of what might have significant consequences for the students' social and academic outcomes (Hattie, 2009; Scherp & Scherp, 2016). Writers like Barnombudsmannen (2015), Skolinpektionen (2016), Skolverket, (2009) opine that authorities, organizations, and different actors in the educational and social welfare system have highlighted the importance of improvements in school and teaching in order to equalize the differences and guarantee beneficial education for students and concluded that most teachers believe they give equal treatment to girls and boys, particularly in support of their learning. In contrast to the perception of being fair and equal, some researchers believe that some teachers have lower

expectations of boys' academic performance and behaviour in school than girls (Epstein *et al.,* 1998; Frosh *et al.,* 2002; Jackson, 2006; Mac & Ghaill, 1994).

Studies have shown those teachers' perceptions of boys and girls are shaped by the students' behaviour in the classroom. For instance, Timmermans, Boer and Werf (2016) and Younger *et al.* (1999), postulate that some teachers perceive girls as hard working and producing higher quality in their work than boys. Girls are also associated with higher communication skills, being organized, and being independent. The boys are perceived as ill prepared, less motivated, and childish (Younger *et al.,* 1999). This becomes relevant when teachers' expectations affect the students' academic outcomes, and teachers have higher expectations for students they perceive as self-confident, independent, and having positive work habits (Hattie, 2009; Timmermans, Boer & Werfe, 2016). Boys are assessed based on the competences they cannot do, or do not want to do, and girls are assessed based on what they accomplish and compliant behaviour (Jones & Myhill, 2004). This perceptions and actions of teachers bleed inequities and do not promote gender fairness and justice in the classroom.

Studies have shown that once a child starts school, factors that contribute to the formation of beliefs and attitudes become broader and more complex (Lavy, 2008 cited in Sule, Seda & Mumcu 2017). In addition to their families, children now interact with their peers in a more structured environment and more importantly, with another adult, the teacher. Teachers' views toward gender roles may affect students' behaviours and real outcomes through a variety of mechanisms. A teacher's beliefs may influence students' own beliefs: the teacher may simply express his/her views in the classroom, and because he/she is a significant authority figure, students may be

likely to adopt and internalize what the teacher says. If a teacher adopts more direct differential interactions with students of different genders, the students are likely to gradually dive into the teacher's style. A teacher with strongly traditional gender role beliefs may think that acquiring academic skills is not as important for girls since they will be unlikely to put them into practice later in life. Such a teacher may reflect these beliefs in actual classroom practices through differences in giving feedback on performance, answering/dismissing questions, and even grading exams (Spencer, Steele & Quinn, 1999 cited in Sule, Seda & Muncu, 2017).

Inspite of what progressive teachers could do to promote equity between boys and girls, research has shown that gender stereotyping and gender biases continue to manifest themselves in schools and classrooms in particular and these are exhibited through the curriculum, teaching materials, teacher attitudes and pedagogies (Mhlauli, 2010; Aikman, Unterhalter & Challender, 2010; Mazile, 1998). In most cases teacher's language, examples, teaching materials, appointment of leaders in the classrooms, expectations of performances, assessments and evaluations tend to place one sex over the other. If the teacher happens to be a male, he would be closely associated with male students than female students. The opposite is the same if the teacher happens to be a female. Such unfair treatment of students calls for the study of teachers' gender perceptions and how these influence their classroom practices which is the core and pith of this study.

2.9 Teachers Classroom Practices

It has already been established that the teacher's place in the school and the classroom is very crucial in shaping and directing students learning and achievements. Teachers' perceptions and beliefs have been established to influence their classroom interactions

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with their students and students are more likely to pitch into the teachers beliefs more especially one that is connected with gender (Sule, Seda & Muncu, 2017). Khanum (2014) maintain that, different students may have different levels of motivation, different attitudes about teaching and learning, and different responses to specific classroom environments and instructional practices. The author concluded that the more instructors understand students' learning differences, the better the chance they have of meeting the diverse learning needs of their students. It is also logical to argue that academically successful students are more interested in their learning and more motivated to work harder.

So, the need for teachers' knowledge about their students' preferences and styles is indisputable' as reinforced by Reid (1987:101) who opined that, ―identifying the learning style preferences ... may have wide-ranging implications in the areas of curriculum design, materials development, student orientation, and teacher training". This implies that when teachers are aware of their students' learning styles, they would be able to design appropriate learning experiences and select appropriate learning materials for better learning outcomes. Accordingly, Alfonseca, Carro, Martin and Paredes (2006) contend that an awareness of students' learning styles will enable teachers to adapt appropriate techniques and methods that suit the students' preferences.

Teacher classroom practice has to take into consideration students' holistic academic achievement, focusing specifically on the unique needs of each learner for maximum benefit from instruction. Felder and Brent (2005) highlight this when they note that ―Students have different levels of motivation, different attitudes about teaching and learning, and different responses to specific classroom environments and instructional

practices. The more instructors understand students' differences, the better chance they have of meeting the diverse learning needs of all of their students". The authors further add that, with the wide spectrum of teaching methods different teachers prefer different methods that include lecture and demonstrations or activities, yet others focus on principles, application, memory and others understand. Moreover, how much a given student learns in a class is governed in part by that student's native ability or innate strength and prior preparation but also by the compatibility of the student's attributes as a learner and the instructor's teaching style (Cornelius-Ukpepi & Geneveive, 2019).

According to the Federation of African Women in Education - FAWE (2005), the interaction between the teacher and the learners is very paramount and it should be devoid of all gender tendencies. FAWE continues that each girl and boy brings to the classroom a different set of personality traits, learning abilities, histories and dreams. Recognizing the students' individuality will be useful in accomplishing gender responsive classroom relationships. By taking time to understand students as boys and girls with diverse differences, teachers can be better placed to give thoughtful attention to students' work. This is an essential step towards classroom rapport and includes focus on the following areas:

Addressing specific needs of students: It is important for the teacher to look for such characteristics as shyness, arrogance, distraction and lack of confidence. The teacher will have to also note that some students are slow learners, some are gifted and most are better in some areas than others. But it is necessary to go beyond academic ability. They should bear in mind that some learners come from disadvantaged situations –

orphans, displaced, the very poor. It is therefore necessary to watch out for the gender specific needs of students to best facilitate students learning.

Feedback: Classroom interaction is a two-way process involving the teacher and the learner. The teacher's classroom practices include teaching and expecting responses from the learners. It is important for the teacher to ensure that the students are learning. Teachers should therefore endeavour to create an environment where they can receive feedback from the students to confirm that learning is taking place. The teacher should encourage and be willing to accept feedback from the students in order to improve the teaching and learning process. The teachers need to help the students to recognize that it is normal not to understand at times and that therefore it is important for them to ask questions. Enhance classroom participation by ensuring that both girls and boys answer questions.

Establishing rapport with students: Learning is more likely to take place in a harmonious classroom, with good rapport between teacher and students and among students. Establishing rapport between male teachers and female students can be a tricky issue, however. The socialization process generally maintains a distance between males and females. Professional conduct demands that such distance be respected. To avoid being misunderstood, some teachers therefore assume a demeanour of aloofness even in classroom interaction; carried to an extreme, this can be detrimental to the academic performance of both boys and girls. Establishing good rapport with both boys and girls help to have full participation of the entire class.

Gender-based distractions in the classroom: Negative gender based behaviour by both teacher and students can be distractive to the teaching and learning process. The examples are numerous; boys bullying girls, bigger students both boys and girls

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bullying smaller ones, teasing, abusive language and gestures, sexual advances, touching and groping, passing notes, unkind scribbles. Teachers need to find ways of making their classroom interaction conducive to learning by eliminating this kind of behaviour.

Anti-social and deviant behaviour: Classroom dynamics are also affected by forces arising outside the classroom, including drug abuse, alcoholism, domestic violence, lesbianism/homosexuality, religious fundamentalism, fanaticism, occultism, demonic practices and witchcraft. Gangs, vandalism, mass hysteria and similar deviant behaviour are others. All these issues can have a negative impact on the teaching and learning processes. Teachers therefore should be aware that some of their students are affected by these issues. Owing to the socialization processes, girls tend to be more vulnerable to being targets to join in activities such as religious fundamentalism and mass hysteria. Boys tend to be targets for gangs, alcoholism and drug abuse. None of the gender is immune to any of these influences, however, and in all such issues the impact is different on girls and on boys. Teachers are therefore expected to play parental roles by critically observing the students to identify such deviant behaviours that will affect the teaching and learning process. The school also needs to have an early warning system for these issues and address them before they rise to unmanageable proportions (FAWE, 2005).

2.10 Teacher Attitudes and Behaviours towards Gender Equity in School and Classroom

Related to the teacher's classroom practices is the teacher characteristics, attitudes and behaviours which are central to the school environment. Teachers can contribute to an oppressive, inequitable environment in the classroom and in the school in general, in fact, they can serve as role models and support for marginalized students (Levtov, 2013). In finding out the relationship between the sex of teachers and students' achievements, Rawal and Kingdon (2010) realised that Indian children taught by teachers of the same sex, caste, or religion have higher achievement than children taught by teachers different from themselves. Given male teachers' perceived views on differences in ability between boys and girls, especially in math, the authors argue that teachers may be discriminating and stereotyping in the classroom. Chudgar and Sadkar (2008) also found that male and female teachers in India had different beliefs about student abilities, as well as different classroom management practices. This situation may not be limited to India but a mass situation in most schools in Ghana.

Similarly, Johnson-Hanks (2006) observed differences in the classroom practices of teachers. In her study of Cameroun teachers in the classroom, she found out that male teachers called on male students to answer questions most often, while female teachers were more democratic in seeking responses to academic questions posed. She also observed that male teachers were more tolerant of male students' misbehaviour in class than they were with the female students.

Teachers may in no doubt treat students differently based on the students' sex. This starts at a very young age like nursery or KG: in a detailed observational study of preschool classrooms, Martin (1998) documented how teachers monitor and discipline ‗boys' and ‗girls' bodies differently, and how this contributes to: ―the embodiment of gender in childhood, making gendered bodies appear and feel natural". Several studies, as mentioned above, have found that teachers believe that boys and girls have different academic abilities, behaviours, and motivations (Anderson- Levitt, *et al.,* 1998; Chudgar & Sankar, 2008; Kirk, 2004; Lloyd, Mensch, & Clark, 2000; Rawal & Kingdon, 2010). In their interactions with students, teachers may draw on normative gender practices such as teasing and challenging students to a context while others may adopt more diplomatic ways of dealing with students. (Francis, 2008; Humphreys, 2008; Hurtig, 2008). Finally, teachers may be very explicit about their attitudes about gender roles. Johnson-Hanks (2006) recount how a female teacher emphasized that it is paramount that women cook for their husbands, regardless of their level of education.

Studies have further shown that in their interactions with students and with each other, teachers are performing gender in school, often emphasizing differences between the behaviour of men and women in order to conform to dominant views of masculinity and femininity (Haase, 2008). Male teacher may assume more fatherly roles in some cases than female teachers who are perceived to be ‗mothers' in the school. In a similar study of a school improvement project at an Egyptian preparatory school, the male teachers were concerned about students seeing them engaged in manual labour, work that is not considered appropriate for educated men, while female teachers more eagerly volunteered (Herrera, 2006). These behaviours contribute to how students and school staff perceive and interact with the teachers, and highlight that teachers – like

all of us – are deeply enmeshed in the gender and class norms and systems of their particular context.

As with much of the literature on gender in schools, the studies described above focus on how teachers reproduce gender inequities. However, teachers can also support and inspire students, and are instrumental to changing the school environment. Anderson-Levitt *et al.* (1998) write: ―the teacher is still the single most powerful player in the classroom. The teacher's behaviour, although it cannot make all the difference, does make an important difference". First, a teacher's beliefs may influence students' own beliefs: the teacher may simply express his/her views in the classroom, and because he/she is a significant authority figure, students may be likely to adopt and internalize what the teacher says. A more direct mechanism is teachers' differential interactions with students of different genders. A teacher with strongly traditional gender role beliefs may think that acquiring academic skills is not as important for girls since they will be unlikely to put them into practice later in life. Such a teacher may reflect these beliefs in actual classroom practices through differences in giving feedback on performance, answering/dismissing questions, and even grading exams (Lavy, 2008).

Similarly, traditional teachers may act according to their beliefs that math is boys' strong suit, and organize teaching practices accordingly. A very progressive teacher, on the other hand, may exert extra effort to engage girls in subjects that are typically considered male dominant and try to break stereotypical attitudes in the classroom. The influence of teacher beliefs may affect achievement, especially longer term outcomes, by affecting the development of key non-cognitive skills (Alan & Ertac, 2014). Girl's performance (especially in math) can also be affected by the teachers' gender role beliefs through stereotype threat–if they feel that their teacher thinks math

is boys' strong suit, they may experience anxiety with respect to conforming to the negative stereotype about girls, which indeed translates into lower performance (Spencer, Steele & Quinn, 1999 cited in Alan, Ertac & Mumcu, 2014). The implication of these studies is that teachers' attitudes influence their classroom practices in so far as gender is concerned. Teachers own gender biases may create inequities in the classroom and may not help learners to learn in a discrimination free environment.

Meyer (2009, p.38) postulates that the teacher plays a central role in the context of the school through their interactions with children, parents, and administrators, and as they do this, they may either perpetuate or transform the school culture. Similarly, Kirk contends that teachers themselves are not neutral actors; they are active agents who are embedded in their specific community, and their own personal and professional lives are also gendered (Kirk, 2004). A study by Ortner (1984) describes the school as a setting for social reproduction and teachers' roles are pivotal for achieving this social reproduction. He adds that this perspective on schools as settings for social reproduction draws on practice theory which is rooted in the works of Bourdieu, Giddens, and others. Practice theory is concerned with the interplay between agency, structure, and culture, generally concluding that while structure constrains and enables individual action, action makes structure, by recreating or transforming it (Ortner, 1984, 1996, 2006). According to Ortner (1989), the central problem for practice theory is that as all its practitioners seem to agree, precisely the question of how actors who are so much products of their own social and cultural context can ever come to transform the conditions of their own existence, except by accident. The studies by the researchers mentioned indicate that teachers themselves are cultural organisms and that their perceptions may affect their actions. When

teachers are glued to traditional construction of gender roles and identity, their practice of gender equity may be affected by their approach and actions. The implication is that, teachers' attitudes may affect their classroom practices so much in so far as gender equity is concerned.

Imperatively, teachers as the prime deliverers of the curriculum, play a crucial and seminal role in the development of learners' gender perceptions, not only through the teaching strategies that they employ but also through their own actions in this domain. They are the primary agents in schools that reproduce the status quo in society with respect to values and norms regarding gender. What needs to be pertinently remembered is that teachers, as products of the society themselves, have their own perceptions of gender; they act in ways that reflect these perceptions, further complicating the _continuity and change' function of education and impacting the education system's obligation to bring about gender equity in education. The actions of teachers and their learners during interaction that takes place both in the classroom and in the informal settings of schools, like playgrounds, change and recreate the perceptions of gender of the learners. In this respect Connell (2006) talks about the: ―…very complex tissue of gender beliefs and practices that operate in particular situations, and the varying ways young men for instance draw on them in constructing ways of life."

Constantinou (2008) argues that ―while one can assume that most educators try to be fair and attempt to provide equitable learning opportunities for all, it is not uncommon for them to slip into stereotyped attitudes and treat males and females differently". Teachers' gender stereotypes may be communicated either directly through behaviour or indirectly through classroom assessment. Other studies have shown that teachers'

perceptions and attitudes may also influence students' perception of their academic potentials (Fennema, Peterson, Carpenter, & Lubinski, 1990; Georgiou, 2008; Sarra, 2011). Since teachers' opinions wield power, learners may begin to question their interests if their experience in the classroom contradicts their notion of personal identity.

It can be deduced from the various studies captured that teachers' gender attitudes may impact students' perceptions and achievements so much. If teachers show positive attitudes towards boys and girls with regards to their individual potentials, students are able to identify themselves uniquely in terms of what they can do.

2.11 Significance of Gender Equity in Education

Generally education has been accepted as a process of preparing individuals to acquire the right knowledge, attitudes and skill to identifying personal and societal problems in order to find solutions for them. It deals with formation of habits of human beings. If so, education is needed seriously to focus on promoting the equal participation of women and men in making decisions; reducing enrolment gap between women's and men's access, giving equality in learning process, educational outcomes and external results; and providing equal benefits for both sexes by taking into consideration their individual strengths and weaknesses and establishing ways of helping them progress in their own ways (Sahin, 2014).

Studies have shown that there is so much disparities, gaps, inequities and discrimination between girls and boys and men and women in almost all aspects of human life. Sahin, (2014) posits that gender equity in education means that males and females have equal opportunities in terms of economic, social, cultural, and political developments. He adds that if gender equity is exactly achieved it will contribute to

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future of girls and boys more than approaches of men-centered, and girls will get benefits from public and domestic life as much as boys. Invariably when importance is attached to gender equity in formal or informal education, the vital issues such as gaps, divisions and conflicts between sexes in society are reduced. Traditionally, society has crafted certain images for men and women which seems to be inherited generationally. These typical images of men and women as inheritance of centuries still are among the most important problems of a modern society. According to the traditional view no ideal education will demand the same culture for both sexes but the girl must be trained for wifehood and motherhood first of all at any time. That is to say, women must be depicted as mothers and housewives, but men should not only be seen as fathers and bread-winners but also owners and protectors of women. These kinds of approaches causing inequity between sexes according to Sahin (2014) produce negative results for families and societies as well as women. Gender inequality humiliates women both at home and outside. Mostly men make important decisions in domestic life and public one, women obey whatever men say, and male sex has great power over female sex, this inequality poisons from generation to generation for ages. Ensuring gender equity in education for boys and girls will lead to an increase productivity in economy, provide higher incomes, delay marriages for teenagers, reduce unconscious fertility rates, and bring up fewer but healthier individuals.

Gender equity also allows teachers to cope with how gender inequality structures their day-to-day activities while complying with government mandates and accomplishing their professional responsibilities. Gupta (2007) and Majumdar and Mooij (2011) posit that working towards gender equity allows teachers to re-imagine themselves as ―shapers‖ of society and the school as a special, equal space. Thus, the inequalities

teachers encounter in school, the government mandates they are required to comply with, and their emotional needs for recognition all orient teachers towards adopting gender equity as a discourse, if not practice. Armstrong, Hamilton, and Sweeney (2006) argue that: ―without change in institutional arrangements, efforts to change cultural beliefs are undermined by the cultural common-sense generated by encounters with institutions". Invariably, ensuring gender equity in schools and in the classroom in particular, does not benefit students alone but helps teachers to correct their own biases and stereotypical nature to improve their own practices in order to achieve educational goals. World Bank (2005) concludes the significance of equity in education by expressing that gender equity is the surest way of achieving ones life‘s aspirations and realise gender equality. The World Bank contends that a basic principle of equity is equality of opportunity among people and ―that a person‘s life achievements should be determined primarily by his or her talents and efforts, rather than by pre-determined circumstances such as race, gender, social or family background". Therefore varied equity strategies that are needed to eventually attain gender equality over the long term must be employed to reflect policies and practices directed toward learners, teachers, and the community.

2.12 Challenges for Promoting Gender Equity in the Classroom

Achieving equity in education is very important and the place of the teacher in ensuring classroom practices that take away all forms of inequities in the class cannot be overemphasized. However, studies have shown that achieving gender equity in the classroom is faced with a lot of challenges ranging from teachers own biases and socio-cultural practices. Studies show that negative traditional and cultural practices such as early marriages, the woman‘ house chore duties and other forms of violence against women in particular are recipes for gender inequities (Prinsloo 2006,

Unterhalter 2005; Wilson 2003). These factors have often led to girls dropping out of school (Wilson 2003), resulting in ̠invisible forms of exclusion‛ (Prinsloo 2006), all of which have impacting negatively not only on girls‛ participation and performance in the classroom, but also widen the gap between boys and girls in terms of achieving gender equity vis-a-vis gender equality.

Motala, Dieltiens and Sayed (2009) and Jansen (2008) believe that poverty is a major challenge to achieving gender equity in school and in class. In their studies about the challenges to girl education in South Africa and Sudan, they concluded that people from poor background found it difficult to concentrate in class as compared to those from wealthy homes. This implies that the teacher may do all it takes to promote gender equity in class but will find it difficult to catch the attention of boys and girls who are already disturbed financially. Other studies have shown that coupled with poverty are intersections of social class, power and race, which create disadvantages for boys and but more importantly, girls to stay in school and learn comfortably and confidently (Holmarsdottir, 2011; Holmarsdottir, Ekne & Augestad, 2011; Subrahmaniam, 2005; Colclough, 2008; Unterhalter, 2005). These manifest themselves in terms of learning opportunities, treatment in school, equal participation and employment opportunities (UNESCO 2003/2004; Pendlebury 2008; Diko, 2007; Prinsloo, 2006; Unterhalter, 2005).

Nomlomo and Holdmarsdottir (2012) posit that a hostile school environment makes it difficult to ensure retention, progression, participation and completion of school by boys and girls but girls are the most vulnerable. This was supported by Jansen (2008) who contends that retention is a major problem in terms of access to education and that access to education is inclusive and meaningful if it ensures the enrolment of all

children (boys and girls) of school-going age and strengthens their retention, progression, achievement and completion. Apparent hostile the school and classroom environments are not conducive to learning. This will invitingly produce discrimination, biases and stereotypes which do not promote equity in the classroom.

Research conducted by King and Winthrop (2015) indicate that restricted space and expectations of society and parents limit girls' ability to reap the returns to education as compared to the boy counterparts. They add that ‗social norms define the roles that women and men have in the family and the community, the expectations they have about their futures, their individual preferences and the kind of relationships they form'. For example, in West Bengal, Beaman, Duflo, Pande and Topalova (2011) find that, in places where no woman had ever been the local leader, 76 percent of parents wanted their daughters to be either a housewife or whatever their in-laws would decide for her, compared with less than 1 percent for their sons. Also, twice as many parents reported that they wanted their teenage sons to graduate from secondary school or college as to those who wished the same for their daughters.

The part played by textbooks by explicitly portraying males differently makes the achievement of gender equity and equality difficult. This assertion is confirmed by Kaur (2018) in his article ‗‗Gender differences in textbooks: An obstacle on the road to gender equality" when he opined that ‗‗gender biases and stereotypes in textbooks can be identified in text, images/pictures, examples, quotes etc. that creates the impression that some activities are meant for men only and job of staying at home and doing house activities are meant for the women". Jabeen, Chaudhary and Omar (2014) on their part believe that these portrayals reflect male superiority whereas female's role seems to be limited when compared with that of men. Implicitly parents

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have grown to accept the societal norms and expectations of boys and girls. This will make it difficult for teachers to challenge traditional roles of boys and girls enshrined in the school curricular and in textbooks.

Other studies by Subrahmanian (2005); Schecter (2013); Sahin (2014); Sarra (2011); and Constantinou (2008) indicate that teachers' behaviours, attitudes and expectations of boys and girls may also create unwarranted inequities in the classroom. Their studies showed that teachers may treat students differently according to their expectations of boys and girls. While some teachers may pursue mathematics and science as the strong suit for boys, others may assume a different posture. This creates biases and stereotypes in the classroom as the teacher interact with the students. Certain teachers may also hold on to traditional and cultural norms that define roles for boys and girls and women and men. This adherence to traditional and cultural expectations will pose a deeper challenge in promoting gender equity by these teachers.

2.13 Summary of the Literature Review

The review clearly indicated that gender is a social construct which assigns roles to men and women and give identity to individuals. It is distinct from sex but difficult to separate the two concepts. Whiles sex is considered biological and physical characteristics which define maleness or femaleness of individuals, gender talks about masculinity and feminity of the sexes. Sex is therefore natural whereas gender is nurture. It was also clear that gender is constructed based on sex and for that matter, the two concepts are sometimes used interchangeably. It is also obvious that the issue of gender in education has been a global concern and that a lot of treaties and agreements have been designed to deal with it. Another area captured was that,

attention over the years has been given to gender equality to the detriment of gender equity. However, the literature revealed that gender equality refers to a situation where men and women are placed on the same pedal without due consideration to needs, challenges, and abilities of men and women. This idea in the literature showed that discrimination, stereotyping, disparities and inequities are produced in most cases. This calls for a second look at how to promote fair and just society where men and women will have the opportunity to development themselves in order to achieve their goals. It was also realised that gender equity plays a major role in education and it is the surest way of achieving gender equality.

Perception of teachers towards gender equity was seen in the literature to influence their classroom practices. It was obvious that teachers' perceptions of gender equity can be seen clearly in their attitudes and behaviours towards boys and girls and men and women in their teaching. It was realised that the sex of the teachers in some cases affect how they deal with boys and girls they handle. Teachers were seen as agents of social change but they themselves are confronted with traditional cultural roles of men and women, and so they are thorn between those traditional roles, educational goals and how to develop gender equity responsive pedagogy to cause this social change. For that matter, teachers themselves may create certain biases and stereotypes in their classrooms. Finally, it was revealed that promotion of gender equity in the school and the classroom ensures a total development of men and women to contribute equally to national growth and development. It is a boast on teachers themselves as it helps them to cope with how gender inequality structures their day-to-day activities while complying with government mandates in accomplishing their professional responsibilities.

2.14 Gap in Literature

The review showed that much study has been done on gender equality in education with few touching on equity. Most of these researches were on access, enrolment and retention of boys and girls in school. It was also pointed out that teachers are agents of social change and play a critical role in transmitting societal norms to students and also strive to achieve educational and professional goals. Teachers therefore play a very critical role in ensuring that fair and just atmosphere is created throughout education to enable males and females reach their full potentials. In their bid to doing these, teachers may exhibit biases and stereotypes during interaction with the students in the classroom. This was evident in the conservations and interactions ensued between the researcher and some tutors of the colleges of education. The language and actions of those tutors showed that they are glued to the traditional and cultural spectacles that dictate males' superiority to females' inferiority. Interestingly, the literature revealed a missing link between tutors biases and stereotypes and how gender equity is promoted in the classrooms during their interactions with students. How tutors perceive gender equity and how their perceptions influence their classroom practices in order to achieve gender equality in Ghana have not received much study or research in the colleges of education especially those in the Ashanti Region. The study therefore set out to provide a way forward that will enable tutors to identify the various biases and stereotypes in the classrooms and how they can deal with them. Since Ashanti Region is an integral part of Ghana, it has been chosen to study the problem in order to bridge the gap.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the methodological structure of the study. The chapter is composed of sections namely introduction, philosophical paradigms of the study, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, instrument administration and collection of data as well as limitations, validity and reliability.

3.1 Philosophical Assumptions of the Study: Constructivist and Post – Positivist Paradigms

The term paradigm is derived from Greek meaning pattern (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) and has been broadly defined by many academics. For example, paradigm is perceived as ―a way of seeing the world that frames a research topic‖ and influences the way that researchers think about the topic (Hughes, 2010:35). Fraser and Robinson (2004: 59) cited in Binti and Kamal (2019) further argued that a paradigm is ―a set of beliefs about the way in which particular problems exist and a set of agreements on how such problems can be investigated‖. Paradigm is also described as ―sets of beliefs that guide action‖ (Guba, 1990, p.17 in Binti and Kamal, 2019) which is embedded in all educational research. Again, Binti and Kamal (2019) citing Hughes (2010); Mukherji and Albon, (2015); Chilisa and Kawulich, (2012); Schwandt, (2001) further assert that a research is undergirded by paradigm, or a specific way of ‗seeing the world and making sense of it‘ and that every researcher has particular understandings on what is knowledge and what is truth. Such understandings shape

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researchers thoughts and views about themselves and other people as much as the researchers' thoughts and views about the world.

Two philosophical assumptions guided the study; the constructivist and post positivist paradigms (Creswell, 2014; Kamal, 2019). Creswell (2014) posits that when two research strands are used sequentially in a study, another paradigm is needed to complement the worldview of the second strand. The constructivist worldview was used as the bases for formulating theoretical issues for understanding the qualitative approach while the post-positivist perspective was used to clarify conceptual grounds for the quantitative strand. According to Lincoln and Guba (2013), most recent research studies have been guided by sets of beliefs and principles regarding ontology- what is the nature of reality; epistemology – what is the relationship between the inquirer and the unknown; and methodology – how we know the world or gain knowledge of it. Kamal (2019) contend that constructivism works within a relativist ontology which clenches to the view that multiple realities exist, a postulation which the subjective epistemology thinks that the inquirer and inquired work together to create understanding.

The main philosophical assumption of the constructivist paradigm rests on the bases that reality is constructed when individuals interacting with their society do not discover knowledge but they construct or create knowledge (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). To the constructivist, various social actors perceive the world as experience by people who live and feel its impact. Implicitly, the constructivists perceive the world based on how people who live in it, live and experience it. Also, the constructivists hold the view that reality is pluralistic and that when it is understood can be achieved through organised interactions between the investigator and the one to be investigated.

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My beliefs about the world are to a greater extent shaped by the constructivist paradigm. Hence, this paradigm will be the most appropriate to the manner of which the topic on the teachers' gender equity perception on their classroom practices can be studied. This is because the target population is found in their natural setting which is the college; they have their own understanding of the world and with the assertion that multiple realities do exist and that it takes the investigator and the investigated to create understanding or knowledge which makes constructivism more appropriate for the first strand (qualitative) of the study. A sequential framework for the quantitative strand was based on the post-positivist lens. As opposed to the positivist strands, the post-positivist worldview has been adopted by most traditional quantitative researchers. Lincoln and Guba (2005, 2013) assert that a post-positivist perspective assumes that reality exist but is only imperfectly apprehendable. In post-positivism, researchers consider the value of values, passion, and politics. The post-positivists have the believe that research cannot be certain without falsifications and that instead of focusing on certainty or absolute truth, there is the need to focus on the confidence of which the findings can be relied on. This requires the ability to see the while picture to take a look at the whole study (Brany, 2013). This is different from _just the fact' devoid of context or judging from nowhere (Morse, 2010).

The ontology of the post-positivist paradigm rests on the attainment that claims about reality must be subjected to critical examination to facilitate the attainment or apprehension of reality. The nature of reality under ontological assumptions is that in post-positivism there is accessibility, external and physical reality. Accessibility relate to the existence of terminologies and theories that help to describe the real world (Guba, 1990). On the epistemology – what is relationship of the researcher and the researched, the post-positivists in a quantitative approach holds the view that the

researcher is independent from the one being researched. It is further held that objectivity and subjectivity of what is known and the knower is abandoned in the recognition that objectivity can never be fully attained because reality is viewed by a subjective receiver bearing in mind that reality is always someone's reality (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), in social research investigators assume a learning role rather than testing role. Under this principle, the researcher considers himself as a person who is conducting research among other people, learning with them rather than conducting research on them. This assumption enabled the researcher to do a value-free study devoid of personal and other external biases. The post-positivist perspective is adopted for this study because of the following reasons; the post-positivists do not see their participants as subjects from whom they collect information but members of a community; the post-positivist stick to their research objectives or questions; and the post-positivists use questionnaires as a valuable tool for data collection through open or closed items

3.2 Research Design

The study adopts qualitative and quantitative paradigms (mixed method) based on the embedded design. The embedded design is a mixed method approach where the researcher combines the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data within a traditional qualitative research design or quantitative research design (Greene, 2008). In the conduct of this study, the exploratory mixed method design was employed with analyses of data done through the use of descriptive statistics design. A higher premium was placed on quantitative data though. Hence the kind of mixed method applied in this study was the embedded exploratory sequential mixed

method design (Creswell, Plano-Clark, Guttmann & Hanson, 2003, 2011, 2014). Studies have shown that in an exploratory design, qualitative data is first collected and analysed, and themes are used to drive the development of a quantitative instrument to further explore the research problems (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2008; Onwuegbuzie, Bustamante, & Nelson, 2010). As a result of this design, three stages of analyses are conducted: after the primary qualitative study is completed, the secondary quantitative phase is carried out born out of the findings from the qualitative phase. The two are then integrated to conclude the study in the exploratory sequential study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The purpose of this design is to comprehend that a single data set is not enough as different questions that need to be answered can be obtained through different approaches (Creswell, 2014 cited in Berman, 2017). The design is also to ensure that collecting data from different sources sequentially before, during or after the study can enhance further understanding of the process and outcome of the study (Sandelowski, 2003). The qualitative strand was administered before the quantitative strand. Creswell and Plano (2007) recommend that the inclusion of the second strand clarify procedure, processes and impacts teaching to reflect equity in the classroom. In the quantitative data, the researcher considered the sex of tutors, their qualifications, and years of teaching, their classroom practices, and their gender responsiveness in the classroom among others.

Instruments such as questionnaires on Likert Scale were used to collect data on quantitative strand. Morgan (2007) opines that the decision to give priority to qualitative and quantitative approaches is difficult. Creswell et al. (2003) observe that difficulty may occur at the analysis stage where data collected and analysed could

skew towards an approach which could be the result of the readers understanding and judgement about the whole process and procedure. However, Creswell (2014) believes that the mixed method of qualitative and quantitative approaches is advantageous to adopt as each tends to complement each other to give a detailed description and picture of the phenomenon under study.

Under the qualitative procedure, observation technique was used in collecting data. Maxwell (2004) observes that strategies for qualitative analyses fall into three main groups, they are: coding and thematic analyses, connecting strategies such as narrative analyses and individual case studies or observation techniques based on ratings and indicators. To enhance detailed discussion, a basic principle of qualitative research is that data analyses should be conducted simultaneously with data collection (Morgan, 2007). This allows the researcher to construct his observation schedules based on the research questions to determine how to test the emerging conclusions of the study.

According to Creswell et al (2003), an embedded mixed methods design can be either one-phase or two-phase approaches for the embedded strand and procedure related to sequential or concurrent nature of the implementation process could be used. In this study, the embedded mixed method was used in a sequential order. The implication was that the findings of the observation which was conducted through structured questions were used to craft items for the quantitative questionnaires to affirm the findings regarding tutors classroom practices that promote gender equity. The first strand was used because the researcher needed preliminary exploration through lesson observations in the classrooms before carrying out the quantitative study (Pole, 2007).

The embedded sequential mixed method has its strengths and weaknesses (Greene, Benjamin & Goodyear, 2003). Some of the strengths of the method are that it saves time and resources that will be committed to a full qualitative or quantitative research as the researcher will be able to improve on a design by adopting a supplementary data based on the notion that different data solves different research problems. On the other hand, besides the traditional qualitative and quantitative methods the researcher needs additional expertise in the application of the mixed method since the lack of it can put the success of the study in peril. It will be extremely difficult to integrate the results when the two approaches have different research questions.

3.3 Population

The population of the study consisted of tutors of the public colleges of education in the Ashanti region irrespective of the courses they teach and the departments they belonged to. The target population is the group of individuals to which the researcher is interested in applying his or her conclusions but the study population is the group of individuals to which the researcher legitimately apply the conclusions (Levy & Lemeshow, 2008). There are eight (8) public colleges in the Ashanti region with the teaching staff population of 377. Out of this number, four of them are single sex colleges with only one being a male college. The single sex colleges are St. Louis College of Education in Kumasi (F), St. Monica's College of Education in Mampong (F), Agogo Presbyterian College of Education in Agogo (F) and Mampong Technical Teachers College in Mampong (M). The other four are mixed institutions and these are Akrokerry College of Education, Agona S.D.A College of Education, Offinso College of Education, and Wesley College of Education.

For the purpose of this study, I concentrated on only the mixed public colleges by the fact that tutors of these colleges at any point in time engage males and females in their classroom interactions and it would be therefore appropriate to consider them for the study per the tenants of the topic and also easy to gather the needed data for the study. Again, the issue of gender equity and inequities in the classroom do happen mostly in mixed institutions than single sex institutions. The target population is therefore the entire teaching staff of the four mixed colleges which is numbered one hundred and ninety-eight (198) out of which one hundred and thirty-two (132) tutors were sampled to constitute the sample size and were made to answer questionnaire. Twelve (12) tutors who volunteered to have their lessons observed were observed to collect data for the qualitative study. These people formed part of those who responded to the questionnaire.

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Procedures

The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling methods. These were purposive homogeneous sampling scheme for the qualitative method and systematic random sampling design for the quantitative method based on the assertion of Patton (2002). What this means is that the sequential design using the parallel sample was adopted for both strands. The qualitative data was also sequentially collected through a request from among the tutors who responded to the questionnaire as to whether they would allow the researcher to sit in their class to observe them as they delivered their lessons. This means that both purposive and simple random sampling techniques were adopted for the study. Purposively, tutors who volunteered for their lesson to be supervised were sampled for the study. This meant that the researcher did not include those who were not prepared to have their lessons observed. With the random sampling technique the tutors were reached the lottery

technique where numbers were written on sheets of paper for tutors to pick at random. This was done according to numbers proportionately chosen from each college until the required number of respondents was obtained for the study. This was based purely on voluntarism and for this, 12 volunteers were considered for the qualitative study. Out of this number, 5 of them were females while the other 7 were males. This was to ensure that the composition was gender representative enough and also to ascertain whether the sex of the tutors would have a significant influence on the results. This is in line with the assertion of Creswell (2003) that upon completion of the questionnaire, the respondents can be asked if they will be interested in being observed.

3.5 Sampling size and Sample Distribution

In the quantitative component, structured questionnaire was undertaken utilising a sample of 132 respondents to examine what Tutors of the public colleges perceive of gender equity and how these perceptions influence their classroom practices. The distribution was done according to the number of tutors in the various departments in the colleges so as to have a fair representation from all departments. The sample size for the study was obtained using Yamane's 1967 sample formula which suggests that the appropriate sample size could vary for various large population sizes. The sample size for the study is calculated based on Yamane's (1967) guidelines for determining the size. Yamane posits that the sampling size can be calculated at 95% confidence level using the formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n= sample size

N=number of the statistical population

e= margin of error (0.05). Thus, 198/1+198(0.05*0.05) =132

Through substitution of the population of 198 tutors in the colleges, the sample size of 132 was arrived at. Samples of tutors from the various colleges were also chosen using simple proportion according to their total number. This is shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of tutors sampled from each college to respond the questionnaires

Proportionate Sample Distribution of Respondents

Name of College	Actual Population	Number of Respondents selected	Percentage (%)
Agona SDA	38	25	19.0
Akrokerri	55	37	28.0
Offinso	48	32	24.0
Wesley	57	38	29.0
Total	**198**	**132**	**100**

The Table 1 gives a pictorial view of proportion of tutors selected from each college with their corresponding percentages for the study. A structured guided observational item were also developed to gather qualitative data

3.6 Research Instrument

The research instruments that were used for the study were questionnaire and lesson observation schedule. The design of the questionnaire was based on the research objectives and subjected to further screening by the supervisor. The questionnaire was prepared to obtain data on teachers perception on gender equity and how it influences their (teachers) classroom practices and was subdivided into two sections _A' and _B'

in accordance with the research objectives. Section ‗A' which was on demographic information of respondents sought to establish the sex, age, qualification, and years of experience in the areas of teaching of the tutors. The ‗B' detailed the various aspects as captured in the research objectives. This was divided into five parts with each part containing at least six items using the Likert scale. These considered what tutors perceive as gender and gender equity, influence of tutors perception on the classroom practices, benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom, and the challenges for promoting gender equity. The questionnaire was intended to obtain quantitative data for the study. The use of this instrument was based on the assumption that reality and purpose are quite compatible (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and that reality is independently known and external to the knower (Guba, 1990). According to Creswell (2014), post-positivists contend that researches contain universal beliefs, concepts and ideas that can be applied to many different situations through questionnaire item administration.

With regards to qualitative component, the participant observation was used as the instrument for data collection. In the words of Patton (2002), observation deals with the generation of practical and theoretical truths about the human experience that are embedded in the realities of everyday existence. The technique allows the researcher to immerse himself or herself in a phenomenon of study in order to gain an understanding of the subject matter being studied in a deeper manner. It is useful because the researcher is enabled to obtain first-hand information, and provide a high face value for data as information obtained appears to measure what is supposed to (Mile & Huberman, 1994). In spite of the reasons given for its effective use, Collins and O‗Cathian, (2009) argue that the observation technique is time consuming and subject to a possible observer effect as people may change their attitudes or ways of

doing things because they are being observed. Members to be observed were based solely on voluntarism, and the individuals who agreed to be observed during their teaching were selected for the observation data.

3.7 Administration of Instruments

An introductory letter was obtained from the Research Coordinator of the Social Studies Education Department of the University of Education – Winneba. Afterwards, permission was sought from Principals and Heads of Department in the selected Colleges to administer the questionnaires. A clear intention of the study was communicated to the respondents which were on the exploration of the perception of tutors of colleges of education on gender equity and how it influences their classroom practices which was purely an academic exercise. Administration of questionnaires was done through random sampling based on departmental bases and this was done by the researcher himself who also collected the answered questionnaires as well. With respect to tutors who volunteered to be observed, different dates were proposed for the exercise. In fact, nobody was forced to take part in the observation exercise except those who wanted to (Glesne, 1999).

3.8 Instrument for Data Analyses

The data was analysed based on the objectives of the study which had been designed to provide results to be analysed on the embedded sequential design with the help of the descriptive statistics. The qualitative data based on the constructivist paradigm analysis preceded the quantitative data analysis. The qualitative analysis was done based on the various themes developed out of the observation schedules. This was done to give a preferred basis for the administration of the quantitative method (Creswell, 2003; Creswell, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). The quantitative

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data based on the post-positivist paradigm on the other hand was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software. Tables, pie charts and bar graphs were used to present the results. In the qualitative study based on the constructivist paradigm, data were analysed thematically to ensure that the report was based on what was actually observed (Creswell & Plano, 2007).

3.9 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

In statistics and research, internal consistency is typically a measure based on the correlation between different items on the same test or the same subscale on a larger test. Internal consistency is usually measured using the Cronbach's alpha, a statistic calculation from the pairwise correlation between items. Internal consistency ranges between zero (0) and one (1). Cronbach's alpha can be viewed as a measure as how well the sum score on the selected items capture the expected score in the entire domain even if the domain is heterogeneous (Cronbach, 1951 in Miles & Huberman, 1994). ―Cronbach's alpha is a model of internal consistency reliability based on the average inter-item correlation of an instrument" (Rovai, Baker, and Ponton, 2014). To ensure validity and reliability of the instrument, the Cronbach's Alpha was used to check the validity of the responses from the questionnaire and the internal consistency measured less than one indicating that there were no biases.

Also, the designed questionnaires were submitted to my supervisor for critical scrutiny and correction. On ethical issues, a letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Social Studies – University of Education – UEW (Winneba) before the instruments were administered. Respondents' confidentiality was strictly observed after permission had been sought from the Principals and Heads of Department from

the various colleges of education in the Ashanti Region. These were done to ensure validity and reliability of the data collected.

To ensure that the researcher was not influenced in any way to alter the outcome of the results of the study due to his position as one of the tutors in the Colleges of Education, tutors were not made aware of areas under observation and that he remained as objective as possible. Only that information he sought to observe and record were those he did observe and recorded. Responses to questionnaire were also interpreted according to the tutors own responses. In effect, the position of the researcher was as objective as to the demands of the research purpose.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the presentation, interpretation and discussion of the organised responses from the field. The chapter is twined around such themes as the introduction which opens up the chapter, demographic background of respondents which explains the calibre of individuals involved in the study and perception of tutors as to what constitute the meaning of gender. Others include tutors perception of gender equity in education, how gender perception influences tutors classroom practices, significance of promoting gender equity in the classroom and the challenges of achieving gender equity in the classroom. It also includes the classroom observation of tutors' lessons and the discussion of findings.

4.1 Results of Tutors Lessons Observation

A total of twelve (12) tutors across the colleges of education in the Ashanti Region selected for the study volunteered for their lessons to be observed. This composed of five (5) female tutors and seven (7) male tutors. The tutors involved in the observation were coded Tr. 1, Tr. 2, Tr. 3, Tr. 4, Tr. 5 up to Tr. 12. The Tr. means tutor. Areas of interest that were observed included teachers pedagogy which embraced the techniques and strategies used in presenting the lessons. Under this, how tutors created opportunities for both males and females to ask and answer questions was observed. Again, the techniques that ensured active participation of learners were also observed. Such techniques included simulation, role play, debates, demonstration etc. The interest was to look at how these techniques involved both females and males in the lessons. Another area of interest was how tutors provided prompt and constructive

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feedback to both males and females in course of the teaching. How tutors attended and catered for the needs of individuals in the classroom during interactions were observed. Here, the interest was to find out whether tutors holistically attended to the students or they identified the challenges males and females face individually in class so they could be assisted to overcome their challenges. The results were thematically analysed.

4.1.1 Tutors selection of techniques of teaching

Such techniques that interested the researcher included simulation, role play, debates, and demonstration. The interest was to look at how these techniques involved both females and males in the lessons. The results indicated varied approaches. For instance Tr. 1, Tr. 3, Tr. 4 and Tr. 5 ensured that equitable opportunities were given to both females and males to ask and answer questions. Whenever questions were thrown to the class, each of the students no matter the gender was given the opportunity to answer or ask questions. Students were handled in such a way that if a question was answered by a male, the next question was answered by female. These tutors would encourage those who were shy, especially females to ask and answer questions. The questions from these tutors were distributed equitably without regard to sex or any other forms of identification.

However, it was observed that Tr. 2 Tr.6 up to Tr.12 would ask questions without taking into consideration the sex of the students. They would pose a question like ―who would answer this question for me" and would wait for the response from anybody else. When the answer was not forthcoming, comments like ―where are the men, so gentlemen you cannot answer this question" Hmm, if the men are not

answering, I don't expect to get any better response of the women" etc. these comments were very common with Tr. 2, Tr. 7, Tr. 8 and Tr. 9.

Again trying to encourage students to ask questions Tr. 6, Tr. 10, Tr. 11 and Tr. 12 saw those who were shy as weak and in most cases ignored their questions. In a case where a young lady asked a question in a mathematics class Tr. 10 reacted in a very negative way and came out with the comment that ―when would you ask an intelligent question?" This discouraged the lady throughout the lesson and became very quiet in the whole period I sat through the lesson.

In the use of the strategies and techniques the results indicated that there was no discrimination whatsoever. It was observed that from Tr. 1 to Tr. 12, all students were strongly involved in lessons when such techniques as role play, simulation, dramatization, demonstration and debates were employed. For instance, there was an observed lesson Tr. 6 class when the tutor created small groups for a discussion and made sure that every group had at least a female and made the females leaders while a male was the secretary for each group. Because the males were more than the females, there was a count from 1 to 8 by the females and this continued until all the females were counted. They were then made to join the groups according to their numbers. Again, Tr. 10 in a social studies class adopted the debate technique to teach the topic ―women are better managers of home than men" under marriage and decided to group the females against the males for the debate. In fact, it was delightful to watch how each group argued around the topic. It was very participatory. Also in IT lesson, Tr. 5 and Tr. 9 ensured that females were given equal opportunities as males to take active part in the demonstration lesson when it got to the manipulation of the computers.

Tutors once again showed different approaches in helping students with different learning needs to overcome their problems. Three lessons observed under Tr. 3, Tr. 4 and Tr. 7 showed that tutors treated students equally without regards to their individual needs and challenges. For instance, in a science lesson under Tr. 4 no individual needs were taken into consideration although the lesson was experimental in nature. It was observed that the class was treated as one unit and taught together as one. Students who expressed concerns were asked to see their friends for assistance. The same issue happened in a mathematics lesson where Tr. 7 didn't consider the difficulties individual students faced in understanding the concepts in Geometry but treated them equally. However, Tr. 1 and Tr. 5 had special attention for the students with special needs. Throughout the lesson, these tutors had time for some selected students and taught them separately from the rest of the class. When asked for the reason, the respond was that, those students were slow learners and needed to be assisted to go in their own pace in other to catch up with others.

On the issue of providing feedback to students, tutors observed showed no discrimination. Prompt and constructive feedbacks were given to students without consideration to sex or lack of intelligence. Equitable opportunities were given to students to quick feedback to their questions and answers provided.

4.1.2 The use of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)

Areas considered under this theme were tutors guiding students to critically challenge traditional views of masculinity and femininity as portrayed in textbooks, identify gender roles that appear in books/ materials and make a point to alert students to these portrayals when using the materials in class, ensure equitable distribution of TLMs for

both males and females, and providing equitable opportunities for both males and females to use and manipulate Teaching Learning Resources.

It was realized that most of the tutors did not bother to point out gender representations in terms of masculinity and femininity to students in textbooks they used. For that matter, no efforts were made to guide the students to challenge these traditional views. This was evident during the presentation by Tr.1, Tr.2, Tr. 3, Tr. 5, Tr. 6, Tr. 10 and Tr. 11. However, Tr. 4, 7, 8, 9 and 12 drew students' attention to those traditional views as what men and women can and must do and asked series of questions to enable them challenge these views. Some of the tutors themselves exhibited certain biases on the materials like pictures, posters and sketches they used for their lessons. In fact, Tr. 2, Tr. 5, Tr. 10 and Tr. 11 were the most culprits. In a social studies lesson Tr. 5 had presented pictures of parliamentary sitting and whether it was oversight or intentional, all the speakers of parliament as well as parliamentary clerks were males. The understanding was that speakers of parliament had been males throughout. When some students drew the attention of the tutor, he ended up comparing numbers of females and males that have been speakers of parliament since 1992 in Ghana. This was a clear display of the tutors' biases as what he thought males and females must do. There was also an instance where an IT tutor observed wanted students to use a certain website for information and much of his concentration was on the gentlemen. So, once in a while the tutor would ask, ―guys are you there? I know you can easily get this done" ―as for my ladies, I need not go there at all". What was disturbing was the fact that no effort was made to assist the females who had difficulties to use the website but treated the class with bias against the females.

For the distribution of TLMs, tutors biases were very minimal as almost all of them gave out materials without recourse to ones gender, ethnic, race or intellectual ability. Every student was given equitable access to materials during the lessons observed. Tutors mostly used group discussions and materials were presented to groups without discrimination or biases. In a science lesson, Tr. 4 used demonstration and experimentation techniques to teach the topic" alkalinity and acidity of solutions" and ensured that each group had enough TLMs to use. Interestingly, the groups were mixed and either a male or female was the leader or secretary. When the leader was a male, the secretary was the female and vice versa.

Students were given the opportunity to manipulate TLMs according to their abilities. However, in an IT lesson observed, Tr. 6 asked the males to assist the females to use the computers in many times. He did not understand why the males should have difficulty in using the computer and in some cases, insulted them (males) for being unable to use the computers. In Tr. 2 class however, the focus was on the females as every question was to be asked and answered by the females. The females would sit by the computers to manipulate the system as little attention was given to the males. There was a clear display of bias towards the men as the tutor was a female and later realized she was a gender champion in her college.

4.1.3 Classroom planning

This was another aspect of the tutors' classroom practice that was of interest to the researcher. Here, the researcher wanted to know how classroom seating was arranged so that those who needed support could be assisted. He was also interested in finding out how groupings were done and how classroom leadership roles were assigned. It was observed that the seating were not in particular order as tutors mostly did not

boarder themselves as to how students were seated. It was found out that students were mostly seated before tutors entered the classrooms and no questions were raised on the arrangements of their seats. In some of the classrooms, one would see some females concentrated on one side while males were also seated at one side. However, in some of the classrooms males and females had been paired in rows while in some of them a female would sit directly behind a male in columns and vice versa. Tutors did not interfere with these seating arrangements. They only re-arranged the class when they wanted to have groups' discussion or there was a demonstration or experiment where special arrangements were made. In two of the classes observed, two students at the back would in many times ask the tutor to write boldly on the marker board because they could not see from that distance. Tutors completely ignored them and asked them to do the right thing if they could not see instead of insisting that they went forward.

Grouping of students for discussion was done in some of the classes with tutors own arrangements. These tutors on realizing that there were males than females first grouped the males before grouping the females. For instance, Tr. 3, Tr. 8 and Tr. 12 wanting seven groups asked the males to number themselves up to 7. They did that until every male was counted. They were then asked to sit in groups according to their numbers. Thus, group 1, group 2, group 3 up to group 7. The females were asked to do some and later joined their groups accordingly. When asked the reason for that strategy, the tutors answered that, they wanted to have gender balance and female representation in each group since the females were fewer. However, they hinted that, when using the debate techniques, they mostly group all the females on one side and the females on another.

However, the other tutors observed would first ask students to sit in groups and would not boarder who sat where. Whether females would form their groups or males would do that was not a problem to those tutors. It was also observed that some tutors had already grouped their students and so students were made to just move into their groups. Those classes were observed not to consider gender and the abilities of students during the grouping and class discussion.

With regards to leadership roles, it was observed that Tr.1, Tr. 3, Tr. 6, Tr. 7, Tr. 9 and Tr. 12 had their course representatives to be females. Those classes had class secretaries as well and these secretaries were observed to be males. The tutors explained in separate occasions that it was a way of ensuring gender equity and equality in the classroom. However, Tr.2, Tr. 4, Tr. 5, Tr. 8, Tr. 10 and Tr. 11 had their course representatives and secretaries to be males. When asked to give reasons, their responses were that they should not meddle with students when it comes to such positions and that students should be allowed to select their own choices. When asked whether to discuss with the students, especially females to accept leadership roles, all the twelve (12) tutors observed responded in the affirmative and this was seen in most of their lesson presentation.

4.1.4 Communication and use of language

This theme sought to find out about how tutors language and body expressions either demean, put fears or discriminate against females and males in the classroom. It was realized that most teachers were very conscious of the language used in their lesson delivery. Language was not hostile to put fear in learners. However, it was realized that while male tutors could communicate so freely with both male and female

students, female tutors observed were very selective with their communication with the male students. This was evident during my observation with Tr. 1 and Tr. 9.

With regards to language that demeans students, some tutors used language which was not pleasant and suggested that females could not do anything better as compared to their male counterparts. For instance, in Tr. 5 and Tr. 7 classes comments like ―Oh women, what at all can you do right‖ and ―All that you know is fashion instead of learning‖ were used to demean some female students who could not answer some questions which those tutors thought were easy to answer. Right after these remarks the demeanour of those students changed abruptly and were not so part of the lesson. There was an instance where Tr. 9 also insulted a male student for failing to answer a simple question. The student became so embarrassed and laid his head on his desk for most parts of the lesson. Strangely, the tutor did not boarder to get him on board the lesson.

Tutors body expressions towards males and females also varied. As some of them showed indifferent postures towards the two sexes (males and females), some openly displayed their open dislike for either females or males. This, during the observation was shown depending on the sex of the tutor. While male tutors were seen with very friendly and welcoming body expressions towards males and females, that was not the case with female tutors. Mostly, their facial expressions alone depicted their biases towards the males.

4.1.5 Assessment and evaluation

The observation considered how tutors adopted strategies that helped to identify gaps between females and males performances for assistance to bridge the gaps, how exercises are given with discrimination and how feedbacks are given to the people.

On the issue of strategizing to identify gaps in students learning, it was observed that with the exception of Tr. 2 and Tr. 10, all the tutors did not have any better strategy for assessment. Students were assessed holistically without regards to their strengths and weaknesses. Equity was in default while equality was promoted. Tutors did not have time for students with special needs and so could not identify the gaps to deal with in helping the students during the classroom interactions. Exercises were found to have been holistically planned without regard to individual needs and capabilities. There were no plans for remedial teaching even though in some of the courses (IT, Mathematics, science, music and dance), some students were observed to have some challenges, tutors made no attempt to assist them to come apart with their colleagues. The females were seen to have much of the difficulty.

However, one significant thing all the tutors did was providing prompt feedback to students. There was not discrimination whatsoever. Feedbacks were given constructively to both males and females and students questions were handled and treated without any discrimination. Tutors showed their knowledge and skills of handling students' responses and questions without recourse to gender, intelligent, colour or ethnic background although there were few instances where some tutors considered some of the students questions as irrelevant and would not want to answer them. Group assessment was used in most of the lessons observed and in each of the groups males and females were mixed to promote gender equity. There was no sign of a male or female dominance during the assessment procedure.

4.1.6 Evidence from the lessons observed

The following were the evidence in the lessons observed

1. Tutors used various approaches and techniques to involve both male and female students in their lessons. However, in a lot of instances, tutors showed biases in their questioning procedures, made unpleasant remarks about those who could not answer questions and treated them with contempt. This affected the active participation of some of the learners especially the shy students who were mostly ladies.

2. Tutors treated students as a unit and would not have time to identify individual challenges and difficulties in learning certain concepts. Students with challenges were only asked to see their friends for assistance without the tutors following up to ensure that they really received the assistance. This affected students understanding in the lessons taught since most of them did not go to these friends for the assistance needed.

3. Teaching and learning resources were equitably distributed. However, no or little attempts were made to point traditional gender issues in textbooks to students to help them challenge these traditional gender issues. A little attempt was made to correct picture depictions in the textbooks and that materials presented by the tutors themselves did not stop the ideas people have about gender issues. There was a lot of tutor biases in preparing and using teaching and learning resources. This did not help students to erase their own perceptions about gender roles of males and females.

4. Tutors did not show so much interest in the seating arrangements of students. Students sat at places they found comfortable. In many cases, one could see a clear demarcation between male seating places and that of the females.

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Students only sat together when they were to discuss issues in groups and this affected their interactions in the classrooms. Students in most cases did not have time to learn from one another to erase the perception of male superiority in the learning process since there was one- man -one seat situations.

5. Tutors were very instrumental in encouraging students to accept leadership roles in the classroom and the college in general. Positions were mixed. While in some cases class representatives were females, others had males as representatives. This was to prepare both females and males to accept leadership roles in future and to draw their attention to the fact that no position is a preserve of males or females.

6. Tutors tried to avoid the use of language that saw to demean students and put fears in them to contribute in the class discussion. However, on few occasions, some tutors body expressions were unpleasant towards some students. These biases were shown per the sex of the tutor. Female tutors were not so friendly as compared to the male colleagues. Certain unwholesome language discouraged certain students from being part of the learning process and affected their performance in class.

7. Tutors did not have time to locate gaps between males and females with respect to their performances. Exercises and class assignments were given holistically and tutors did not find out where students had challenges so that they could help them to solve. However, feedbacks were promptly given without any biases or discrimination. Individual questions were attended to without looking at the sex. Questions and responses considered to be irrelevant were thrown away without a recourse to who was involved. In effects, gender issues still existed to indicate classroom inequities.

From the observation, it was realised that tutors of Colleges of Education exhibit various degrees of biases towards males and females in their classrooms. While in some cases, certain tutors tried to create a levelled playing field for learners, some of them showed indifferent attitudes towards students learning and difficulties. Some tutors did not also consider equity in their learning but rather promoted equality throughout their lesson delivery. Although the sex composition of tutors observed was made up of 5 females and 7 males, this did not affect their practices significantly. However few of them were influenced by their sex and treated students according to the sex type. Some female tutors were more accommodating to female students than males and vice-versa.

4.2 Presentation and Interpretation of Data from the Questionnaire

Responses of tutors to the questionnaires distributed are presented and interpreted as follows:

4.2.1 Demographic information of respondents

This aspect deals with tutors sex, age distribution, highest qualification as well as years of teaching in the colleges. The impulse of this was to ascertain how tutors sex influence their dealings with males and females in the classroom, their maturity levels in terms of age in handling various gender issues in the colleges, whether they possess right qualifications in teaching in the college and their teaching experiences in so far as teaching in the colleges is concerned

4.2.1.1 Sex distribution of college tutors: the males and females respondents
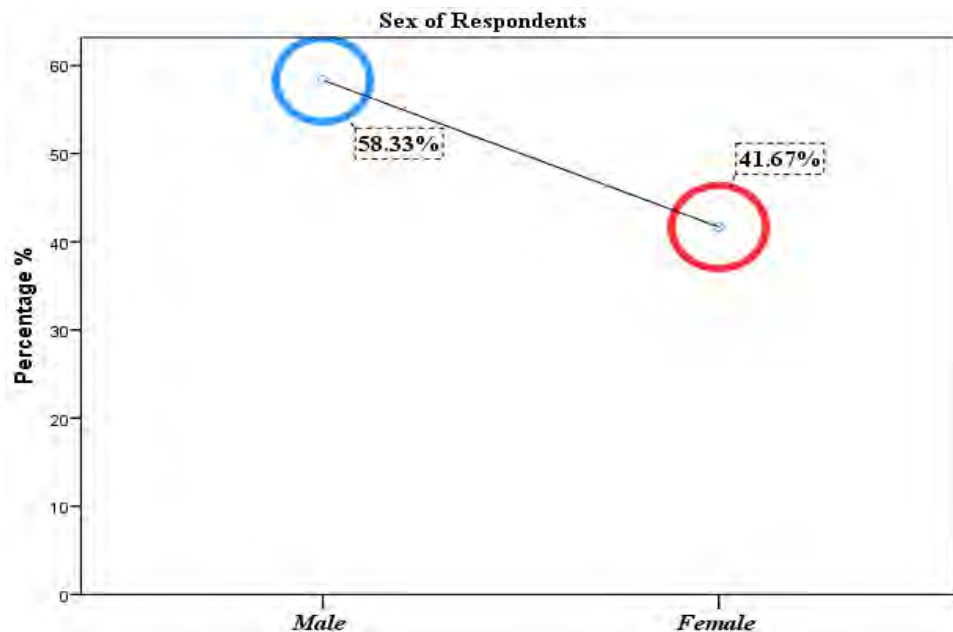
Figure 1: Sex distribution of respondents

Source: Field work 2020

Figure 1 above describes the sex distribution of tutors who answered the questionnaires. This was intended to find out whether the sex of the respondents would have any impact on gender equity perceptions. The figure 1 shows that out of 132 respondents, 77 (58.33%) were males and 55 (41.67%) were females. The sex of respondents was very important for the study as this would ensure gender balance and also fathom how sex of tutors could influence the data collection and responses thereof.

4.2.1.2 Age distribution of tutors who responded the questionnaire

This was intended to find out the ages of tutors and how far they have encountered gender issues and how they have been dealing with those issues in their classrooms over the years of teaching.

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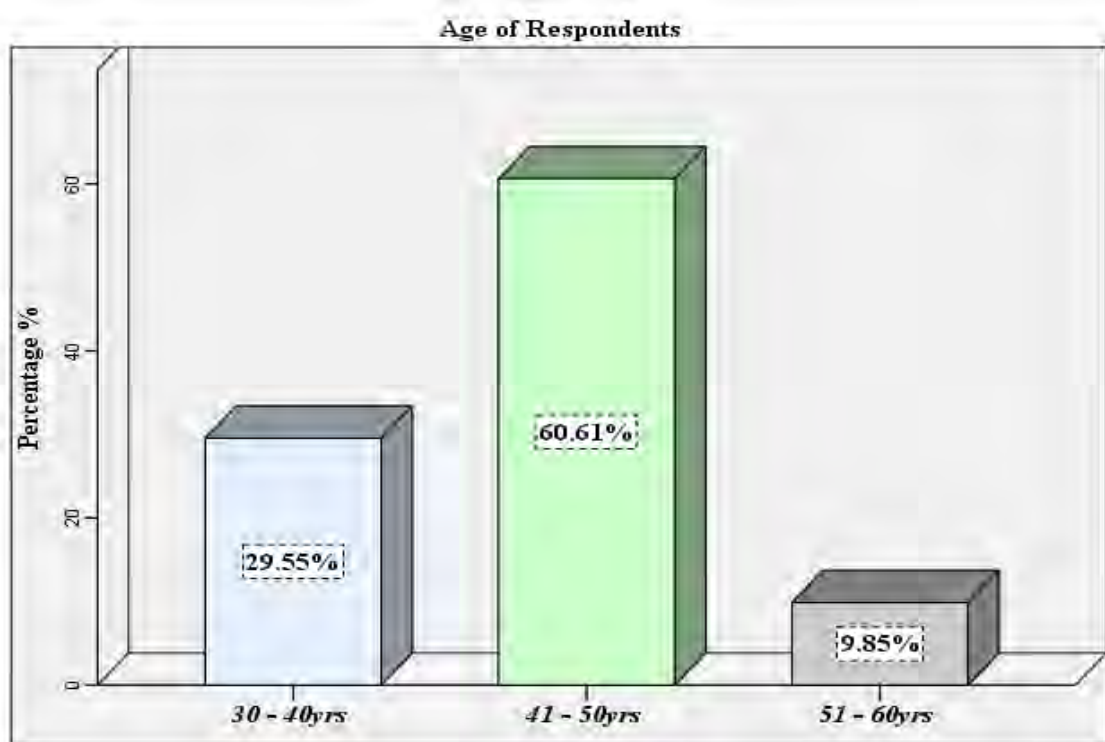
Figure 2: Age distribution of respondents

Source: Field work 2020

The Figure 2 and Table 2 indicate that 39 (29.55%) aged from 30 – 40yrs, 80 (61.0%) aged within the range of 41 – 50yrs and 13 (9.85%) of the respondents also fell within the age range of 51 – 60yrs. It can easily be seen from figure 2 and table 2 that majority of the respondents were within the age bracket of 41 – 50yrs which was approximated to 61% of the entire respondents. This implies that the tutors have ten to twenty years in teaching to deal with gender issues in their colleges and classrooms. Hence, collecting data on their ages was very significant to the study to ascertain how far they have to deal with gender issues in their classrooms especially those that bother on gender equity.

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Table 2: Age distribution of tutors who responded to the questionnaire

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30 – 40yrs	39	29.55
41 – 50yrs	80	60.61
51 – 60yrs	13	9.85
Total	**132**	**100**

Source: Field work 2020

4.2.1.3 Highest qualifications of tutors who responded to questionnaire

This represents the pictorial view of the distribution of educational qualifications of tutors. This indicates whether tutors possess the right educational qualifications to teach in the colleges
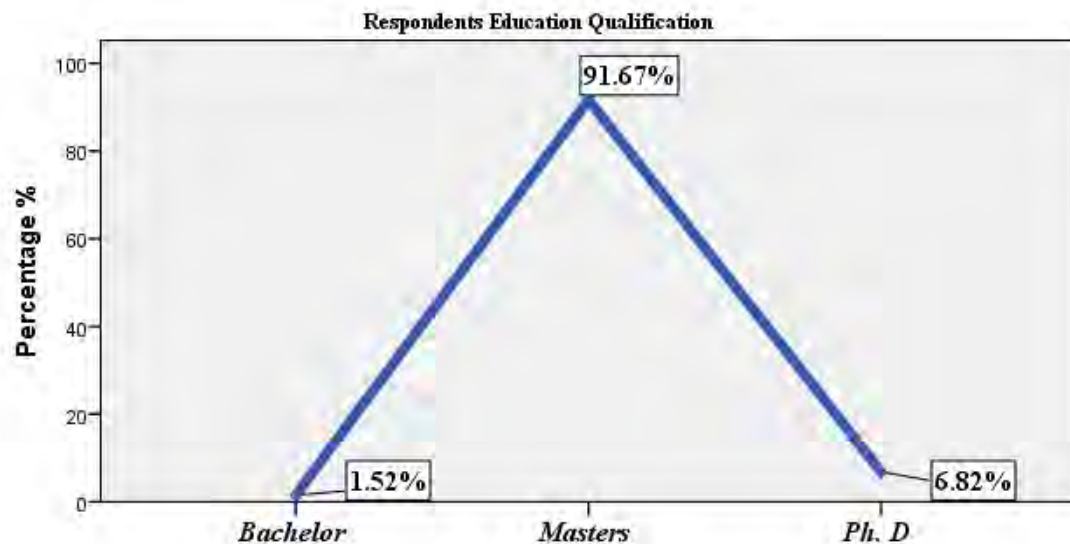
Figure 3: Distribution of the educational qualification of respondents
Source: Field work 2020

Tutors of Colleges of Education are expected to have a minimum qualification of Master's degree to teach in the colleges. The study sought to know whether tutors possess the minimum qualification required. The belief was that having the right qualification would motivate and build tutors confidence to be effective and proficient in their work as tutors. The data indicate that majority of the respondents 121

(91.67%) approximate 92% have Masters' Degree which is the basic requirement for teaching in the colleges of education. However, 9 (6.82%) about 7% have managed to obtain Ph.D. Degrees. The data further show that there are still tutors with Bachelors' Degree which represent 2 (1.52%) approximate 2%.

4.2.1.4 Tutors years of teaching in their various colleges of education

This data present a picture of years of teaching experience of tutors in the colleges and hammer on the number of gender issues tutors of colleges encounter and how they are able to deal with these gender issues.

Table 3: Years respondents have been teaching in the colleges

Years of Teaching in the College	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 – 10	68	51.5
11 – 20	56	42.4
21 – 30	8	6.1
Total	**132**	**100**

Source: Field work 2020

Table 3 reveal that 68 (51.5%) approximately 52% of college tutors who responded to the questionnaire have been teaching in the colleges for a span of about 10 years while 56 (42.4%) have been teaching in their colleges for more than 10 years. Interestingly, 8 (6.1%) of the respondents have been in their colleges for not less 20 years. The implication of these responses is that the tutors would have firm knowledge about gender and equity issues and are therefore aware of certain classroom practices that project biases and stereotypes that hinder the promotion of gender equity. It was important then to consider this element as appropriate for those participated in the study.

4.2.2 Perception of tutors on the meaning of gender

Data were collected on tutors' perception on what constitutes gender. The analysis of tutors' responses on their perceptions of gender which was one of the aspects of the study that was dear to the researcher is shown below.

Table 4: Tutors definition and perception on gender

No	How do tutors perceive the concept of gender	S/D		D		N/S		A		S/A	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
	Definitions of Gender										
	Gender is a social construct										
1a.	Gender is rather biologically constructed concept	9	6.8	8	6.1	7	5.3	45	34.1	63	47.7
1b.		50	37.9	33	25.6	6	4.5	26	19.7	17	12.9
2a.	Gender defines roles for males and females in the society.	11	8.3	7	5.3	1	0.8	71	53.8	42	31.8
2b.	Gender is the expected identity of males and females according to the responsibilities	10	7.6	16	12.1	29	22.0	52	39.4	25	18.9
2c.	Gender is the characteristics and behaviours of females and males in the social structure	10	7.6	13	9.8	16	12.1	66	50.0	27	20.5
	Perceptions of gender										
3.	The dynamics of gender differ from society to society	7	5.3	5	3.8	7	5.3	45	34.1	68	51.5
4a.	Gender places one sex group over the other.	30	22.7	16	12.1	21	15.9	47	35.6	18	13.6
4b.	Gender issues breed inequities in the society	12	9.1	20	15.2	22	16.7	57	43.2	21	15.9
5a.	Gender and sex are related but are not the same.	17	12.9	7	5.3	4	3.0	50	37.9	54	40.9
5b.	Gender is absolutely the same as sex	67	50.8	23	17.4	8	6.1	17	12.9	17	12.9
6.	Gender proffers sexual and personal identity to individuals	8	6.1	12	9.1	40	30.3	53	40.2	19	14.4

Source: Field work 2020

Table 4 is data on the tutors' perception on what constitutes the meaning of gender. Tutors responded to certain statements by showing their agreement or otherwise to the statements. From the table 9(6.8%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement ―gender is a social construct". 8(6.1%) disagreed while 7(5.3%) were not sure whether they agree or disagree with the statement. However, while 45 respondents representing 34.1% agreed with the statement, 63(47.7%) strongly agreed with the

statement. Responses on the meaning of gender being biologically constructed indicates that 50(37.9%) strongly disagreed with the statement. 33 constituting 25.0% disagreed while 6(4.5%) were not sure. As many as 26 (19.7%) respondents agreed with the statement while 17 (12.9%) strongly agreed with the statement. With regard to gender being considered as defining the roles of females and males in the society, 11 (8.3%) strongly disagreed, 7 (5.3%) disagreed and 1 (0.8%) were not sure. However, 71 (53.8%) agreed while 42 (31.8%) strongly agreed respectively. Again, data on gender being the expected identity of males and females, 10 (7.6%) and 16 (12.1%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. 29 (22.0%) of the respondents were not sure whereas 52 (39.4%) agreed and 25 (18.9%) strongly agreed respectively.

Respondents were also to provide information on their perception of gender being the characteristic and behaviours of males and females in the social structure. While 10 (7.6%) strongly disagreed and 13 (9.8%) disagreed, 16 (12.1%) were not sure about the statement. However, 66 (50.0%) agreed with the statement while 27 (20.5%) strongly agreed. On the statement that the dynamics of gender defers from one society to another, 7 (5.3%) strongly disagreed with the statement. It can also be seen from the table that while 5 (3.8%) disagreed, 7 (5.3%) were not sure. 45 (34.1%) agreed with the statement while 68 (51.5%) strongly agreed. Once more, respondents provided data on the statement gender places one sex group over the other. This attracted 30 (22.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement while 16 (12.1%) disagreed. 21 (15.9%) were not sure whereas 47 (35.6%) agreed and 18 (13.6%) strongly agreed respectively. The table further shows that 12 (9.1%) strongly disagreed with the statement ―gender issues breed inequalities in the society". Another 20 (15.2%) disagreed while 22 (16.7%) were not sure about the statement.

Meanwhile, 57 (43.2%) agreed while 21 (15.9%) strongly agreed with the statement. Data on gender and sex being related but not the same produced 17 (12.9%) strongly disagreeing, 7 (5.3%) disagreeing while 4 (3.0%) of the respondents were not sure. However, as 50 (37.9%) agreed with the statement, 54 (40.9%) strongly agreed. Respondents were tested to relate the relationship in the first instance with the statement ̶gender is absolutely the same as sex". 67 (50.8%) strongly disagreed with the statement while 23 (17.4%) further disagreed. As 8 (6.1%) were not sure, 17 (12.9%) agreed while 17 (12.9%) strongly agreed.

Lastly, the table shows that 8 (6.1%) strongly disagreed and 12 (9.1%) disagreed with the statement that gender proffers sexual and personal identity to the individual. However, as 40 (30.3%) were not sure, 53 (40.2%) agreed while 19 (14.4%) strongly agreed with the statement. It can be concluded from the data that tutors have varied perceptions on what constitutes the meaning of gender. While some perceive gender as roles assigned to males and females in society, others believe that it is the attributable characteristics of males and females and what they are expected to do per these characteristics. However, a greater number of the tutors believe that gender is a social construct but were divided on how it treats males and females in terms of placing one sex group over the other.

4.2.3 The perception of tutors on the meaning of gender equity

Data on the responses of tutors on what they perceive to be gender equity was collected and analysed in table 5 below.

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Table 5: Tutors definition and perception of gender equity in education

No	How do tutors perceive the concept of gender equity in education	S/D Freq	%	D Freq	%	N/S Freq	%	A Freq	%	S/A Freq	%
	Definition Of Gender Equity										
1a.	Gender equity is the fair and just treatment of males and females in education	2	1.5	10	7.6	4	3.0	46	34.8	70	53.0
1b.	Gender equity is the opportunity given to males and females without preference in class	3	2.3	7	5.3	4	3.0	52	39.4	66	50.0
2.	Gender equity is the removal of all forms of ill treatment against females and males in education.	6	4.5	18	13.6	3	2.3	49	37.1	56	42.4
3a.	Gender equity is the surest way of achieving gender equality in education.	4	3.0	2	1.5	8	6.1	41	31.1	77	58.3
3b.	Gender equity is the equality that exist in the classroom	19	14.4	32	24.2	12	9.1	47	35.6	22	16.7
	Perception of Gender Equity										
4.a	Gender equity has received little attention in the classroom.	12	9.1	32	24.2	11	8.3	60	45.5	17	12.9
4.b	Gender equity is always promoted in the classroom without any hindrance	18	13.6	32	24.2	27	20.5	43	32.6	12	9.1
5.	Gender equity provides opportunity for females and males to achieve their full potentials	2	1.5	1	0.8	2	1.5	59	44.7	68	51.5
6.	Gender equity in education removes barriers of academic achievement for males and females	6	4.5	3	2.3	2	1.5	64	48.5	57	43.2

Source: Field work 2020

Table 5 shows that 2 (1.5%) strongly disagreed, 10 (7.6) disagreed while 4 (3.0%) were not sure with the statement ―gender equity is the fair and just treatment of males and females in education". The table further depicts that 46 (34.8%) of the respondents agreed with the statement while 70 (53.0%) strongly agreed. Data collected on the statement that gender equity is the opportunities given to females and males without preference, produced 3 (2.3%) respondents who strongly disagreed with the statement. While 7 (5.3%) disagreed, 4 (3.0%) were not sure. Meanwhile 52 (39.4%) agreed while 66 (50.0%) strongly agreed with the statement. The table further shows that 6 (4.5%) strongly disagreed while 18 (13.6%) disagreed with the statement ―gender equity is the removal of all forms of ill treatment against females

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and males in education". As 3 (2.3%) were not sure about the statement, 49 (37.1%) agreed as against 56 (42.4%) who strongly agreed with the statement. Once again it can be deduced from the table that while 4 (3.0%) strongly disagreed with the statement that gender equity is the surest way of achieving equality, 2 (1.5%) disagreed. However, 8 (6.1%) were not sure whereas 41 (31.1%) agreed and 77 (58.3%) strongly agreed with the statement respectively. The data further shows that 19 (14.4%) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 32 (24.2%) disagreed with the statement that gender equity is the equality that exists in the classroom. While 12 (9.1%) were not sure, 47 (35.6%) agreed while 22 (16.7%) strongly agreed with the statement. On the issue of gender equity having received little attention in the classroom, 12 (9.1%) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 32 (24.2%) disagreed. 11 (8.3%) said they were not sure whereas 60 (45.5%) agreed and 17 (12.9%) strongly agreed with the statement respectively.

The table further shows that responses to the statement that gender equity is always promoted in the classroom without any hindrance varied. As 18 (13.6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the claim, 32 (24.2%) disagreed. While 27 (20.5%) were not sure, 43 (32.6%) agreed with the statement. Not only that, 12 (9.1%) strongly agreed with the statement. On the statement ─gender equity provides opportunity for females and males to achieve their full potentials" the table indicates that 2 (1.5%) strongly disagreed while 1 (0.8%) disagreed. 2 (1.5%) of the respondents were however not sure. Notwithstanding these, 59 (44.7) agreed while 68 (51.5%) strongly agreed with the statement. Responses on the statement that equity in education removes barriers of academic achievement for females and males indicate that 6 (4.5%) strongly disagreed while 3 (2.3%) disagreed with the statement. However, 2 (1.5%) were not sure whereas 64 (48.5%) agreed and 57 (43.2%) strongly agreed with this perception

respectively. The statistics revealed that majority of college tutors perceive gender equity as fair and just treatment of males and females, eschews preferences based on sex, provides opportunity for males and females to achieve their full potentials, and removes all barriers in education. They also held that gender equity has received little attention in classroom, and it is the surest way of achieving gender equality in education and in the classroom.

4.2.4 Influence of tutors' gender equity perceptions on their classroom practices

Peoples' perceptions invariably affect their actions and decisions in many ways. Tutors' perception on gender equity has a relationship with their practices, hence a data was collected on that effect. The analysis below throws light on the influence of tutors' perceptions on their classroom practices.

Table 6: Influence of tutors' gender equity perception on their practices

No.	How tutors gender perceptions influence their classroom practices.	Very/oft. Freq %		Often Freq %		Never Freq %		Sometimes Freq %		Always Freq %	
	Techniques and straggles of teaching										
1.a	Equitable opportunities are given to females and males to ask and answer questions in class	59	44.7	2	1.5	0	0	8	6.1	63	47.7
1.b	Those who put up their hands to ask and answer questions are considered without regards to their gender.	4	3.0	14	10.6	18	13.6	91	68.9	5	3.8
1.c	Boys are always quick to put up their hands to ask and answer questions.	4	3.0	15	11.4	45	34.1	65	49.2	3	2.3
2.	Participatory techniques such as group work, role play, simulation are used to ensure equitable participation by females and males	56	42.4	2	1.5	0	0	12	9.1	62	47.0
3.	Groupings are gender responsive devoid of discrimination.	38	28.8	1	0.8	0	0	15	11.4	78	59.1
4.	Equitable/equal opportunities are given to females and males to access Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs)	74	56.1	0	0	0	0	9	6.8	48	36.4
5.	Individual needs and abilities are taken care of during class interactions	77	58.3	9	6.8	0	0	16	12.1	30	22.7
6.	Constructive feedback to females and males are provided in class without discrimination	25	18.9	0	0	0	0	5	3.8	102	77.3
	Communication and Use of Language										
7.	Language that does not demean either males or females are used during lesson delivery	40	30.3	2	1.5	0	0	4	3.0	86	65.2
8.	Language that does not put fear in females and males are employed in the classroom	38	28.8	3	2.3	0	0	7	5.3	84	63.6
9.	I avoid the use of body expressions that project preferential treatment to either males or females	42	31.8	5	3.8	0	0	6	4.5	79	59.8

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10.	Confidence is built in females and males to assume leadership roles in school and classroom	71	53.8	17	12.9	0	0	29	22.0	15	11.4
	Use of Teaching and Learning Materials										
11.	I employ and use TLMs that challenge traditional roles for females and males	29	22.0	18	13.6	1	0.8	78	59.1	6	4.5
12.	Efforts are made to correct traditional roles in textbooks that are gender biased	19	14.4	13	9.8	9	6.8	81	61.4	10	7.6
3a.	Opportunities are given to females and males to manipulate TLMs according to their abilities	74	56.1	3	2.3	1	0.8	9	6.8	45	34.1
13b.	Females are shy and afraid to manipulate certain TMLs	7	5.3	8	6.1	65	49.2	43	32.6	9	6.8
14	I ensure that Teaching and Learning Materials are equitably distributed	40	30.3	4	3.0	0	0	7	5.3	81	61.4
	Planning of the Classroom Activities										
15.a	Classroom seating is planned so that females and males are mixed to benefit from each other.	78	59.1	5	3.8	6	4.5	20	15.2	23	17.4
15.b	Classroom seating arrangement is based on intellectual ability rather than gender	1	0.8	9	6.8	54	40.9	61	46.2	7	5.3
16.	Teaching strategies are planned to ensure equitable participation of males and females	41	31.1	2	1.5	2	1.5	8	6.1	79	58. 8
17.	I review TLMs that are gender biased before classes begin	48	36.4	13	9.8	4	3.0	54	40.9	13	9.8
	Assessment and Evaluation Procedure										
18.	I develop assessment strategies that help to identify gaps between females and males performance for assistance to bridge the gap	40	30.3	5	3.8	0	0	12	9.1	75	56.8
19.	Exercise and class activities are planned and given without discrimination	14	10.6	2	1.5	0	0	9	6.8	107	81.1
20.	I provide counselling services for both females and males to help them solve their problems with their academics	51	38.6	23	17.4	1	0.8	29	22.0	28	21.2

Source: Field work 2020

Table 6 shows responses by respondents on the influence their gender perceptions has on their classroom practices. It further indicates the frequency at which tutors perception of gender equity influences their classroom practices. Their responses were on the scale *very often, often, never, sometimes, and always.* On the issue on tutors ensuring that equitable opportunities are given to females and males to ask questions in the classroom, 59 (44.7%) indicated that they very often do that while 2 (1.5%) showed that they do that often. Whereas 8 (6.1%) indicated that they sometimes provide equitable opportunities in the classroom, 63 (47.7%) said they always do that. However, no respondents indicated that they never give opportunities equitably to females and males to ask questions. A follow up statement that those who put up their hands to ask and answer questions are considered without regard to gender indicates

that 4 (3.0%) do that very often, 14 (10.6) do that often while 18 (13.6%) have never done that. On the contrary, 91 (68.9%) sometimes give preference to those who put up their hands while 5 (3.3%) always do that. It can further be seen from the table that 4 (3.0%) of the respondents believe that males are always quick to put up their hands to answer and ask questions while 15 (11.4%) indicated that it happens often. While 45 (34.1%) respondents never agreed with the statement, 65 (49.2%) indicated that it sometimes happen.

However, 3 (2.3%) said males are always quick to put up their hands. Tutors responses to the statement that participatory methods such as group work, role play, simulation and dramatization are used to ensure equitable participation of females and males indicated that 56 (42.4%) do that very often while 2 (1.5%) often do that. However, while 12 (9.1%) sometimes employed these methods, 62 (47.0%) sometimes do that. None of the respondents said they never do that. Again, tutors were to respond to how groupings are done in respect to gender responsiveness. 38 (28.8%) indicated that they very often ensure that groupings are gender responsive while 1 (0.8%) often ensures that. While 15 (11.4%) sometimes ensure gender responsive groupings, 78 (59.1%) always ensures that. However, none of the respondents indicated never as a response to the statement.

The table once again indicates that 74 (56.1%) of respondents very often ensure that equitable opportunities are given to females and males to access Teaching and Learning Materials while 9 (6.8%) sometimes do that. As 48 (36.4%) indicated that they always ensures that equitable opportunities are given to access TLMs, 1 (0.8%) often do that while no respondent never do that. On the statement that individual needs and abilities are taken into consideration during class interactions, 77 (58.3%)

of respondents indicated that they very often consider students' abilities and needs while 9 (6.8%) said that they do that often. While 16 (12.1%) sometimes consider needs and abilities of students, 30 (22.7%) always consider those things. Responses on the provision of constructive feedback to females and males in class without discrimination show that 25 (18.9%) very often provide constructive feedback while 5 (3.8%) sometimes do same.

Meanwhile 102 (77.3%) indicated they always provide constructive feedback without discrimination. There were however no responses for often and never respectively. This implies that majority of the tutors provide constructive feedback to females and males without gender discrimination. On the issue of communication, tutors responded to the statement ―language that does not demean either males or females are used during class interactions". 40 (30.3%) of respondents indicated that they very often use demeaning free language while 2 (1.5%) often do that. As 4 (3.0%) showed that they sometimes use appropriate language, 86 (65.2%) said that they always use language that does not demean students. Data on whether tutors use language that put fear in females and males in class shows that 38 (28.8%) indicated that they very often do not use language that put fear in females and males in the classroom interactions. While 3 (2.3%) showed that they often do not put fears in students per their choice of language, 7 (5.3%) sometimes do not. 84 (63.6%) indicated that they always use language that does not put fears in females and males during class interactions. In some cases tutors use body expressions that portray preferential treatment and so tutors responded to the statement ―I avoid the use of body expressions that project preferential treatment to females and males. 42 (31.8%) respondents showed that they very often avoid the use of body expressions that suggest preferential treatment while 5 (3.8%) often do that. While 6 (4.5%)

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sometimes do that, 79 (59.8%) always avoid using body expressions that indicate preferential treatment for either males or females. However, there was no response for never. The table once again shows that 71 (53.8%) respondents very often build the confidence of males and females to assume leadership roles in class.

Whereas 17 (12.9%) often do that 29 (22.0%) sometimes build students confidence to assume leadership roles. While there was no response for never, 15 (11.4%) indicated always builds females and males confidence to assume leadership roles. Again, data on the employment of Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) that challenge traditional roles of females and males produced 29 (22.0%) respondents very often do those while 18 (13.6%) often practice that. As 1 (0.8%) responded never, 78 (59.1%) sometimes use TLMs that seek to challenge gender roles of females and males 6 (4.5%) do that always. The table further shows that 19 (14.4%) of tutors very often make effort to correct traditional roles in textbooks that are gender biased. While 13 (9.8%) often try to correct these biases, 9 (6.8%) never made any effort to correct these biases. Meanwhile, 81 (61.4%) sometimes try to correct these biases while 10 (7.6%) always make the effort to correct them.

Also, respondents were to respond to the statement ―opportunities are given to females and males to manipulate TLMs according to their abilities". In response 74 (56.1%) indicated that they do that very often while 3 (2.3%) showed that they do that often. However, as 1 (0.8%) indicated that they never do that, 9 (6.8%) they sometimes give such opportunities based on learners abilities. In contrast, 45 (34.1%) of the respondents said that they always give opportunities to females and males to manipulate TLMs according to their abilities. A follow up statement to ascertain the authenticity of responses provided for the opportunities given. Tutors therefore

responded to the statement that females are shy and afraid to manipulate certain TLMs, 7 (5.3%) that happens very often while 8 (6.1%) said it is often so.

However, as 65 (49.2%) said females are never afraid or shy to manipulate certain TLMs, 43 (32.6%) females are sometimes are shy and afraid to manipulate certain TLMs. In contrast, 9 (6.8%) respondents indicated that females are always shy and afraid. Some of these responses question how tutors claim to ensure equal opportunities in manipulating certain Teaching and Learning Materials. With respect to ensuring equitable distribution of TMLs 40 (30.4%) indicated that they do that very often while 4 (3.0%) often do that. As 7 (5.3%) showed that they sometimes distribute TMLs equitably, 81 (61.4) indicated that they always do that. However, there was no response for never. The statement on the seating arrangement being planned such that females and males are mixed benefit from each other, 78 (59.1%) said that very often mix the seating arrangements while 5 (3.8%0 often do same. While 6 (4.5%) never boarded themselves about the seating arrangement, 20 (15.2%) sometimes mixed the students. however, 23 (17.4%) indicated that they always consider gender during classroom arrangement. In order to confirm what might be the response to a mixed seating arrangement, a statement seating arrangement is based on intelligence rather than gender produced 1 (0.8%) who very often consider intelligence as against 54 (40.9%) who never consider intelligence. However, as 61 (46.2%) sometimes consider intelligence when arranging the class, 7 (5.3%) always do that while 9 (6.8%) often do that. Tutors response to planning teaching strategies to ensuring equitable participation shows that 41 (31.1%) very often select teaching strategies that ensure equitable participation of females and males. While 2 (1.5%) often do that, 2 (1.5%) never select equitable strategies for teaching. As 8 (6.1%) sometimes plan strategies that will ensure equitable participation, 79 (58.8%) always do that. From the

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table tutors response to the statement that ─┤ review TLMs that are gender biases before classes begin, indicate that 48 (36.4%) very often review the TLMs while 4 (3.0%) never review the TLMs. As 54 (40.9%) sometimes review TMLs, 13 (9.8%) always do that, another 13 (9.8%) often review the TLMs that gender biased.

Data was once again collected on the assessment procedures to ensure equity. On the statement that tutors develop assessment strategies that help to identify gaps between female and male performance for assistance to bridge the gap, 51 (38.6%) indicated that they very often develop assessment procedures that helps to identify gaps to assist them. While 5 (3.8%) often develop such assessment procedures, 12 (9.1%) respondents sometimes develop such assessment procedures. While 75 (56.8%) always develop assessment strategies to identify gaps between male female performance for assistance to bridge the gap, there was no response for never.

From the table 14 (10.6%) respondents indicated that they very often make sure that class exercises and activities are planned and given without any form of discrimination. While 5 (3.8%) often do that, 9 (6.8%) sometimes plan without discrimination. 107 (81.1%) said that they always make sure that exercise are planned and given without discrimination while there was no response for never. Finally, response on counselling services provide to males and females to improve on their academics, 51 (38.6%) very often do counsel students, 23 (17.4%) often do that while 1 (0.8%) respondent never does that. However, as 29 (22.0%) sometimes provide counselling services to students, 28 (21.2%) always counsel females and males on academics.

4.2.5 The benefits derived from promoting gender equity in the classroom.

The data in table 6 provides analysis of tutors responses on the benefits derived from promoting gender equity in the classroom. In the table S/D means strongly disagreed; D – Disagreed; N/S – Not Sure; A – Agreed; S/A – Strongly Agreed. Freq means Frequency while the sign (%) stands for percentage.

Table 7: Benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom

No	How the promotion of gender in the classroom id beneficial	S/D Freq %		D Freq %		N/S Freq %		A Freq %		S/A Freq %	
1.	Gender equity provides opportunity to develop full potentials of students	2	1.5	1	0.8	2	1.5	59	44.7	68	51.5
2.	Gender equity enables teachers to meet educational goals and their role as change agents	0	0	2	1.5	4	3.0	75	56.4	51	38.3
3.	It builds the confidence of females and males to assume political and other leadership roles.	0	0	14	10.5	27	20.3	52	39.1	39	29.3
4.	Promotion of gender equity helps in the achievement of gender equality in the classroom	2	1.5	2	1.5	0	0	65	49.2	63	47.7
5.	Promotion of gender equity develops learners to challenge traditional roles that breed discrimination	0	0	9	6.8	27	20.5	59	44.7	37	28.0

Source: Field work 2020

Table 6 gives statistics on the benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom. It can be seen from the table that 2 (1.5%) strongly disagreed with the statement that gender equity provides opportunity to develop full potential of students, 1 (0.8%) disagreed. However, while 2 (1.5%) were not sure, 59 (44.7%) agreed and 68 (51.5%) strongly agreed with the statement respectively. Data on the statement ―gender equity enables teachers to meet educational goals and their roles as change agents" indicate that 75 (56.4%) agreed while 51 (38.5%) strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 4 (3.0%) respondents were not sure while 2 (1.5%) disagreed with the statement. However, there was no response for strongly disagreed. Again, the table shows that 14 (10.5%) disagreed with the statement that gender equity builds the

confidence of females and males to assume political and leadership roles in schools. Whereas 27 (20.3%) were not sure of the statement, 52 (39.1%) agreed and 39 (29.3%) strongly agreed respectively. However, there was no response on strongly disagreed. Furthermore, response on the statement that gender equity helps in the achievement of gender equality in the classroom shows that 2 (1.5%) strongly disagreed, another 2 (1.5%) disagreed while 65 (49.2%) agreed with the statement. As 63 (47.7%) strongly agreed with the statement, nobody responded to not sure. Finally, the table further shows that 9 (6.8%) disagreed with the statement that promotion of gender equity develops learners to challenge traditional roles that breed discrimination. While 27 (20.5%) were not sure of the statement, 59 (44.7%) agreed. The table once again shows that 37 (28.0%) strongly agreed with statement while there was no response for strongly disagreed.

4.2.6 Challenges for achieving Gender Equity in the Classroom

This aspect of the analysis provides information of the responses of tutors on the challenges for achieving gender equity in the classroom.

Table 8: Tutors responses on the challenges for achieving gender equity in the classroom

No	What factors hinder the achievement of gender equity in the classroom	S/D Freq	%	D Freq	%	N/S Freq	%	A Freq	%	S/A Freq	%
1.	Socio-cultural underpins of females and males are a major challenge.	1	1.5	3	2.3	35	26.5	70	53.0	23	17.4
2.	Organisation and the structure of the school curriculum and textbooks are challenges in achieving gender equity.	7	5.3	17	12.9	12	9.1	67	50.8	29	22.0
3.	The way females and males are socialised to accept traditional roles poses a problem	5	3.8	14	10.5	17	12.9	71	53.8	25	18.9
4.	Economics conditions of females and males make it difficult to promote gender equity in the classroom	6	4.5	18	13.6	24	18.2	58	43.9	26	19.7
5.	Teachers own biases and stereotypes prevent them from promoting equity in the classroom	4	3.0	13	9.8	6	4.5	72	54.5	37	28.0
6.	Teachers expectations about the roles of females and males affect equity practices in the classroom	4	3.0	15	11.4	3	2.3	72	54.5	38	28.8

Source: Field work 2020

Table 7 gives a pictorial view to what responses respondents gave about the challenges of achieving gender equity in classroom. Series of statements were made for respondents to indicate their agreement or disagreement to the statements. From the table 1 (0.8%) strongly disagreed, 3 (2.3%) disagreed while 35 (26.5%) were not sure with the statement that socio-cultural underpinnings of females and males are major challenges to achieving gender equity. However, while 70 (53.0%) agreed with the statement, 23 (17.4%) strongly agreed with the statement respectively. Data on the statement that organisation and structure of the school curriculum and textbooks equally poses a threat in achieving gender equity in education indicate that 7 (5.3%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while 17 (12.9%) disagreed. On the other hand, while 12 (9.1%) were not sure, 67 (50.8%) agreed but 29 (22.0%) strongly agreed with the statement. The table further shows that 5 (3.8%) strongly

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disagreed, 14 (10.6%) disagreed while 17 (12 9%) were not sure with the statement that, the way females are socialised to accept traditional roles poses a problem in achieving gender equity in the classroom. However, 71 (53.8%) agreed with the statement while 25 (18.9%) strongly agreed that socialisation procedure is a challenge to achieving gender equity. on the statement that economic conditions of females and males make it difficult to achieve gender equity in the classroom, the table shows that 6 (4.5%) strongly disagreed while 18 (13.6%) disagreed. As 24 (18.2%) were not sure about the statement, 58 (43.9%) agreed while 26 (19.7%) strongly agreed that economic conditions affect the achievement of gender equity. Data collected on tutors own biases and stereotypes preventing them from promoting gender equity in the classroom show that 4 (3.0%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while 37 (28.0%) strongly agreed.

However, as 13 (9.8%) disagreed, 72 (54.5%) agreed with the statement whereas 6 (4.5%) were not sure. Another statement that attracted 4 (3.0%) respondents strongly disagreeing and 38 (28.8%) strongly agreeing was that teachers perceptions about the traditional roles of females and males affect tutors equity practices in the classroom. While 15 (11.4%) disagreed with the statement, 3 (2.3%) were not sure but 72 (54.5%) agreed that teachers perceptions about gender roles might make it difficult to achieve gender equity in the classroom.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

4.3.1 Tutors perception of gender

On the issue of what constitutes gender the findings indicated that majority of tutors held the perception that gender is social construct, it further defines roles for males and females in the society and it is the expected identify of males and females according to their responsibilities. Majority further held that gender is the characteristics and behaviours of females and males in the social structure and dynamics of gender differ from society to society. Tutors also held that gender places one sex group over the other, breeds inequities and differs from sex although there is a relationship between the two concepts. They believed that gender is absolutely not the same as sex and finally held that it proffers sexual and personal identity on individuals.

Even though data collected on gender as a social construct indicated that 108(81%) (Agreed and strongly agreed combined) of the respondents were of the firm believe that gender is a social construct, a significant majority 113(84.8%) held that gender defines roles for males and females in the society. This assertion is consistent with UNESCO (2003); UNESCO (2009), WHO (2011, 2019), Beall and Sternberg (1993), Mogamad, (2011) and UEW Gender Policy (2009), UNESCO (2009). For instance, UNESCO (2009) posits that ‒gender refers to the roles and responsibilities men and women that are created in our families our societies and our cultures". The body further argues that gender is a social and constructed differences in women's and men's roles and responsibilities, which are learned, vary from culture to culture and change over time.

To Beall and Sternberg (1993), gender refers to a social construction by which people define social roles. Mogamad (2011) puts forward that social constructs above gender are the vehicles through which society's expectations are confirmed. These studies confirm the perception tutors of colleges hold on the meaning of gender.

The study further showed that a substantial majority of 77(58.3%) held that gender also gives identity to males and females in accordance with their responsibilities in society. In the same face, 93(70.5%) agreed that gender could also be considered as the characteristics and behaviours of females and males in the social structure. These perceptions are in line with what Wealth Health Organization -WHO (2011) postulated that ―gender is socially constructed characteristics of women and men such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men" UNESCO (2009) also asserts that gender includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviour of both women and men. This relationship between tutors perceptions and that of WHO and UNESCO, are clear manifestations that Tutors of Colleges of Education have very solid knowledge as what constitute gender.

The study also revealed that tutors held that gender is not static and that it varies from society to society. Statistically 113 (85.6%) agreed that the dynamics of gender is society specific and changes over time. This declaration is consistent with UNESCO (2009) that ―gender is described as a socially constructed differences in women's and men's roles and responsibilities which are learned, vary from culture to culture and change over time". It further argues that, the systems of social differentiation such as political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental disability, age and many more modify gender roles. Again, tutors perceptions agreed with WHO (2019) that gender

as a social construct varies from society to society and can be changed. UEW Gender Policy (2009) makes the position of the Tutors conclusive when it opined that gender refers to masculine and feminine characteristics, abilities and expectations about how women and men should behave in society and that these characteristics are time bound and changeable. This shows that tutors believe gender issues are clearly dynamic and change with passage of time.

Interestingly, the issue of gender placing one sex group over another received varied responses. The statistics in 4.2, indicated 46(34.8%) held that gender does not place one sex group over the other. 21(15.9%) were absolutely not sure indicating that gender does not pose any threat to any sex group. However, a significant minority of 65(49.2%) agreed that gender issues cause discrimination of a sought. The statistics indicated clearly how tutors disagreed with certain gender issues and confused over them. Perception therefore differs in some occasions. In as much as the tutors held that gender does not place one sex group over the other, they interestingly believed that gender breeds inequities in the society. This was evident on the 78(59.1%) of the respondents holding up to this assertion. This declaration contradicts the early position held by the tutors and indicated the level of tutors understanding on gender issues. Inequities posed by gender issues are consistent with Mogamad (2011) who opined that ―gender constructs limit the thinking of both girls and women and boys and men as regards their roles in society and their education, the world of work, economics and politics, thus reproducing gender divisions and the unequal power relations that these underline and facilitate". UEW Gender Policy (2009) also indicate that gender gives unequal value, opportunities and life chances to boys and girls to confirm the perceptions held by the tutors of the Colleges of Education.

In trying to establish the relationship between gender and sex 104 (78.8%) of the respondents held that gender and sex are related but are not the same. Although there were some significant disagreements, the data indicated that majority know how difference gender and sex are. This perception was solidified when 90(68.2%) of the respondents strongly held that gender is never the same as sex. This assertion agrees with the works of Lindsey (2015), Bonthuys and Albertyn (2007) Fausto-Sterling (2000), Basaw (1992), and Diamond (2002) in Hinse, Sally and Tam Samgaer (2010). For instance Lindsey postulates that ―people tend to think of gender as the result of nurture - as social hence fluid while sex is the result of nature, simply given by biology.

However, nature and nurture interweave and there is no obvious point at which sex leaves off and gender begins" On their part, Bonthuys and Albertyn distinguished between sex and gender when they indicated that gender signifies the differences which societies and cultures ascribe to people according to their sex. Basaw adds that ―sex is a biological term referring to people and animals according to their sex organs but gender is socially constructed concept which is based on the sex of the people". Indeed, the tutors perceptions indicated a clearly and a firm grasp of the meaning of gender and how it relates sex but can absolutely be separated. The statistics further revealed that 72(54.6%) of the respondents held the perception that gender proffers sexual and personal identity to individuals. This perceptions matche with that of Mogamad (2011) and UNESCO (2009). Teachers perceptions of gender also match with their teaching experiences in the Colleges as majority of the tutors have been in the colleges for not less than 10 years and have been dealing with gender issues.

4.3.2 Tutors perception of gender equity

There was the need to seek tutors understanding on what they perceived to be the meaning of gender equity. On the question of gender equity ensuring fair and just treatment of males and females in education, the study revealed that majority of the tutors believed fairness and justice are what gender equity is about. This was evident in the number of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed with the statement. The combination of their responses indicated 116(87.8%) held the notion that equity ensures fair and just treatment of males and females. This assertion is consistent with UNESCO (2017), WHO (2011), UEW Gender Policy (2009) & McMahon and Geske (1982 in Ester et al, 2013). For instance UNESCO (2017) posits that ‒equity is about ensuring that there is a concern with fairness, such that the education of all learners is seen as having equal importance". The World Health Organisation - WHO on one hand thinks that gender is the process of allocation of resources, programs and decision making fairly to both males and females without discrimination. UEW gender policy on the same subject of fairness and justice posit that ‒gender equity refers to the fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between women and men". McMahm and Gesk (1982) simply adds ‒equity encompasses justice, equality, morality and right".

Consequently 118(89.4%) held that gender equity provides opportunities for both males and females without preferences. This formed majority of respondent and indicated that tutors know that students should not be discriminated against. Evidently, majority of the respondents agreed that equity removes all forms of ill treatment against females and males in education. This perception is supported by Federation of African Women in Education -FAWE (2005) which postulates that gender equity is defined as giving equal treatment to both boys and girls, women and

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men to access resources and opportunities. Blumberg (2009) of course touches on removal of preferential treatment when he opines that ―gender equity denotes the equivalent treatment of a person regardless of gender or sex. It is the ideology that women have the same opportunities as men in life". These assertions by FAWE and Blumberg directly relate to the perceptions tutors hold about gender equity regards to equivalent treatment of both males and females.

On the issue of equity ensuring that equality is achieved in education and in the classrooms, majority of the respondents held that equity is the surest way of achieving equality. Even though there were some disagreements, 118(89.4%) consented that gender equity will lead to the realizations of gender equality. This showed that gender issues still exist because the emphasis has continuously been on equality without touching on what would bring the equality. This declaration by the college tutors is supported by the works of USAID, (2008) which says that parity and equity are the building blocks of equality. It went further to say that while equality is the goal to be achieved, equity is the means of achieving the goals. The findings concluded that gender equity which ensures that fair and just environment is created for men and women to fully develop their potentials according to their respective needs and abilities eventually would promote equality that is much anticipated.

With regards to gender equity being the equality that exists in the classroom, a sizeable number of tutors 69(52.3%) held that perception. However, as many as (47.7%) did not agree with the statement. Notwithstanding, this, the simple majority who agreed with the statement were in tune with Sahin (2014), Nordensvard (2014), World Bank (2005) Genderlinks (2010). Sahin for instance, states that ―gender equity in Education means that males and females have equal opportunities in the learning

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process and that achievement of gender equity will contribute to the future of boys and girls. Nordensvard (2014) on his part believes that equity in education is said to be maintained where there is no discrimination. Undoubtedly, removal of discrimination is done when there is equity to access learning in the classroom as individuals needs and abilities are taken into consideration. The responses from the tutors further indicated that inequalities still exist in the classrooms and something needs to be done to erase them.

On the issue of always promoting gender equity in the classroom, tutors responses indicated otherwise. The results could not show 50% of respondents holding on to that perception. The findings indicated that 50(37.8%) held that equity have not always been promoted. As many as 27(20.5%) were not sure whether equity is promoted or not. The sum of those who disagreed and those who were not sure gave 77(58.3) who perceived that there are hindrances to promoting gender equity in the classroom.

However, (41.7%) respondents contested that equity is always promoted without hindrance. The responses showed that tutors were either not being truthful or confused with the statement or decided just to tick for ticking sakes. However, the perceptions held by the tutors coincided with the assertion by Prinsloo (2006), Unterhalter (2005), Wilson (2003) who held that negative traditional and cultural practice are recipes for inequities in the classroom. Nomlomo and Holdmarsdottir (2012) on their part believe that hostile school environment makes it difficult to ensure retention, progression, participation and completion of school by boys and girls. Outcome of the tutors' perceptions implied that gender equity cannot absolutely be ensured in the classroom due to such hindrances. There is no argument that tutors own biases might also serve as hindrance. This is evident in the assertions of

Subrahmanian (2005), Schecter (2013), Sahin (2014) Sara (2011) and Constatinou (2008). For instance Constantinou opines that ̶teachers' behaviours, attitudes and expectations of boys and girls might also create unwarranted inequities in the classroom".

Notwithstanding, tutors held that gender equity has received little attention in the classroom. This affirms their early perception that gender equity cannot always be promoted in the classroom. The statistics showed that 77(58.4%) held that little attention has been given to promoting gender equity in the classroom. The finding clearly indicated that much needs to be done by all stakeholders in education to devote attention to the issue of equity in schools and classrooms so that equality can easily be achieved.

Subsequently, majority of the tutors held the belief that gender equity is the provision of opportunities for females and males to achieve their full potentials. Out of the 132 respondents, the statistics showed that 127(96.2%) respondents held the belief that opportunities given to both sexes to achieve their potential are what gender equity is about. This can be realized if barriers of creating inequities are identified and sealed. The assertion of the respondents is consistent with Sahin (2014), Nordenvard (2014), UNESCO (2013), and UNESCO (2014). Sahin for instance posits that gender equity in education means that males and females have equal opportunities in terms of economic, social, cultural and political development. He adds that if gender equity is achieved, it will contribute to future of girls and boys and they will benefit from public and domestic life. Nordensvard looks at opportunities as a removal of discrimination in any form when he opines that ̶Equity in education is said to be maintained where there is no discrimination". UNESCO (2014) on its part thinks that

equity is equivalent to and involves the promotion of equal roles, treatment and opportunities for boys and girls within and through education. The perception of tutors was based on their conviction that individuals have potentials to develop and that they just need the opportunity to live in a non-discriminatory educational environment to realize their dreams.

The statistics further showed that 121 (91.7%) of the respondents held that gender equity in education removes barriers of academic achievement for males and females. This showed that tutors know there are barriers in ensuring equity in education, especially the classroom and that unless these barriers are identified and sealed, it will be extremely difficult to achieve gender equality. The assertion of the respondents coincided with that of Baker (1998) who listed traditional instructions, inequitable classroom interaction, teacher expectations and judgements, curriculum materials, and fewer opportunities to learn as barriers to achieving equity in education. This assertion by Baker is supported by Mazilo (1998) and Mhlanli (2010) who also added that teaching materials, teacher attitudes and pedagogies as other barricades for achieving gender equity in education. Meanwhile, Motala, Dieltiens and Sayed (2009) believe that poverty is a major challenge when it comes to achieving equity in the classroom. They opined that people from poor backgrounds find it difficult to concentrate in class as compared to those from wealthy homes. Implicit in these relationship with the responses put formed by the college tutors is a clear manifestation that barriers do exist in education and more importantly in the classroom and the effort of tutors to remove these barriers is very paramount in achieving gender equity in the classroom.

4.3.3 Influence of tutors perceptions on their classroom practices

The study ascertained the frequency at which tutors perceptions influence their classroom practices in so far as gender equity was concerned. Sule, Seda and Muncu (2017) contend that teachers' perceptions and beliefs influence their classroom interactions with their students and students are more likely to pitch into the teachers belief more especially one that is connected with gender. On the part of Khanum (2014), different students may have different levels of motivation, different responses to specific classroom environments and instructional practices. These posits require tutors of colleges of education to have adequate knowledge about their students and institute the best practices that will cater for every member of the class regardless of their gender.

According to Khan (2020), designing and maintaining a classroom's learning is a challenging task for educators. It involves many forces or strategies. It is therefore important to take into consideration each of these forces and employ those strategies in order to ensure a positive learning environment for all students and that all are given equal opportunity to learn and strive. Tutors response to the statement that equitable opportunities are given to females and males to ask and answer questions in class indicated that 59(44.7%) very often provide equitable opportunities whereas 2(1.5%) often do that. The findings also showed that while 8(6.1%) of the respondents sometimes give equitable opportunities for females and males to answer and ask questions, 63(47.7%) always ensure that. A closer look at the findings indicated that majority of the tutors alluded to the fact that it is very important to promote gender equity in class by providing opportunities for students to freely answer and ask questions according to their abilities. This was evident in the number of tutors who indicated that they very often and always provide opportunities for students to fully be

part of the teaching and the learning process. DiFranza (2019) contends that respecting everyone's voice is a very important step in achieving equity in the classroom and that each student should feel that they have the power to speak their mind and that their words will be used productively in conversation. FAWE (2001) urge teachers to enhance classroom participation by ensuring that both girls and boys answer questions in class without fear of discrimination or biases. In order to be sure of tutors' responses for providing equitable opportunities for females and males to ask and answer questions, two follow up statements were put forward. This time, tutors responses on the statement ―students who put up their hands are considered to ask and answer questions indicated that 91(68.9%) sometimes give preference to such students while 18(13.6%) never considered that.

Interestingly, 5(3.8) of the respondents always consider those who put up their hands while 4(3.0%) do that very often and 14(10.6%) often want those who put their hands to answer and ask questions to answer and ask questions. Meanwhile, 4(3.0%) held that males are quick to put up their hands very often as compared to 45(34.1%) who said that it is never true that males are quick to put up their hands. However, 65(49.2%) of the respondents asserted that males sometimes are quick to raise their hands to answer and ask questions. Although 3(2.3%) held that males are always quick to answer and ask questions, 15(11.4%) said it happens often. These findings revealed that even though tutors responded that they give equitable opportunities to females and males during classroom interactions, considerable biases do exist in many times as indicated in the number of those who attested that preference is given to those who put up their hands and that males are quick to raise their hands. These finding are consistent with Constantinou (2008) who argues that ―while one can assume that most educators try to be fair and attempt to provide equitable learning

opportunities for all, it is not uncommon for them to slip into stereotyped attitudes and treat males and females differently". On her part, Khan (2020) adds that ─equity in classroom is a work in progress in which educators inevitably bring the different social identities and social locations into the learning process. It means educators must not only be able to recognise the differences in race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other social identities among their students, but also adjust their approach to teach those students accordingly"

Consequently, participants gave varied responses on the use of participatory methods such as group work, role play, simulation etc. to ensure equitable participation of males and females in their lessons. Mlama, Dioum, Makoye, Murage, Wagah and Washika, (2005) put forward that teachers need to take an all-encompassing gender approach in the processes of lesson planning, teaching, and classroom management and performance evaluation. Among such innovative pedagogical approaches include role plays, group discussions, case studies, skits, demonstrations and study tours which are participatory in nature. The findings showed that while 62(47.0%) of tutors always use such participatory methods to involve the learners, 56(42.4%) revealed that they do that very often. The study further revealed that 12(9.1%) sometimes employ those participatory methods while 2(1.5%) often use them. The implication is that tutors of colleges of education held that students must be involved in the teaching and learning process and that by employing participatory methods, inequities can be removed to facilitate effective and proficient learning by males and females. However, these techniques are not frequently used by tutors as none of the responses crossed 50%. Inequities would therefore still exist in the classroom. UNESCO (2009) believe that the teacher's teaching methods and techniques should be void of

discrimination and must give boys and girls equal opportunity to fully participate in the classroom interactions on regular bases.

Using groupings in teaching is one of the activity oriented techniques teachers employ to ensure full participation of females and males during the classroom interaction. Out of group discussions, the teacher is able to promote cooperation, tolerance, sharing of ideas and gender equity in the teaching and the learning process. The study therefore sought from the respondents whether classroom groupings are gender responsive. The findings indicated that majority of the tutors either always make sure that groupings are gender responsive or very often ensure that groupings are gender responsive. The data indicated that 38(28.8%) very often use gender responsive groupings while 78(59.1%) always use gender responsive groupings. By gender responsive grouping, we mean there is equitable representation of males and females in groups according to their numbers, needs and abilities. However, 15(11.4%) indicated that they sometimes use gender responsive groupings to get every students involved in the lessons presented. Tutors responses collaborate with Mlama *et al.* (2005) and UNESCO (2009) who share the common opinion that girls are not brought up to speak out and when they sit at the back of the class they are less likely to participate unless the teacher makes a special effort to involve them. The teacher must therefore make an alternative arrangement such as breaking the class into smaller groups to encourage the girls to participate better. Groupings are always expected to be gender responsive so males and females can benefit from each other.

The statistics further showed that 74(56.1%) of the respondents indicated that they very often provide equitable opportunities for females and males to access Teaching and Learning Materials – TLMs in the classroom during interactions. While 48(36.4%) always provided equitable access to TLMs, 9(6.8%) sometimes allow for equitable access. Meanwhile, 1(0.8%) responded indicated the provision opportunities to access TLMs often. The sum of those who provide access very often, often and always showed that 123(93.3%) of the respondents do not discriminate against females and males when it comes to accessing TLMs. The implication is that tutors of colleges of education held the belief that by allowing students equitable access to TLMs help them (students) to learn in an atmosphere where gender biases and stereotypes are minimised and that there are no distinctions between what females can do through the teaching and the learning process and what males can also do. This attitude of tutors is in line with Clarke (2000) who indicated that teachers as educators must make sure that students have equal access to and use equipment (TMLs) in the learning process. He adds that if a lab has better and worse equipment in some rooms, the teacher must make sure males and females have equal access to the better equipment.

There is no doubt to say that students come to school with individual needs, aspirations, challenges, and backgrounds. Khanum (2014) maintains that, different students may have different levels of motivation, different attitudes about teaching and learning, and different responses to specific classroom environments and instructional practices. So the need for teachers' knowledge about their students' preferences and styles is indisputable' as reinforced by Reid (1987). The teacher should have adequate knowledge and skills of identifying these differences and make the effort to helping females and males benefit from the classroom interaction

according to their individual needs. Tutors response to whether they make effort to take care of individual needs and abilities during classroom interactions revealed that 77(58.3%) very often consider the needs and abilities of males and females in their teaching while 30(22.7%) always do that. While 9(6.8%) often take care of the needs of students, 16(12.1%) sometimes consider that. The findings revealed that majority of the tutors ensure that individuals are treated according to what their needs and abilities are and that students cannot be considered as a unit to be holistically taught in the classroom. It is an indication that equality in education can be achieved gradually when the teaching and the learning process adopts individualistic approach in ensuring a fair and just treatment of students in the classroom. Accordingly, Alfonseca *et al.* (2006) contend that an awareness of students' learning styles will enable teachers to adapt appropriate techniques and methods that suit the students' preferences. Abu-Dabat and Alhaman (2013) stress that the role of the teacher is to provide several teaching techniques to accommodate various levels of competences displaye by males and females according to their abilities. Each girl and boy brings to the classroom a different set of personality traits, learning abilities, histories and dreams. Once again Mlama *et al.* (2005) contend that recognizing the students' individuality will be useful in accomplishing gender responsive classroom.

One important aspect of teaching and learning is the provision of constructive and prompt feedback to students during the classroom interaction. Bols (2013) postulates that ―feedback pertaining to students' assessment has been emphasised as an increasingly important factor on modern higher education and providing prompt feedback motivates students to high academic performance". On the issue of tutors providing constructive feedback to students without discrimination, the findings indicated that 25(18.9%) provide constructive feedback without discrimination to

student very often while 5(3.8%) do that sometimes. 102(77.3%) ensure that they always provide feedback without discrimination while often and never received no response. In as much as overwhelming majority of the tutors provide feedback promptly to students, the study revealed that some tutors do not frequent them and this was evident in 3.8% who sometimes provided the needed feedback to students. Tutors actions match up with Gordon (2011) cited in Georgeta, (2019) who sustains that ―quality of feedback can create the difference and the effectiveness of the educational relationships between teachers and students, where respect is mutually assured". To Panisoara (2017) ―one of the best motivators of the teacher student relationship is feedback and that feedback provided by the teachers and the one provided by learners share the same importance in didactical process". Clark (2000) argues that ―it is highly successful when we are able to show students exactly how much they have learned and have grown over the school year. These studies consolidate the need for tutors to provide feedback to their students without discrimination.

Effective communication in the classroom ensures proficient interaction between teachers and students. It is the only means by which teachers and learners can make known their ideas, provide and get feedback from each other and make the entire teaching and learning process going. Communication in the classroom takes the form of language and body expressions and the usage of these media may lead to biases or stereotypes. Effective communication is therefore enhanced when the right language and body expressions are used. In the opinion of Clark (2000), teachers are expected to use language that is gender neutral in the classroom. He adds that when referring to students, teachers must use inclusive language rather than exclusive language. For instance, instead of using ‗girls‘, ‗boys‘, ‗ladies‘, ‗gentlemen", the teacher should

simply use ‗students'. For this reason, tutors ways of communicating with students were considered. The findings revealed that most of the college tutors avoid the use of language that demean either males or females in the classroom. About 40(30.3%) indicated that they very often avoid using demeaning language while 86(65.2%) always ensure the usage of appropriate language which does not demean any of the students. Clark (2000) once again suggests that teachers must employ appropriate language all the time and such language should encourage collective communication when no individual feels inferior. It was also realised that 4(3.0%) of the respondents sometimes use language that does not demean any of the students. This showed that there exists certain level of inappropriate language usage suggestive of gender biases towards the sexes though minimal.

Language once again is expressed as a tool of communication that reveals a lot about what we think and believe and therefore must be used carefully. Inappropriate language use can transmit negative messages and inhibit learning. A boy or girl whose teacher constantly tells them ‒you are stupid", may actually come to believe this to be true, with potential for a negative impact on academic performance (Mlama et al., 2009). Again, the findings showed that tutors language does not put fear in females and males in the classroom. The statistics indicated that 84(63.6%) employed language that does not put fears in females and males always whereas 38(28.8%) of respondents do that very often. In spite of the fact that 7(5.3%) of respondents do sometimes use fearless language in the classroom, highest number of tutors refrain from using language which might put fear in learners to be actively involved in the classroom activities.

According to UNESCO (2009) ―language can reinforce gender differences and inequalities and in the classroom often reflects male dominance and relegates females to an inferior position". Teachers therefore need to re-examine the kind of language they use, to ensure that it is gender responsive and it treats males and females as equal partners and provide a conducive learning environment for both. On the use of tutors body expressions to communicate to students during classroom interactions, the findings indicated that majority of the respondents, 79(59.8%) always make sure that they avoid the body expressions that project preference to females and males. Not only that, 42(31.8%) and 5(3.8%) of respondents employ body expressions devoid of preferential treatment very often and often respectively. However, few tutors indicated that they do that sometimes questioning how equity is promoted in their classrooms. There were no responses to never. Implicitly, college tutors indicated the need to use appropriate language to communicate with females and males in the classroom and that insults, fear and demeaning postures discourage students to study to reach their full potentials and do not promote gender inclusiveness. Studies have shown that teachers in many instances are not aware that the language they use in the classroom reinforces negative gender attitudes. They may use terms and expressions, and tones of voice that give the impression that girls are not as intelligent as boys, and vice versa. Such language and body expressions do not encourage students to learn since they accept the teachers‘ expressions as their persona (Mlama et al., 2005; UNESCO, 2009).

One issue that is topical with gender is the assumption of leadership positions in society. It is posited that most people especially feminists believe males have been superior in major positions in society spanning from traditional, economic, social and political. Most religions even forbid females to actively involved in certain decisions

and have special seating places for females. This issue of female inferiority is projected in most textbooks used in schools and colleges. For this reason, the study sought to find out how tutors of colleges of education encourage females and males to assume leadership positions in college and their future endeavours.

Mlama *et al.* (2005) contend that when assigning projects, teachers must ensure that both girls and boys are given leadership positions and roles. It must be emphasised that there should also be equal participation in such activities as making presentations. The findings revealed that 71(53.8%) of tutors make effort to build the confidence of students to take up leadership positions and roles very often. While 17(12.9%) often encourage females to rub shoulders with the males on taking up leadership roles, 29(22.0%) sometimes build the confidence to go for positions.

However, 15(11.4%) always make sure to conscientise females and males to go for positions because no position is the preserve of a particular sex. The findings also revealed that though tutors encourage students and build their confidence to go for positions, they do not do that frequently. It would therefore be very difficult to fully achieve the results of erasing the societal impression that females are not to occupy certain leadership roles and this would affect the involvement of females in decision making in future. The findings are consistent with UNESCO (2009) which posit that teaching and learning materials tend to depict men in leadership and professional roles but women as weak, passive, and submissive. Teachers therefore, are to encourage students especially females to know that such is not the case by assigning them roles during classroom interactions.

The findings further revealed that over 50% of tutors do not frequently employ Teaching and Learning Materials – TMLs that challenge traditional gender roles for males and females. By implication, tutors selection of materials mostly does not consider gender biases. The data showed that 78(59.1%) sometimes employ TLMs that challenge traditional roles of females and males in their lesson presentations. Not only that, 18(13.6%) of tutors often use such TLMs challenging traditional roles of males and females while 19(14.4%) do that very often. Just 6(4.5%) of the respondents indicated that they always employ TLMs that challenge gender roles of males and females. It was observed from the tutors responses that in spite of their bid to deal with gender inequities, much attention is not given to roles that society assigns to males and females that are usually projected in TMLs such as textbooks and others. Tutors therefore do not put in maximum effort to challenge and correct these postures.

The data once again, revealed that tutors do not always make the effort to correct traditional gender roles projected in textbooks for males and females. Clarke (2000) sustains that ―teachers must evaluate instructional materials for subtle biases and stereotyping, identify any roles and life styles portrayed for only males or females and assess if the roles and lifestyles are realistic or stereotyping". This will enable teachers to determine the attitudes portrayed and their rippling effects on students' academic and real life. When the statement on the efforts made by the tutors to correct traditional gender roles projected in textbooks was raised 81(61.4%) indicated that they sometimes make the effort to correct the traditional gender roles projected in textbooks for males and females. While 19(14.4%) showed that they do that very often, 9(6.8%) had never made any effort to correct those biases. Only 10(7.6%) of respondents always make the effort to correct the biases portrayed in the textbooks as against 13(9.8%) who do that often. The picture indicates inconsistencies in dealing

with gender issues which textbooks carry that are full of inequalities, biases and stereotypes against the sexes especially women, and teachers as agents of change in society do not show much dedication in trying to help erase those biases. However, Clarke (2000) opines that teachers must use instructional materials that are inclusive and those textbooks, posters, or hand-outs that show only demographic group such as white females in nursing and men into law and engineering should not be purchased. He adds that if certain genders or ethnic groups are underrepresented in already supplied or purchased materials, those issues must be addressed with students and have them identify ways to make the materials more inclusive. Tutors inconsistencies in addressing such issues will rather encourage exclusiveness in the classrooms. Mlama et al (2005) assert that women are mostly depicted in domestic, caregiving and supportive roles. Men, on the contrary, are portrayed as powerful, assertive and intelligent as well as leaders in society. Personality attributes portrayed in textbooks are consistent with traditional societal notions of male superiority and authority. As a result, teaching and learning materials reinforce gender stereotypes call for teachers to do a thorough review of such materials before usage.

Allowing students to use and manipulate TLMs arouse and sustain their interest in the teaching and the learning process. Teaching and Learning Materials themselves make lessons real and practical and by involving both males and females in the use of them (TMLs), ensures active participation, understanding and retention of what is taught and learned. The question of tutors providing opportunities for females and males to manipulate TLMs majority of tutors allow both males and females to manipulate TLMs without any hindrance. The results indicated that 74(56.1%) of tutors provide equitable opportunities for students to use TLMs very often while 45(34.1%) always ensure manipulation of materials freely during interactions. Although 9(6.8%)

sometimes ensure equal use of TLMs, 3(2.3%) often do while 1(0.8%) respondent never provided such opportunities. A cursory look at the responses indicated that there was a problem with frequency even though tutors ensure that no one is disadvantaged when it comes to the use of TLMs in the teaching and learning process. To give tutors the opportunity to authenticate the responses to the manipulation of TLMs by females and males, a follow up statement ―females are shy and afraid to manipulate certain TLMs" was crafted. The findings showed that over 65(49.2%) held that females are never shy nor afraid to manipulate TLMs. However, 43(32.6%) stated that females are sometimes shy and afraid to use certain materials. While 9(6.8%) showed that females are shy and afraid to manipulate materials always, 7(5.3%) indicated very often and 8(6.1%) respectively. The responses implied that those tutors who believed women to be shy and afraid to use TLMs might discriminate against them on the usage and manipulation of certain TLMs and may not provide equal opportunities for males and females in the classroom during lessons delivery with regards to TLMs usage. This further negates the previous claim of some tutors of providing equal opportunities for students to manipulate TLMs and questions how positively gender equity is promoted in the classroom.

Consequently, tutors response to equitable distribution of TLMs revealed that TLMs are distributed equitably by tutors. The statistics indicated that 81(61.4%) of college tutors always ensure equitable distribution of the TLMs to students regardless of gender while 40(30.3%) do that very often. While 7(5.3%) sometimes ensure equitable distribution of TLMs, 4(3.0%) often do that. There was no response for never. The findings implied that tutors believed the fair and just distribution of TLMs will help students to move according to their abilities and needs and that tutors are aware for the need to consider individual abilities and needs in the teaching and

learning process in order to ensure fairer distribution of TLMs. Lal (2011) sustains that the role of TLMs in the classroom are to make learning real, practical and fun for children. Teachers use TLMs to illustrate or reinforce a skill, fact or idea. TLMs also help in bringing novelty and freshness in classroom teaching as it relieves learners from anxiety, fear and boredom. For this reason, teachers are expected to fairly distribute TLMs so that each student in the classroom will benefit from their usage.

One characteristic of teachers' classroom practices is how classroom seating is planned and arranged so that no student is disadvantaged. How the classroom is arranged can contribute positively or negatively to teaching and learning processes. The seating arrangement must be done such that females and males can learn from each other and benefit from the teaching and learning process. Tutors response to the statement that classroom seating is planned so that females and males are mixed to benefit from each other revealed that majority of the tutors mix students in their seating arrangements. The findings indicated that 78(59.1%) of tutors ensured a mixed seating arrangements very often while 23(17.4%) always do that. As 20(15.2%) sometimes bother themselves with mixed seating arrangements, 6(4.5%) never bothered as how students would be seated. Meanwhile, 5(3.8%) of the tutors often planned the seating arrangement for the benefit of the students in the classroom. It was realised that, in as much as a substantial percentage of tutors 76.5% ensure that students do not see themselves differently from class and arranging the classroom seating by mixing students, a good number of tutors, 19% do not frequently plan the seating arrangements.

Obviously, there would be some stereotyping and biases in such classrooms where females will be seated at one corner whereas males will also be in another corner. The finding falls in line with Mlama et al (2005) and UNESCO (2009). For instance, Mlama et al stress that many girls are socialised not to speak out hence seating arrangements that place them at the back or in corners reinforce this tendency, which in turn leads to poor performance. A gender responsive classroom set up responds to the specific needs of both boys and girls and that good classroom set up that mixes girls and boys enhances participation of both girls and boys. When respondents were given the opportunity to authenticate the previous responses by indicating whether seating arrangement is based on intelligence, 54(40.9%) indicated that it was never the case. However, 61(46.2%) revealed that arrangement is sometimes based on intelligence while 7(5.3%) posited an always situation. 9(6.8%) ensured that seating arrangement is often based on intelligence while 1(0.8%) respondent indicated that considering intelligence for classroom seating arrangement happens very often. The relationship between the two arrangements (the one mixed and the one based on intelligence) revealed that tutors believed that classroom arrangement should always be mixed but quite a number of them arrange the seating according to intelligence in some cases based on the topic and the technique used. This was consistent with the classroom lessons observation made when in some instances students seating arrangement was mixed while in some cases, students intelligence were considered. Arrangements based on intelligence mostly saw either females concentrated on one side while males were also seated on another side.

Observations of classroom practices show that teaching and learning is largely gender biased. Many teachers apply teaching methodologies that do not give girls and boys equal opportunities to participate. Consequently, there is an urgent need to introduce

gender responsive pedagogy (FAWE, 2004). On planning teaching strategies with respect to methods, the findings further revealed that over 50% of tutors always plan their teaching strategies to ensure equitable participation of males and females in the teaching and learning process. 79(58.8%) of tutors indicated that they always plan their teaching strategies to ensure that females and males have equal chances of participating fully in the lessons taught. While 41(31.1%) very often plan their lessons to promote equitable participation of learners, 2(1.5%) often do, as much as 8(6.1%) sometimes plan strategies that promote equitable participation. A cumulative effect was that about 91.4% of tutors of colleges of education plan their teaching strategies to provide opportunities for females and males to participate in lessons according to their abilities. The findings are consistent with Mlama et al (2005) who urged teachers to use innovative approaches such as role plays, group discussions, case studies, skits, demonstrations and study tours to ensure participation of males and females in the classroom. However, the problem lies on the frequency at which these strategies are planned and executed.

Teaching and learning materials are fundamental to the pedagogical process and are critical for shaping young minds. Yet an examination of textbooks and other learning materials reveals that they implicitly communicate traditional and limited gender roles (Mlama *et al.,* 2005). Personality attributes portrayed in textbooks are consistent with traditional societal notions of male superiority and authority against female submissiveness and passiveness. As a result, teaching and learning materials reinforce gender stereotypes. It is therefore important for teachers to be able to review the textbook and other teaching aids for possible gender stereotypes. Tutors response to efforts made to review TLMs that are gender biased before classes begin revealed that though tutors make effort to review those TMLs, the frequency at which it is done is

very low. The findings showed that 54(40.9%) sometimes review gender biased TMLs while 48(36.4%) do that very often. As 13(9.8%) review these materials often, the same number 13(9.8%) always review such materials which is very low. Interestingly, 4(3.0%) of the respondents had never made the attempt to review those gender biased TLMs. The findings indicated that tutors do not frequently review TLMs that are gender biased and that gender inequities still exist in the various classrooms in so far as TLMs selection and usage are concerned. However, Mlama et al (2005) argue that teachers ought to review the teaching and learning materials for gender responsiveness. This would enable teachers to find out if the materials contain gender stereotypes so as to identify the type of techniques that can be used to address them. If for instance, a chemistry textbook portrays only male scientists as inventors, teachers out of the review can include a discussion of female scientists as well. Throughout, carefully review the gender responsiveness of the language used in the teaching and learning materials can be identified, discussed and corrected (Mlama *et al.,* 2005).

Undoubtedly assessing students to ascertain their progress in the teaching and learning process is one of the requirements for effective teaching. The teacher is supposed to plan proficient assessment procedures that will help them to identify the gap between males and females progress in the classroom so that they can strategise to help learners to overcome their difficulties in learning. Bols (2013) stresses that ―assessing students' progress in the learning has been emphasised as increasingly important factor in modern higher education and that assessment helps students to identify their own progress and failures in the teaching and learning process". For this reason the study sought from tutors how they plan their assessment strategies to help

identify gaps between females and males performance for assistance to bridge the gap.

The findings revealed that 75(56.8%) of tutors always develop such assessment strategies that help to identify gaps while 40(30.3%) do that very often. Cumulatively, about 87.1% of tutors ensure that assessment strategies help to find out progress of work and identify performance gaps between females and males for redress. However, it must be emphasised that 12(9.1%) sometimes develop such assessment strategies while 5(3.8%) often do that. This implied that 12.9% of respondents do not frequently plan assessment that would help identify gaps between females and males performances. This indicated that issues of gender disparities and inequities still exist in some of the classrooms that tutors would have to deal with.

The findings furthermore, revealed that majority of the tutors plan and give class exercises and activities without discrimination. Accordingly Mlama *et al.* (2005) assert that teachers should plan their lessons such that allowances are created for all students to participate in the learning activity. Teacher biases and stereotypes may prevent them from assigning activities to students without discriminating against them. Teachers can do away with their biases by identifying students' needs, challenges and difficulties they face in the classroom and plan activities that would cater for individual needs. The findings indicated 107(81.1%) tutors develop and give class exercise and activities without discrimination. While 14(10.6%) do that very often, 2(1.5%) often do that as 9(6.8%) sometimes plan activities and exercises without discrimination. In fact, they sometimes plan and give these activities as and when they deemed fit. This in no doubt may disadvantage some males and females and continuously breed inequities. Meanwhile UNESCO (2009) indicate that the

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teacher must make time for adequate feedback from both girls and boys to ensure that both girls and boys have understood the lesson.

As part of their roles in the classroom, teachers are expected to render counselling services to their students to enable them take informed decisions as it affects their academics. According to Kumar (2017) counselling enables the counselee to know himself/herself and his/her present and possible future situations so he/she can make use of his/her characteristics and potentials in a way that is both satisfying to himself/herself and beneficial to society and further, can learn how to solve further problems and meet future needs. These services will help learners to change their learning styles into more challenging and productive one. The study therefore sought to find out how frequent do tutors of the colleges of education provide these services to females and males considering their strengths and weaknesses. The study revealed that the tutors do not mostly provide counselling services to the students. Apart from 28(21.2%) of the tutors who indicated that they always provide counselling services to females and males, 51(38.6%) provide these services very often while 23(17.4%) do that often. Whereas 29(22.0%) indicated the provision of counselling services is done sometimes 1(0.8%) tutor never provided the counselling services. Kumar (2017) further posits that ―counselling is an important educational tool in shaping the orientation in a child from negative ideas that is planted in the child by his/her peers. Hence, the need to counsel the child in moulding their future through counselling therapy". It could also be found from the data that 39.4% of tutors do not frequently provide counselling services and this would not help males and females to identify their weaknesses for progress. Again, it would not also help learners comprehend that there are no differences between what males can do and females can do in the teaching and learning process.

4.3.4 Benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom

Tutors provided data on the benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom. The statistics indicated that respondents believed that promotion of gender equity provides opportunity to develop full potentials of females and males, enables teachers to meet educational goals and their roles as change agents, builds confidence of males and females to assume leadership positions, helps in the achievement of gender equality in class, and develops learners to challenge traditional roles that breed discrimination. In each case, more than 50% of the respondents held on to the benefits stated in the questionnaire.

On the issue of the opportunities to develop full potentials 2(1.5%) strongly disagreed, 1(0.8%) respondent disagreed while 2(1.5%) were not sure. Meanwhile, 59(44.7%) agreed and 68(51.5%) strongly agreed. The sum of those who agreed and strongly agreed gives 127(96.2%). This implied that very majority of the respondents held that it is important to promote gender equity in class to help develop the potentials of males and females alike. Sahin (2014) posits that gender equity in education means that males and females have equal opportunities in terms of economic, social, cultural and political developments. He adds that when gender equity is exactly achieved, it will contribute to future of girls and boys more than approaches of men-centred, and girls will get benefits from public and domestic lives just like boys. This position of Sahin solidifies the perception held by the tutors of colleges of education.

The findings further indicated that tutors were resolute on their view that equity helps tutors to meet both educational goals and their roles as change agents. The data showed that 75(56.4%) agreed with the statement while 51(36.3%) strongly agreed. The sum of the126 (92.7%) indicated that majority of the tutors held that gender

equity in the classroom is very significant to education and teachers as a whole. This is consistent with Majumdar and Mooij (2011) who considered the teachers position as shapers of society and the school. They posit that ―working towards gender equity allows teachers to re-imagine themselves as ‗shapers‘ of society and the school as a special, equal space". Also Armstrong, Hamitlton and Sweeney (2006) argue that gender equity empowers the teachers to correct their own biases and stereotypical nature to improve their own practices in order to achieve educational goals.

Tutors also held that promotion of gender equity builds the confidence of males and females to accept leadership roles. With this, 52(39.1%) agreed and 39(29.3%) strongly agreed with the statement respectively. This translated to 91(68.4%) of respondents holding on to this assertion. It must however, be emphasized that while 14(10.5%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement, 27(20.3%) were not sure about the statement. This gives a clear picture of how some tutors perceive how significant it is to promote gender equity in their classroom. Definitely such tutors may not be able to identify their own biases let alone making attempts to correct them.

Consequently, 65(49.2%) agreed and 63(47.7%) strongly agreed that promotion of gender equity helps to achieve gender equality in the classroom. The findings indicated that 128(96.9%) held the perception of equity promoting equality. The implication is that tutors of Colleges of Education are very much aware of why they need to always promote gender equity in their classrooms. It is to ensure that no learner is left behind in so far as males and females learning are concerned. Tutors assertion is in tune with World Bank (2005) with the position that gender equity is the surest way of achieving gender equality. World Bank points out that ―a basic principle of equity is equality of opportunity among people and that a person‘s life

achievements should be determined primarily by his or her talents and efforts, rather than by pre-determined circumstances such as race, gender, social and family background". It must be noted that 4(3.0%) of the respondents did not agree with the statement.

Tutors once again held that promotion of gender equity develops learners to challenge traditional roles that breed discrimination between males and females. This was evident from the data of which 59(44.7%) agreed with the statement and 37(28.0%) strongly agreed. In sum, 96(72.7%) believe that equity develops the minds of learners to challenge those traditional discriminatory roles that draw non-existing line between males and females. Sahin (2014) contends that traditionally, society has crafted certain images for men and women which seem to be inherited generationally. Women by tradition must be depicted as mothers and housewives but men should not only be seen as fathers and bread-winners but also owners and protectors of women. Sahin indicates that these inequalities humiliate women both at home and outside and need to be challenged. It is important therefore of tutors to seriously ensure fair and just classroom atmosphere to enable learners identify these negative traditions to help students realize the uniqueness of each sex.

4.3.5 Challenges for achieving gender equity

The study ascertained tutors conceptualization of the challenges that hinder the achievement of gender equity in the classroom. The responses of the tutors varied, however, majority held that socio-cultural underpins really poses a challenge. Whereas 70(53.0) agreed with the assertion, the statistics showed that 23(17.4%) strongly agreed. The sum of the agreed and strongly agreed gave 93(70.4%) holding on to the socio-cultural underpins as threat to gender equity. It must however be

emphasized that 35(26.5%) of the respondents were not sure about the statement while 3(2.3%) disagreed and 1(1.5%) respondent strongly disagreeing respectively. The findings shows that, some tutors have doubts as to what prevents the realization of gender equity and wondered if socio-cultural attributes play any part. Teachers holding on to the perception that socio-culture plays a role in achieving gender equity subscribe to the findings of Prinsloo (2006), Unterhalter (2005), and Wilson (2005) who held that negative traditional and cultural practices such as early marriage, the women house chore duties and other forms of violence against women in particular are recipes for gender inequities. For instance Prinsloo (2006) posits that these cultural practices impact negatively not only on girl's participation performance in classroom, but also undue the gap between boys and girls in terms of achieving gender, equity vis-a-vis gender equality. Again, King and Winthrop (2015) also believe that social norms define the roles that women and men have in the family and the community and this negates the achievement of gender equity in the classroom.

On the issue of a threat pose by the organization of the school curriculum and textbooks to achieving gender equity, the study indicated that 67(50.8%) held that curriculum and structure of textbooks pose challenge to gender equity. However 29(22.0) strongly agreed but 7(5.3%) strongly disagreed and 17(12.9%) disagreed. Again 12(9.1%) of the respondents indicated that they were not sure about the statement. The addition of the agreed and strongly agreed responses showed clearly that 93(70.4%) clearly believe school curriculum and structure hinder equity achievement in the classroom. Tutors assertion is consistent with Mhalanli (2010) who puts forward that gender stereotyping and gender biases continue to manifest themselves in schools and classrooms in particular and they are exhibited through the curriculum, teaching materials, teacher attitudes and pedagogies.

Kaur (2018) also posits that gender biases and stereotypes in textbooks can be identified in text, images/pictures, example, quotes etc. that create the impression that some activities are meant for men only and job of staying at home and doing house activities is meant for women and this makes it difficult to achieving gender equality in the classroom. On their part, Jabeen, Chaudhay and Omar (2014) believe that literature reflects male showvanism whereas females' roles seem to be limited when it is compared with males. These assertions of the researchers indeed indicate that gender equity and equality are affected in the classroom as held by the respondents.

Tutors responses to the issue of students economic situation being a hindrance to achieving gender equity in the classroom indicated that 4(3.0%) strongly disagreed, 13(9.8%) disagreed whereas 43(4.5%) were not sure. However, 58(43%) of the respondents agreed that economic conditions is a challenge for achieving gender equity and 26(19.7%) strongly agreed respectively. The sum of agreed and strongly agreed gave 84(63.6%) which implied that majority of the respondents held the perception that economic conditions of students have influence on gender equity and equality. This assertion is consistent with Motala, Dieltiens and Sayed (2009) who believed that poverty is a major challenge to achieving gender equity in school and in class. In their studies about the challenges to girl education in South Africa and Sudan, they concluded that people from poor background found it difficult to concentrate in class as compared to those from wealthy homes.

Again, Bianco and Leech (2010) found out that socio-economic background of boys and girls received different treatment from teachers. Their conclusion was that people from a lower socio -economic status were particularly vulnerable to teachers' unchecked biases and stereotypes in their classrooms. Even though most of the tutors

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related positively with the statement, it must be emphasized that those (36.4%) who disagreed with the statement showed how tutors held different perceptions and opinions on gender matters despite years of teaching in the various colleges.

The issue of teacher biases stereotypes and expectations on achieving equity tutors once again gave varied responses. Teachers biases and stereotypes saw 4(3.0%) strongly disagreeing while 13(9.8%) disagreeing respectively. As 6(4.5%) were not sure about the statement 72(54.5%) agreed while 37(28.0%) strongly agreed. On teacher expectations, the findings showed that 4(3.0%) strongly disagreed with the statement that teachers expectations about the roles of males and females affect equity practices in the classroom. Whereas 15(11.4%) disagreed with the statement, 3(2.3%) were not sure. However, 72(54.5%) and 38(28.8%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively.

As many as 109(82.5%) held that teachers biases and stereotypes pose a challenge to promote equity in the classroom. This is in line with Bianco and Leech (2010), Ewijk (2011), Auwarter and Aruguete (2008), Mazile (1998) posits that teachers' language, examples, teaching materials, appointment of leaders in the classrooms and expectation of performance may place one sex over other. Constantinou (2008) adds that while one can assume that most educators try to be fair and attempt to provide equitable learning opportunities for all, it is not uncommon for them to slip into stereotyped attitude and treat males and females differently". Again Bianto and Leech (2010) argue that teacher's biases may be very conspicuous on students coming for lower socio-economic background. The findings showed clearly that tutors themselves perpetrate various forms of biases and stereotypes which may affect their classroom practices with respect to promoting gender equity negatively.

4.4 Summary

The study revealed that tutors had a comprehensive understanding of gender equity issues. Teachers are aware how traditional, teaching material, teaching techniques and theirs own biases and stereotypes create gender inequities in the school and the classrooms. Tutors once again know that their classroom practices should be gender responsive and their actions and activities should be developed to give equal and equitable opportunities to men and women to realise their full potentials. The study further revealed that although tutors make efforts to deal with gender biases, their actions are not done frequently and that gender inequities seriously exist in the classrooms despite the efforts taking to curb the canker.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the summary of research findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

The research was carried out to explore the perceptions of tutors of colleges of education on gender equity and its influence on tutors' classroom practices in the Ashanti Region. The research objectives were to explore how tutors of colleges of education understand gender and gender equity, explore how the tutors' perceptions translate into their classroom practices, ascertain the benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom by tutors, and ascertain the challenges of promoting gender equity in the classroom. The purpose of the study was to find out how the college tutors could do away with gender equity biases in the teaching and practices to ensure gender equality in the classroom for development and social change. The study was guided by the assumption that tutors of colleges of education in the Ashanti Region have adequate knowledge on gender issues especially gender equity and that tutors are striving very hard to ensure equity in the classroom through practices which aim at achieving equality for all learners in their classrooms at the long run.

The study revealed that majority of the tutors possesses the basic qualifications to teach in the Colleges of Education which is Master Degree. Very few of the tutors however, have First degree and PhDs in their various fields of study respectively. The tutors' ages, sex, and years of teaching experiences in the colleges gave them the

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required prospectus to teach in the colleges and deal with gender issues especially, gender equity in the classroom.

The study further revealed that tutors in the Colleges of Education in the Ashanti Region perceive gender as a social construct on the expectations on males and females, definition of roles for males and females, characteristics and behaviours of females and males in the social structure and differs from society to society and changes over time. Tutors further perceived gender as a construction that places one sex group over the other, breed inequities and differs sharply from sex though there is a relationship between the two concepts. These perceptions are accepted considering the background and teaching experiences of the tutors.

Additionally, the research showed that tutors perceive gender equity as the fair and just treatment of males and females in education, provision of opportunities for both males and females without preferences, a means of achieving gender equality, equality that exist in the classroom where males and females have equal opportunities to the teaching and learning process. Other gender equity perceptions by tutors include; gender equity has received little attention in classroom and has not always been promoted, promotion of gender equity in the class is hindered by cultural and social norms, socialisation processes and tutor biases, and that gender equity is the removal of all forms of barriers to a successful teaching and learning in the classroom.

On the issue of how tutors perceptions influence their practices, the study revealed that tutors provide equitable opportunities for females and males to ask and answer questions in class, sometimes give opportunity to those who raise their hands to ask and answer questions by compromising equity. Tutors also revealed that females are sometimes shy to ask and answer questions in class. Juxtaposing the opportunities

given to those who put up their hands to ask and answer questions and the fact that females are sometimes shy to ask and answer questions conclude that equity is sometimes compromised during class interactions.

The findings further indicated that tutors use participatory methods and techniques such as simulation, role play, discussion, debate, and demonstration to promote full participation of learners. However, few tutors do not use these methods frequently. Tutors also use gender responsive groupings but it is not also done frequently. On the issue of accessing teaching and learning materials, the study revealed that tutors provide equitable access for all students to TMLs but this is not also frequently done. Individual needs and abilities are also considered very often when planning teaching strategies by tutors. This affects their choice of strategies, approaches and techniques adopted during the teaching and learning process. However, quite a number of tutors do not consider this frequently.

Teacher feedback to students is very important to help them reflect on their own teaching and students' progress. The study revealed that tutors always provide constructive and prompt feedback to males and females without discrimination. These feedbacks are given without recourse to students' gender or backgrounds. The study further revealed that tutors are most often careful about language and body expression choices to communicate with males and females in the class. Language that does not demean, put fears in students or project gender preferences are mostly used during interactions, however, there are certain instances tutors use inappropriate language that scare students to take active part in lessons especially females.

Furthermore, tutors make effort to build the confidence of males and females to assume leadership positions. They give important leadership roles to males and females equitably during class and group discussions and emphasise the need for females to contest for various leadership roles in the college. However, there are few cases where tutors show biases in the appointment of leaders. The study further revealed that tutors do not frequently employ teaching and learning materials that challenge traditional roles for males and females. Again, tutors give equitable opportunities for males and females to manipulate and use TLMs but this is not done frequently. However, tutors ensure equitable distribution of TLMs. Although a sizable number of the tutors sometimes distribute TLMs equitably, the study showed that there are still tutors who distribute TLMs anyhow. Again, tutors do not show much commitment to review TLMs that project differences in roles ascribed by traditions to males and females. They do not take cognizance of them to review and correct biases in pictures and posters used in the teaching and learning process.

On student seating arrangement, the study revealed that tutors very often ensures mixed seating arrangement while in most cases, the seating is based on intelligence. Tutors also sometimes do not bother about these arrangements and allow students to sit at anywhere they want. Also, the study revealed that tutors plan their teaching strategies that will give students equitable opportunities of participant. Over 70% always plan strategies for full participant while some 30% do that very often. This in a way can be accepted considering the years of teaching experiences of the tutors involved and the levels they teach.

On planning assessment strategies that help to identify the learning difficulties and gaps between males and females, the study revealed that tutors plan of assessment is very often geared towards soliciting students' difficulties and gaps in the learning process to help institute appropriate methods to rectify these gaps. On the issue of planning and giving exercises and activities to males and females without discrimination, the study revealed that tutors always develop exercises and activities that are not discriminately in anyway. However, few of them do not ensure equity when assignment, exercises and activities to males and females are planned and executed.

The study also revealed that tutors do not regularly provide counselling services to students to help them assess their progress and difficulties. Even though counselling services are provided, the study showed that tutors provide these services sometimes. The indication is that tutors do not have strategies to identify difficulties learners face so they can help them through counselling services.

The study further revealed that tutors perceive the opportunities to develop the full potentials of males and females as one of the benefits of gender equity in the classroom. Other benefits tutors hold about promoting gender equity in the classroom are; equity helps tutors to meet both educational goals and their roles as change agents, builds the confidence of males and females to accept leadership roles, and that gender equity helps to achieve gender equality in the classroom and education as a whole. The study further revealed that tutors hold that promotion of gender equity develops learners to challenge traditional roles that breed discrimination between males and females as shown in most textbooks and the society at large as one of the benefits.

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On the challenges of achieving gender equity in the classroom, tutors perceive that socio-cultural underpins, organization of school curriculum and textbooks and economic situations or backgrounds of males and females as some of the challenges for achieving gender equity in the classroom. Others to the tutors include teachers' biases, stereotypes and expectations and bad communication with respect to choice of language as one of the major challenges for achieving gender equity in the classroom and education as a whole.

5.2 Conclusions

For this study it can be concluded that gender inequities exist in college classrooms and that they breed discrimination, especially those against females. It was seen that tutors have different perceptions about gender and gender equity and that their classroom practices varied considerably. On teachers perceptions on gender and gender equity, the study showed that tutors perceive gender as social construct, roles played by males and females, characteristics and behaviours of males and females which give rise to assigned roles by society and that gender issues breed inequities and discrimination against one sex group. Tutors also perceived gender equity as the fair and just treatment of males and females in the classroom, equitable opportunities given to males and females to reach their full potentials, removal of all forms of barriers that fight against the achievement of males and females. Tutors also agreed that gender equity has received little attention in the classroom.

Similarly, the study revealed that tutors exhibit different practices to promote gender equity in the classroom. As some of them constantly provided opportunities for males and females to participate fully in the teaching and learning process, others do not. The study further revealed that gender inequities still exist in the classrooms due to

teachers own biases and stereotypes as some were seen to strongly glued to the traditionally constructed roles for males and females. Tutors in the colleges are seen as fulfillers of educational goals and agents of change, however, selection of TLMs, language choices and counselling of students to make informed decisions were all seen in default in most cases.

Tutors also from the study revealed that promoting gender equity is not only beneficial to students but to the tutors themselves and the society at large. They believe that equity develops full potentials of males and females, promotes equality at the long run and removes all forms of barriers in education. However, the study revealed that these benefits are thwarted by challenges like socio-cultural background of males and females, economic situations, socialisation processes and teachers own biases and stereotypes which need to be cleared and solved.

5.3 Recommendations

Having analysed the implications in the light of the findings some proposals have been made for future consideration. These are;

1. Gender equity deals with fair and just opportunities given to males and females in the teaching and learning process by considering individual needs and abilities. So, tutors must all the time institute practices that will provide opportunities for males and females to develop their potentials according to their abilities.

2. Textbooks and TLMs have been structured along traditional roles where male superiority has been projected. Tutors are expected to identify these disparities, review such TMLs before usage in order to help students challenge these biases for personal growth and development.

3. Effective communication goes with the choice of appropriate language that does not demean or put fears in males and females to learn. Tutors should make conscious effort to use stereotype free language and body expressions that promote equity and gender in order to achieve equality in the classroom.

4. Providing counselling service to students is very important but tutors in the colleges showed that they seldom counsel their students. It is recommended therefore that tutors provide counselling services regularly to males and females in their classrooms so that they can help them to identify their own difficulties as connected to their academics and other aspects of their lives. This will help male and female students to make choices and decisions to help them perform positively in academics.

5. Students learn well under different circumstances and environment that help to provide an opportunity to identify individual differences in terms of needs and abilities so as to plan assistance to facilitate teaching and learning that cater for individual male and female students. Tutors are therefore recommended to create a congenial atmosphere that eliminates gender inequalities so they promote equality learning.

6. Gender equity can best be promoted when class activities, feedbacks and assessments are all inclusive. Tutors are expected to plan activities and assessment procedures that will provide prompt feedback from both students and tutors to ensure smooth flow of the classroom interaction. Assessment must be provided without biases and discrimination and must help both males and females to have continuous learning to build themselves up.

7. Tutors should check their own biases and stereotypes that do not give fair opportunities for males and females in their classrooms through proper

interactions and better communications with students. They should manage preferences tailored on sex and traditional beliefs to that breed inequities in the classroom.

8. Curriculum developers and producers of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials must continuously revise and transform the curriculum, textbooks and TLMs so that gender biases can be done away with. Materials that project male superiority over females that breed gender inequities must either be avoided or constantly reviewed to ensure fair and just treatment of males and females in the classroom.

9. Tutors must make it a part of their daily interactions with students by pointing to gender biases and stereotypes that are found in the school and in the classroom in areas of communication, leadership, appointment etc to build the confidence of males and females to contest and accept leadership positions and other appointments to promote gender equity which serve as bases of achieving gender equality.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The following suggestions have been made for further research:

1. The study did not include Senior High Schools and the Basic Schools hence, a study should be conducted on the gender equity perceptions among teachers of SHS and Basic schools and how they influence their classroom practices.

2. A study must also be conducted on teachers' ideas on alternative ways of promoting gender equity in the classroom.

3. The study revealed that much study have been done on enrolment and accessibility of education to all children but not so much study has been done on the relationship between enrolment and gender equity in schools. Therefore

a study must be conducted to establish the relationship between school enrolment and promotion of gender equity in schools.

4. Promotion of gender equity is very much dependent on methods and techniques used during the teaching and learning process. Hence a research must be conducted on the teachers' perception on instructional approaches and techniques that promote gender equity in the classroom.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Observational Guide on Tutors' Lessons Delivery

This observational guide is developed to help the researcher observe tutors classroom practices through their lessons delivery. Areas of interest include tutors' pedagogy, use of teaching and learning materials, classroom planning, communication, and assessment.

1. **Tutors pedagogy during lesson delivery**

- Tutor uses participatory methods such as simulation, role play, demonstration, debate, and discussion to ensure full participation of males and females. Yes ( )   No ( )

- Tutors provide equitable opportunities to males and females to ask and answer questions. Yes ( )   No ( )

- Tutor provides adequate room for individual needs and abilities and assist them to overcome their difficulties. Yes (   )   No (   )

- Tutor exhibits patience towards males and females who are mostly shy to ask and answer questions in class. Yes ( )   No (   )

- Tutor places students at the centre of the lesson delivery. Yes (   ) No ( )

2. **Tutors selection and usage of TLMs**

- Tutor shows evidence of critically reviewing TLMs that portray gender roles in textbooks and other materials. Yes ( ) No ( )

- Tutors ensures equitable distribution of TLMs to both males and females. Yes ( ) No ( )

- Tutors guides students to identify TLMs that portray various traditional roles for males and females and assist them to challenge these roles in course of lesson delivery. Yes (   ) No (   )

- Tutors provides equitable opportunities for males and females to use and manipulate certain TLMs. Yes ( )   No (   )

3. **Tutors classroom planning**

- Classroom seating is arranged such that males and females are mixed to benefit from each other. Yes ( )   No (   )

- Classroom seating arrangement is based on students' intellectual abilities.

  Yes ( ) No ( )

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- The tutor does not show any interest in the seating arrangement of the class.

    Yes ( ) No ( )

- Class groupings is gender responsive. Yes ( )   No ( )

4. Tutors communication

- The tutor does not use language that demean males or females.

    Yes ( )   No ( )

- Tutor's language does not put fears or intimidate males or females.

    Yes ( ) No ( )

- Tutor's body expressions do not project preferential treatment towards males or females. Yes ( )   No ( )

- Tutor does not become too judgmental towards students expressions.

    Yes ( ) No ( )

5. Tutor assessment procedures

- Tutor uses assessment procedures that help to identify gaps between females and males performances in class and makes effort to bridge those gaps.

    Yes ( )   No ( )

- Tutor plans and gives out class exercises and activities without discrimination against males or females.

    Yes ( )   No ( )

- Tutor provides prompt and constructive feedback to males and females without discrimination.   Yes ( )   No ( ).

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for Tutors of Colleges on their Gender Perception and

Classroom Practice

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION- WINNEBA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

This questionnaire has been designed to solicit information for a research studies in Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) on the topic "Perception of Tutors of Colleges of Education on Gender Equity and Its Influence on Their Classroom Practices in the Ashanti Region" at the Department of Social Studies Education at UEW. You have been humbly selected as one of the respondents to help in the above study. The information you provide will help to make a positive impact on improving equitable tutor practices in our colleges. Be assured of maximum confidentiality on the information you shall provide.

Instruction: Please tick (√) where applicable and provide responses where appropriate.

Part 1: Demographic Information

1.   Sex: a. Male [   ]   b. Female [   ]

2.   Age: a. 30- 40 [   ]

                b. 41 – 50 [   ]

                c. 51 – 60 [   ]

3. Highest Educational Qualification:

a. Bachelor [   ]

b. Masters [   ]

 c. Ph. D [   ]

4.   Years of teaching in the College ………………………………….

a. 0 – 10 [   ]

b. 11- 20 [   ]

c. 21 – 30 [   ]

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Part 2: Tutor perception on gender

The following statements or expressions in this table are in respect to tutors perceptions on gender. The questions are the Likert scale 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for not sure, 4 for agree, and 5 for strongly agree. Please, *tick* $(\sqrt{})$ where applicable your agreement or otherwise to the statement.

No.	Tutors Perception of Gender	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	a. Gender is a social construct. b. Gender is rather biologically constructed concept.					
2.	a. Gender defines roles for males and females in the society. b. Gender is expected identity of males and females according to their expected responsibilities. c. Gender is the characteristics and behaviours of females and males in the social structure					
3.	The dynamics of gender differs from society to society					
4.	a. Gender places one sex group over the other. b. Gender issues bleed inequities in the society					
5.	a. Gender and sex are related but are not the same b. Gender is absolutely the same as sex					
6.	Gender proffers sexual and personal identity to individuals.					

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Part 3: Tutors perception on gender equity in education

These expressions are tabled to solicit your ideas as what constitutes gender equity in education. The items are on the Likert scale 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 representing strongly disagreed, disagreed, not sure, agreed, and strongly agreed respectively. Please *tick* (√) your agreement or disagreement where applicable.

No.	Tutors Perception of Gender	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	a. Gender equity is the fair and just treatment of males and females in education b. Gender equity is the opportunities given to males and females without any preference in the class.					
2.	Gender equity is the removal of all forms of ill treatment against females and males in education					
3.	a. Gender equity is the surest way of achieving gender equality. b. Gender equity is the equality that exist in the classroom.					
4.	a. Gender equity has received little attention in the classroom. b. Gender equity is always promoted in the classroom without any hindrance					
5.	Gender equity provides opportunity for females and males to achieve their full potentials					
6.	Gender equity in education removes barriers of academic achievement for females and males.					

Part 4: Influence of tutors gender equity perception on tutors classroom practices

The statement in the table below is to find out how tutors perceptions of gender equity influence or translates into their classroom practices. It is to look at the frequency at which tutors exhibit gender equity in their classroom practices. The statements are the scale Very often, Often, Never, Sometimes, and Always. Please, *tick* (√) the appropriate place which corresponds to the statements made.

No.	Influence Of Teachers Perception On Their Classroom Practices	Very Often	Often	Never	Sometimes	Always
1.	a. Equitable opportunities are given to females and males to ask and answer questions in the classroom. b. Those who put up their hands to ask and answer questions are considered without regards to their gender. c. Boys are always quick to put up their hands to ask and answer questions					
2.	Participatory methods such as group work, role play, simulation are used to ensure equitable participation by females and males					
3.	Groupings are gender responsive devoid of discrimination					
4.	Equal opportunities are given to females and males to access TLMs					
5.	Individual needs and abilities are taken care of during class interactions					
6.	Constructive feedback to females and males are provided in class without discrimination.					
7.	Language that does not demean either females or males are used during lesson delivery					
8.	Language that does not put fear in females and males are employed in the classroom					
9.	I avoid the use of body expressions that project preferential treatment to females and males					
10.	Confidence is built in females and males to assume leadership roles in my class.					
11.	I employ and use TLMs that challenge traditional roles of females and males.					
12.	Efforts are made to correct traditional roles in textbooks that are gender biased.					

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13.	a. Opportunities are given to females and males to use and manipulate TLMs according to their abilities. b. Females are shy and afraid to manipulate certain TMLs					
14.	I ensure that teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) are equitably distributed					
15.	a. Classroom seating is planned so that females and males are mixed to benefit from each other b. Classroom seating arrangement is based on intellectual ability rather than gender					
16.	Teaching strategies are planned to ensure equitable participation of males and females					
17.	I review TLMs that are gender biased before classes begin.					
18.	I develop assessment strategies that help to identify gaps between females and males performance for assistance to bridge the gap.					
19.	Exercises and class activities are planned and given without discrimination					
20.	I provide counselling services for both males and females to help them solve problems with academic					

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PART 5: Benefits of promoting gender equity in the classroom

The following statements are made to gather information on the benefit of promoting gender equity in the classroom. Please *tick* $(\sqrt{})$ where applicable your agreement or disagreement with the statement.

No.	Benefits of Promoting Gender Equity in the Classroom	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	Gender equity provides opportunity to develop full potential of students					
2.	It enables teachers to meet educational goals and their roles as change agents					
3.	It builds the confidence of females and males to assume political and leadership roles in school.					
4.	Promotion of gender equity helps in the achievement of gender equality in the classroom					
5.	Promotion of gender equity develops learners to challenge traditional gender roles that breed discrimination					

PART 6: Challenges for achieving gender equity in the classroom

The following expressions are tabled to find out the challenges faced in achieving gender equity in the classroom. Please, *tick* $(\sqrt{})$ where applicable, your agreement or disagreement with the expressions.

No.	Challenges for achieving Gender Equity in the Classroom	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	Social-cultural underpins of females and males are major challenges to achieving gender equity.					
2.	Organisation and the structure of school curricular and textbooks is a challenge in achieving equity in education					
3.	The way females and males are socialised to accept their traditional roles poses a problem					
4.	Economic conditions of females and males make it difficult to promote gender equity in the classroom					
5.	Teachers own biases and stereotypes prevent them from promoting equity in the class					
6.	Teachers' perceptions about the roles of females and males affect equity practices in their classrooms.					