GLOBAL JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY SOCIAL SCIENCES
(Published By: *Global Institute for Research & Education)*

www.gifre.org

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT: A GHANAIAN PERSPECTIVE

[1]Akua Ahyia Adu-Oppong, [2]Emma D. Aikins & [2]Goddana M. Darko

[1]School of Graduate Studies-College of Technology Education, Kumasi-University of Education, Winneba- Ghana
[2]College of Technology Education, Kumasi-University of Education, Winneba- Ghana
[2]College of Technology Education, Kumasi-University of Education, Winneba- Ghana

Abstract

Women in higher education management in Ghana are an elite group among women. Nevertheless there is abundant evidence that they are disproportionately in lower grades and less secure positions than their male counterparts. There are longstanding inequities which appear to have been met with complacency rather than commitments to bring about change. The aims of the study were to: determine the percentage of women in decision-making academic and administrative positions, to explore the perceptions, feelings and opinions of a sample of these women about their experiences in management, and to obtain a broad base of opinions and ideas from which to develop strategies that would increase the representation of women in higher education management. A survey research design was employed to gather data for this study.

Keywords: participation, institution, women, management, higher education, strategies

1.0 Introduction

The overall development of a country depends upon the maximum utilisation of the citizens, both male and female. Women comprise more than half of the entire world's population. But it can be said that, across the globe the status of women is much lower than that of men in every sphere of life. Women are identified with domestic life while professional work is viewed as a male-dominated sphere. However, with the advancement of time, the fact has now been recognised that without ensuring women's development, national development cannot be achieved (Wirth, 1997). Traditionally, the labour force has been a 'man's world' and as such has been male dominated. Labour force feminisation emerged from what Acevedo (2002) terms a tripartite or threefold shroud of oppression consisting of racism, classism, and sexism. Women's filtration into the labour force ascended after World War II as a result of the need to earn incomes to support families (Gold, 2003).

After the United Nations (UN) women's decade (1975-1985) and the Beijing Conference (1995), there has been an increasing awareness of the worth and importance of the woman. Consequently, there has been a tremendous increase in the proportion of women in the labour force. However, women occupied lower rank positions which required less educational experiences and practice.

The history of women in management positions can best be described as a struggle for survival and identity coupled with the need and desire to protect and support the family. The supply of women qualified for management jobs began to increase as more women accumulated work experience in organisations and completed management and professional training programmes (ILO, 2000). Almost universally, women have failed to reach leading positions in major corporations irrespective of their abilities. Women generally fare best in industries employing large numbers of women, such as health and community services and the hotel and catering industry (Wirth, 1997).

Female managers in every organisation remain a tiny fraction of those in senior positions (Reskin, 2002) and, although female managers have high levels of education and a desire to progress in their careers, it remains the case that few achieve the same status as their male counterparts even in advanced economies (Knights and Richards, 2003; Rubery, 2002).

In 1990, the concept of "glass ceiling" pervaded the literature to describe the paucity of women and minorities heading public and private sector organisations (Maume, 2004). Subsequently, the term "glass-ceiling-effect" became synonymous worldwide with the struggles women face in attempting to move up to the senior, executive and top management positions in corporate organisations (Wirth, 1997).

In Africa, the structure of the labour market is sometimes thought to obey "*natural*" laws, so that women do jobs that are more appropriate for their bodies and social roles. In paid work, women and men work at different tasks in agriculture, mining, manufacturing and services (Acevedo, 2002). Women work in the informal economic sector and they do specific types of informal work, such as domestic work and street vending (Parra-Garrido, 2002). They work from their homes, in which case their work is invisible and may not be considered as work even by the women themselves (Acevedo, 2002).

In the area of higher education, both in teaching and management, women are still a long way from participating on the same footing as men. Women have made some progress in achieving parity in teaching but are grossly underrepresented in higher education management (Gold, 2003). The position attained by women in higher education management is influenced by a number of factors. Of greatest importance is the existence of a pool of formally qualified women, the socio-cultural and psychological barriers preventing women from pursuing academic careers and assuming managerial roles, and the attitudes of the higher education system, especially the academic community, toward women's access to such positions in higher education institution

1.1 Problem Statement

For more than a decade, women academics and administrators in Ghanaian universities have been signalling to their respective university communities that the underdevelopment and under-utilisation of their abilities were hindering their careers, and consequently, the overall development of their institutions. The central argument has been that equality of career opportunity along gender lines must be an integral part of any strategy to promote long-term development in higher education. One of the main ways in which this could be achieved is through a human resource management policy of staff development and career enhancement that explicitly takes account of the needs and aspirations of its women professionals to move up the career ladder in institutions, and therefore increase their representation in the top echelons of university management.

Significantly, some debate has been taking place on the forms in which gender inequity manifests itself, given the clear statistical evidence that comparatively speaking, the level of women's access to higher education and to entry-level technical and managerial positions in the job market have increased. Proof of this is provided in the universities' records on student admission which show, for example, that between 2003/04 and 2013/14 the percentage of female enrolment rose from 32.9% to 52.9%. However, women find themselves facing a number of structural and organisational barriers when they seek to enter top management, the principal route to career advancement; within the same period, women's share of top rank administrative position saw a marginal increase from 2.8% to 5.3%.

It is ironic that the university, a vital part of the education sector that is expected to play a proactive role in achieving the goals of equality of opportunity in the society, is itself facing the acute problem of gender inequity in respect of overall representation of women in the faculty and administrative staff, and especially in top management.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the status of women managers in higher education institutions in Ghana, and to determine the percentage of women in decision-making academic and administrative positions, to explore the perceptions, feelings and opinions of a sample of these women about their experiences in management, and to determine the problems they face. The need to get some ideas of specific conditions in Ghana has resulted in this survey which is focused on the University of Education, Winneba.

2.0 The Position of Women in Higher Educational Management

The position of women in higher education management cannot be treated in isolation from the general status of women in society (England, 2005). Throughout history, women have had only a limited role in society with restricted opportunities (Britton, 2000). Even in this new era, this harsh reality somehow remains true, and gender inequalities continue to primarily disadvantage women, who suffer much more from the discrimination that occurs to both genders (ESU, 2008). The education sector, including its highest level in its ladder, meaning Higher Education (HE), has been also influenced by 'the women's issue', even though the academia has been perceived itself as progressive part of society (ESU, 2008).

The higher education sector is characterised by specific aspects that make it distinguishable from the business world. However, in higher education, as well as in business, men and masculine values are dominant (Whitehead, 2001). Research abounds especially in Europe and North America showing the status of women in management and more so in higher education management. Such research is beginning to attract the attention of research in developing countries. According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) female entrance in higher education institutions in Africa have increased to nearly 45% in 2011. However, the participation rate of women at senior management level in higher education is relatively low. The senior management level, in this study, refers to academic and administrative professionals such as professors, senior lecturers, senior researchers, registrars, deputy registrars, finance officers, deputy finance officers and other analogous positions in higher education institutions.

In several countries women hold less than fifty percent of academic and administrative posts in higher education institutions (Dines, 1993). They are best represented in lower level academic and middle management positions and their participation relative to men decreases at successively higher levels. Representation varies between about ten and twenty percent at middle management level and from 0-10% at senior management level (Reskin, 2002). Representation in the committee system follows a similar pattern with women more likely to be members of departmental and faculty committees than on governing boards or councils. A consequence of this pattern of decreasing representation at successively higher levels is that senior women frequently find themselves

isolated in hierarchies which are predominantly male (England, 2002).

Healy (2009) is of the view that academic life is a sphere where in theory women should find few barriers to opportunity. If there is anywhere that women professionals should be successful, then it is in the universities. However, the reality seems to be that academia has been perceived as traditionally elitist, male and patriarchal in its workplace culture, structure and values. According to Healy (2009, three perspectives explain the continuing under representation of women in senior administrative positions:

1. The first perspective is *person-centred* in which the paucity of women is attributed to the psycho-social attributes, including personality characteristics, attitudes and behavioural skills of women themselves. Focus is on the need for women to adapt-to compensate for their socialisation deficits. Among personal factors are lack of self-esteem and self confidence; limited aspirations in the field of management, lack of motivation and ambition to accept challenges to go up the ladder; women's orientation to interpersonal relations with peers which could impede their upward mobility; promoted myths regarding women's low potential for leadership, being less assertive, less emotionally stable and lacking ability to handle a crisis (Bond, 2006).

2. The alternative perspective, the *structure-centred* paradigm advances the view that it is the disadvantageous position of women in the organisational structure (few numbers, little power, limited access to resources) which shapes and defines the behaviour of women. The underlying premise of this perspective is that men and women are equally capable and committed to assuming positions of leadership. The problem is vested in the structure and the remedy is a fundamental change to eliminate inappropriate discrimination in institutional policies and practices. Among structural factors may be listed discriminatory appointment and promotion practices, male resistance to women in management positions, absence of policies and legislation to ensure participation of women, and limited opportunities for leadership training and for demonstrating competence as a result of the power structure in the workplace (Bond, 2006).

3. Smulders (2008) explores the *culture-centred* approach which links gender centred and organisational structure perspective. Her analysis is concerned with social construction of gender and assignment of specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations to women and to men. These gender-based roles, irrelevant to the workplace, are carried into the workplace. Higher education institutions therefore reproduce gender differences 'via their internal structures and everyday practices' because of the cultural perceptions which determine the attitudes and behaviours of individual men and women and form barriers to the equal participation of women in senior management.

Traditionally, universities run two hierarchical levels of power; i.e., academic and administrative. Women continue to be under-represented at all levels of the academic and administrative hierarchies (Reskin, 2006). According to Reskin, several reasons could account for this discrepancy:

First, among academics, there is a lack of qualified women - especially on higher levels – due to subtle entry barriers encountered by women at the entry levels. This is not the case in administration where there is a large pool of qualified women and, in many fields, they even outnumber the men.

Secondly, according to the traditional university ideology, academic positions are more highly valued than the relative newcomers on the academic scene, the professional administrators. It is a well known fact that the greater the social value attached to a position the lesser the chances of women's success in attaining it.

Thirdly, administrative appointments are more strictly governed by formal criteria of experience and qualifications. On the other hand, appointment to academic managerial positions is considerably influenced by such less tangible criteria as the visibility and recognition achieved by the potential candidate. In this respect, for a variety of reasons, women often are at a disadvantage.

The situation of women in Ghanaian universities is not entirely different from other universities worldwide. A statistical overview report of Ghanaian Universities by Ardayfio-Schandorf, (2005) provides a comprehensive picture of the participation of women in Ghanaian Universities. Her report reveals that in Ghana the percentage of women in the both teaching and administrative-management positions were increasingly low as they moved up the occupational ladder. Among the very top positions, women comprised 9.5 percent, while most universities had never had women Vice Chancellors.

In 2008, the University of Cape Coast made history when it appointed its first female Vice Chancellor. Before this appointment, no woman had made it to the chief executive (Vice Chancellor) position in any university in Ghana. The University of Ghana recently (2013) sworn into office its first female Registrar; earlier, in the history of Ghanaian universities, the highest position a woman had ever occupied was the Pro-Vice Chancellor position. Currently, there is only one woman Vice Chancellor in Ghana- at the University of Energy and Natural Resources. In the other senior management positions women comprise only 13.9% of registrars/secretaries, 1.2% of pro-vice-chancellors/pro-rectors/vice-presidents, 8.5% deans of faculties, 15.2% heads of departments, and 7.8% finance directors (Asiedu, 2009).

## 2.1 A Survey of the University of Education, Winneba

The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) is Ghana's premier solely teacher education university. UEW is a multi-campus university with four campuses spread in two regions of the country; the main campus situated at

Winneba, the College of Languages Education (Ajumako Campus) in the Central Region, the College of Technology Education (Kumasi Campus) and the College of Agricultural Education (Mampong Campus) in the Ashanti Region.

Parallel to this academic power structure is the administrative managerial hierarchy, whose function is essentially planning and implementation of the decisions of the different councils, as well as the day-to-day management of the administrative infrastructure of the university. The administrative directors as well as upper level administrative management positions (e.g. Registrar, Finance Officer etc) are filled through open competition. In addition, on the borderline between these two sectors are the directors of the various service and research centres ranging from the university library and computer centres to specialised centres and directorates.

Although there is some variation among the four campuses of UEW, the current position of women in it can be summarised by the following diagram. The current percentage of women in any given managerial category is shown, followed by the total number individuals in the specific category (indicated in parentheses by N).
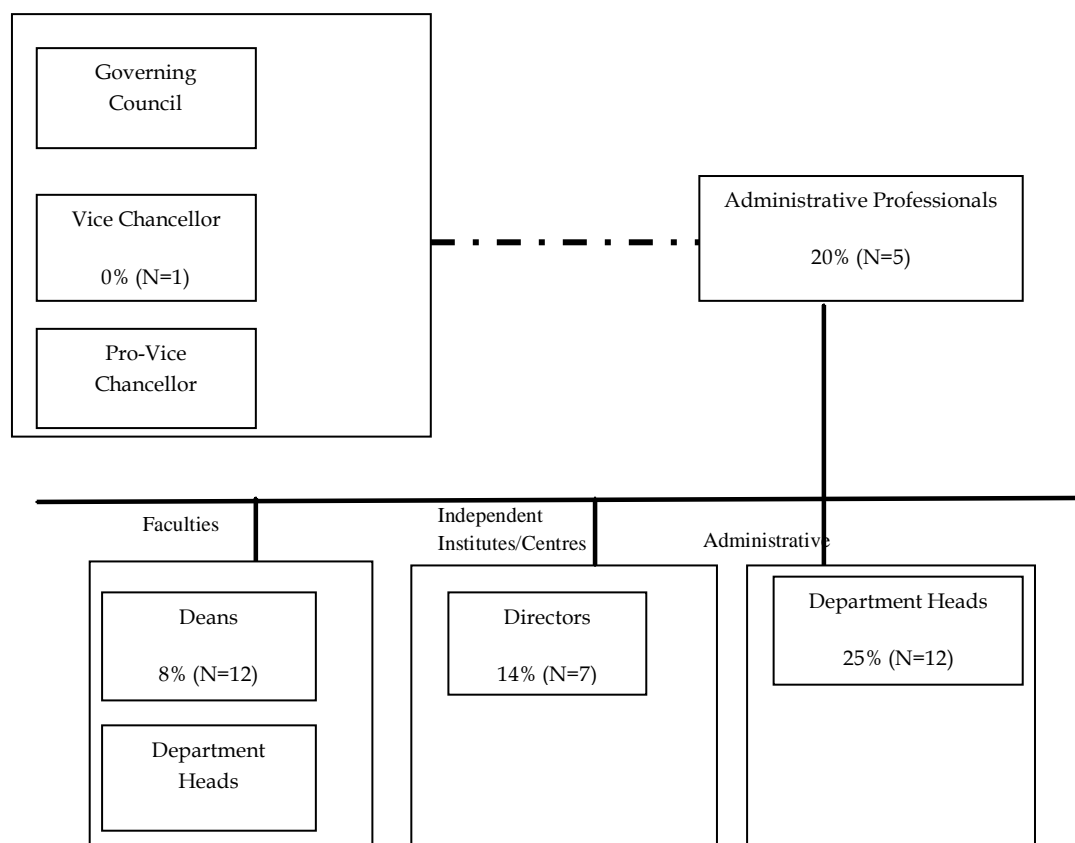
Source: UEW annual report, 2016
Fig. 1: The current overall participation of women in the administration and management of UEW

3.0 Methodology

All the female academic and administrative senior members of staff of the four campuses of the UEW formed the subject of the investigation. The total number of women who teach at UEW is ninety seven (97) (out of 449, constituting about 21 percent of the teaching staff). There are forty women (40) at the management levels of the administration (out of one hundred and thirteen are administrators) however; there are fifteen (15) women at the top ranks of the administration. Sixty eight (68) women, making up half of the total number of administrators and teaching staff, were randomly chosen and questionnaires were sent to them. Sixty one questionnaires were returned. Forty five respondents were academics, twenty three were administrators. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts of managers, and percentages of women managers were attained using SPSS v.12 and were used to show the status of women in the university management. Documentary data was also utilised to cross check, supplement and

confirm information obtained from interviews and questionnaires. The information volunteered by these women highlighted the constraints women face in acquiring and maintaining senior professional and academic positions, and the challenges women encountered in managing such positions. The information obtained from the respondents is presented below.

3.1 Main Findings

3.1.1 Characteristics of Female Respondents

Out of the respondents 10% hold a doctoral degree, all other respondents in the sample had masters degree qualifications and were professionally qualified within their respective jobs; nine were studying for additional degrees. Most of the respondents lack managerial training as only 12% attended short training courses in administration mainly administrative professionals. The majority of the respondents were married (84 %) with a small number of children or none (31 % have none and 43% have one child or two). These women are mainly heads of academic departments (18%) or heads of administrative units (25%) while only one of them is a dean of faculty.

3.1.2 Gender Distribution among Academic and Administrative Personnel

Table 1: Gender distribution among academic and administrative personnel

Positions	Gender		
Academic	Males	Females	Total
	352	97	449
Administrative	118	40	158
Total	**470**	**137**	**607**

Source: Field Data, 2016

Table 1 shows that there are 607 senior members in the university, out of which 137 (23%) are female.

Table 2: Distribution of women in senior membership category as a percentage of all staff as well as of all women

Department/Faculty	As % of all Staff	As a % of all Women
Agriculture Education	0.0	0.0
Science and Environment Education	20.0	0.7
Business Education	13.0	4.3
Technical and Vocational Education	15.3	4.3
Creative Arts Education	18.1	5.8
Social Science Education	10.8	3.6
Languages Education	40.7	24.0
Science Education	25.8	11.6
Educational Studies	23.3	10.2
Centres & Directorates	22.2	5.8
Central Administration/Support Units	25.3	29.1
Total	**22.5**	**100**
N=	**607**	**137**

Source: Field Data, 2016

Table 2 shows the distribution of women positions as a percentage of all staff positions as well as of all women.

Table 3: Percentage of women in senior management positions as a percentage of all staff as well as of all women

Position	As % of all Staff	As a % of all Women
Vice Chancellor	0.0	0.0
Pro-Vice Chancellor	0.8	0.0
Deans of Faculty	0.1	0.7
Deans of Students	0.0	0.0
Directors of Institute /Centres	0.4	2.1
Registrar	0.0	0.0
Finance Director/Audit	0.1	0.7
Librarian	0.0	0.0
Heads of Department	1.8	8.0
Development Officer	0.0	0.0
Total	**2.6**	**11.6**

Source: Field data, 2016

Table 3 show the percentage of women in senior management positions as a percentage of all staff as well as of all women.

3.1.3 Opportunities for Women in Academic and Administrative Posts

The results of the data presented in Tables 1 & 2 show that women are underrepresented in both academic and administrative posts at UEW, particularly in top administrative positions. In UEW, the women constitute 21% of the total senior member academic staff, 25% of the senior member administrative staff, 18% of the total heads of academic departments, 8% of the total number of Deans of Faculties; while top level positions Vice Chancellor and the Pro-Vice Chancellor as well as registrar are 100% male. This means that in UEW women's participation in management has been minimal; they were found primarily in intermediate management level positions, while being nonexistent at top-level posts. So, their participation in the decision-making process is still low.

3.1.4 Opinions of Respondents about their Management Experience

Concerning the factors that contributed to their appointment to managerial positions, 95% of the respondents said it was their academic qualifications, about 12% added previous experience and seniority in rank; 51% mentioned personal characteristics, (e.g. being responsible, hard-working, conscientious, patient, precise, independent, committed individuals, known for their sustained performance, good communication skills). This means that the majority of respondents have a good self-image, and were probably chosen as managers for their outstanding academic and personal qualities.

The main administrative responsibilities held by respondents correspond to their respective positions, e.g. the deans supervise all academic and administrative matters in the faculty participate in the decision-making process, write reports, chair faculty boards; the heads of department prepare academic schedules, department budgets; the directors of students affairs supervise all matters related to student activities, and so on.

3.1.5 Managing Career and Family

Concerning the effects of job responsibilities on their personal, family and social lives, the majority of respondents feel that they have sacrificed other areas of their lives to success in their jobs. About 71% said that they do not have enough time for leisure and relaxation; 24 % added that they feel job stress, fatigue and anxiety; 64% said that the job decreases the time allocated to the family; 44% said that it diminishes their social life; about 25% said their jobs have no effect on their personal and family life.

Regarding the effect of family responsibilities on their jobs about 80% said that these responsibilities have no influence at all; 19% said they have little effect; only four said that these effects are considerable. Some of their responses are captured as follows:

I find it hard to find time for myself. I am faced with role-conflict and role-overload when the children are sick (Senior Lecturer and Head of Department).

It had not been easy until they left primary school because of the educational system (private tuition and competition) that puts a lot of pressure on parents and students. It was pretty hard at that time. Now, it is a bit easier for me since they are at secondary school. But, even then, you've got responsibilities at home (drive them around). I can't cope without a house-help. I need people to help me at home, otherwise it is too much. The challenge is whether I am able to reach my target, for example, my research, and then make sure that my children do well in their studies and that family life is fulfilling for my children and me to keep everything going (Senior Assistant Registrar).

Information gathered from the responses imply that most of the respondents are able to manage their career and family responsibilities in spite of challenges encountered.

3.1.6 Participation in decision-making

With respect to their participation in the decision-making process, 78% of the respondents said they participate very effectively within the domain of their responsibilities and within the rules and regulations, while 16% said that they feel their participation is partial and 6% felt that it is limited. On the other hand, 78% said that they use democratic methods in their decision-making process, by discussing and sharing views with others, respecting the opinions of specialists; 34% said they study the issues carefully and apply the rules; while 12% said that sometimes they take firm individual decisions when needed, within the rules, and some mentioned being objective without rigidity.

In response to the question whether they believe that there are any differences between men and women in management or decision-making styles, 65% of the respondents said no, and 35% said yes. The majority of the latter (32%) said that a woman is easier to deal with as she is more careful when taking decisions, more democratic, more sensitive to the understanding of issues, more objective, hard-working and more committed than a man. However, 100% of the respondents believe that a woman is able to participate as effectively as a man in the decision-making process, and in holding leadership responsibilities.

3.1.7 Relationship with Superiors

Concerning their positive and negative feelings regarding their relationships with their male superiors, 90% said they have good relationships based on respect, cooperation, reciprocal confidence and understanding. However, 18% mentioned that the social relationships with male superiors are cold or revealing lack of confidence and

negative attitudes towards women and their abilities; some men are reserved and feel uncomfortable while discussing issues with women; consequently cooperation with them is limited.

While dealing with female superiors, 65% of the respondents said that their relationships are based on respect, cooperation, friendships, understanding, confidence and frankness. However, some mentioned competition, jealousy, lack of objectivity. Only 10% said that there is no difference in the relationships with superiors due to sex, but to personal characteristics of the individuals.

3.1.8 Discrimination and prejudice at the workplace

In relation to their feelings about any gender discrimination between them and their male colleagues in similar administrative positions, 94%, 85%, 77% and 79% of the respondents said that there is no discrimination in: salary, promotion opportunities, level of responsibility given to both sexes and the relationships with superiors due to gender, respectively. The ones, who affirmed the existence of discrimination, said that some positions, like the posts of Vice Chancellor and the Pro-Vice Chancellor, are reserved for men (14 %), that the women are given a leadership position only when necessary. These respondents thought they had been victims of gender prejudices and thought that women were not treated the same way as their male counterparts; below are some verbatim responses:

Being a young woman certainly does impact the way I am treated in this place as I am often expected to serve food during departmental events and provide administrative assistance to more senior academics (Lecturer).

During my job interview I was asked questions about my personal life, if I was married, had children, if I was thinking of getting married, about my parents. This happens all of the time to women particularly when there is a male or all male interview panel. They will not ask this to men. You have to prepare for these questions. I find this very upsetting (Assistant Registrar)

Some added, however, that she would have to sacrifice more than a man because of her family duties. On the other hand, 58% of the respondents believe that women do not have equal opportunities to participate in higher education management; yet 42% believe that women have these opportunities.

3.1.9 Qualities and attributes for achieving success

With regards to the variables (personal, academic, family, social) which could help a woman to achieve success in higher education management, 92% of the respondents consider academic qualifications as the main variable; 32% added, as important variables, experience and continuous training; 63% believe in personal characteristics, i.e. interpersonal skills and good relationships with others, managerial skills, self-confidence, objectivity, commitment, patience, intelligence; 58% stressed the family relationships and less family responsibilities; 48% mentioned the extent of acceptance of women by society and the change in traditional attitudes and stereotypes regarding women.

In response to whether they feel they need training in any area to achieve better management in higher education, 66% of the respondents said yes, while 34% said no. The majority of the first group need training in: modern management techniques applied to higher education administration, the use of computers in administration and the skills needed for financial matters and planning the budget.

In addition, some respondents mentioned the importance of visiting other institutions to benefit from their experience; others mentioned the necessity of continuous training and mentoring.

3.2 Strategies to Increase Women's Participation in Higher Education Management

Responses gathered from the respondents indicated that, for women to be able to perform at par with their male colleagues there was the need for institutionalised programmes to help them in the effective performance of duties and responsibilities. Such programmes as mentoring and career development training were emphasised by all respondents. They were of the view that mentoring and career development training have the capacity of equipping women with the requisite knowledge and skills needed to perform effectively.

3.2.1 Mentoring

The role of mentors was seen by the respondents as crucial to their career progression and development both personally and professionally. The role of mentors was equally crucial for respondents for each management level. All of the respondents thought that having a mentor was crucial to their career progression. About 80% reported that they would like to have a mentor. The role of mentors was equally crucial for respondents for each management level.

However, the same women reported that they were not given the opportunity to have a mentor. The respondents who had mentors reported that their career success was generally influenced by access to supportive mentors. In other words, successful women had access to professional based networks. This is apparent in the following testimonies:

My mentor stretched me intellectually and gave me lot of support . . . He gave me more than I gave him . . . but, I must say it is not a one way flow. My mentor taught me ways of looking intellectually at knowledge in his teaching. He put me on committees and training courses (Senior Lecturer and Head of Department).

One of my mentors supported me in the office and in working in various roles. I found the other mentor's discussions particularly invigorating. Both were very supportive. They helped me to get a job in the university. It is about being willing to sit and discuss intellectual questions, challenge each other and be challenged (Deputy Registrar).

3.2.2 Career development

One issue raised in improving performance of women in management by the respondents was career development. Over half (54%) of the respondents reported that they had never benefited from any career development programme. The remaining respondents said even though they had received some form of training, such opportunities seldom presented themselves. The study's results demonstrate that 88% of the respondents have access to mentors, 40% are members of social networks and over half (54%) have access to career development training programmes. Moreover, all respondents have access to at least, one type of career or work-related support structure, with 60% being part of the major decision making, 35% being frequently invited to meetings, and 70% having succession planning for career advancement.

The findings of the study indicate that a quarter of the sample population stated that they had never participated in social network activities in their career. Women found most entertainment venues where business dealings were made, unsuitable for them as they are geared towards male managers. About 80% of the respondents were of the view that training and development programmes should encapsulate important values and expectations of employees within the university. Such development programmes should target all employees who are considering promotion and managerial positions (within the University).

3.2.3 Institutional and government support

About 87% of the respondents were of the view that there should be commitment and institutionalised support from the government through the provision of legislative and infrastructure support which give tangible recognition for creating an enabling environment for women. Special programmes for women are necessary but they should be backed at government and institutional level by anti-discrimination legislation and regulations. Some of the responses are captured below:

*One major strategy needed is a political decision to alter the current unequal conditions and structures that continue to define women as secondary persons and to intensify efforts to achieve equity in the appointment, election and promotion of women to high positions in different areas, thus ensuring their participation in the decision-making and policy-making processes (*Head of Department*).*

*As women are under-represented at top-level positions, a compensatory measure could be taken to assign a certain percentage of the managerial posts to women and to ensure that such positions are accessible to us (*Assistant Registrar*).*

Several conclusions can be drawn from this summary description of the relative share of women in different types of managerial and administrative positions. Within the university hierarchy both in terms of internal and external affairs of the university, the most visible, prestigious and influential position is that of the Vice Chancellor. Only full professors are eligible for Vice Chancellorship. So far, no woman in UEW academic history has succeeded to reach the status of Vice Chancellor, only one woman has succeeded to reach the status of Pro-Vice Chancellor. With rare exceptions, faculty deans are also supposed to be either senior lecturers or professors. Taking into account the small number of women among these categories, they are underrepresented among deans. At present only one faculty has a woman as dean. The presence of female directors and heads also varies considerably from one faculty to another. Women directors and heads everywhere tend to be concentrated in the more typically 'feminine areas' of e.g. humanities, educational extension centres.

In addition to the managerial positions within UEW, there are several boards and committees more or less directly responsible for policy formulation and resource allocation in UEW. Such boards and committees have fewer women as members; women on such committees usually serve these committees as secretaries or at best member/secretaries. Of the total number of 60 members of the five sub-committees of the academic board, women constitute only 27%. The proportion of women on the University Council is also clearly less than could be expected on the basis of their qualified numbers.

In the administrative structure of UEW, the overwhelming majorities of secretarial, clerical, and supporting service jobs, as well as lower and middle level administrative positions, are held by women. Thus, unlike in the case of the academic staff, within the university administration, women are well provided with opportunities to gain administrative and managerial experience. On the basis of the above, one can conclude that at present the likelihood of a woman achieving a managerial position at UEW is greater in the administrative than in the academic hierarchy.

4.0 Conclusion

This paper documents a conscious attempt to address the issue of gender equality in the employment practices in one of the public universities in Ghana in respect of its academic and administrative staff. The evidence suggests that at the University of Education, Winneba, women are under-represented at all levels in teaching and administration other than mid-level administration, and teaching at the lecturer level.

The reasons for the under-representation can be attributed to a number of factors. These are: although on the increase, structural barriers in the formal university appointments system; inaccessibility to informal university networks, and sometimes the rejection of these are acceptable means of mobilising support for academic and other pursuits; competing responsibilities at work and in the home; mythical perceptions of the role of women held by university men and women and the internalised perceptions of 'accepted female roles', thereby minimising assertive efforts on the part of women.

Because of this, the challenge to Ghanaian women in general and to woman educators or managers in institutions of higher education and UEW in particular, is not to compare themselves to men but to find their own place in society. This process may take time but it should be the course to follow. Stakeholders need to acknowledge that women managers in higher education in Ghana today can achieve much when efforts to improve their capabilities are accompanied by some basic structural changes in the system and by a concerted effort to halt the gender stigmatisation which dominates the system.

References

Acevedo, D. (2002). Feminist Inroads in the Study of Women's Work and Development' Maracay, Universidad de Carabobo.

Anker, R. (2008). *In the world " Gender and Jobs: Gender segregation of occupations.* Geneva: ILO Publishing Company.

Ardayfio-Schandorf, E. (2005). Different Places, Different Voices: Gender and Development. Geneva, Switzerland.

Asiedu, A. B. (2009). Women in Management: Prospects and Challenges. *Journal of Education and Social Management* 16: 47-68.

Bernstein, R. (2006). Engendering equality in the boardrooms. *Europa International Herald Tribune.*

Bond, T. (2006). Counselling Supervision: Ethical Issues in Counselling. The BAC Counselling Reader. Sage Publication, London.

Britton, D. (2000). The Epistemology of the Gendered Organization. *Gender & Society, 14,3* , 418–434.

Dines, E. (1993). "Overview". Women in Higher Education Management, London: Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO

England, P. (2005). Sex inequality in labour markets: the role of motherhood and segregation. *Social Politics, Summer* , 264-288.

ESU(2008). Policy paper on gender equality in Higher Education. URL: http://www.esu-online.org/news/article/6064/100/ (Retrieved August 20, 2013)

Gold, A. (2003). "Enterprise Culture, Equity and Gendered Change in Commonwealth Higher Education", Williams Gareth (ed.) *The Enterprising University: Reform, Excellence and Equity,* Burkingham: Open University Press

Healy, G. (2009). Reflections on researching inequalities and intersectionality. Equality, diversity and inclusion at work: a research companion. M. Ozbilgin. Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

ILO. (2000). *International Labour Report.* Geneva: ILO, Publishing Company.

Maume, D. J. (2004). Is the Glass Ceiling a Unique Form of Inequality? Evidence from a Random-Effects Model of Managerial Attainment. *Work and Occupations*, Vol. 31 No. 2, May 2004, 250-274

Knights, D. & Richards, W. (2003). "Sex Discrimination in UK Academia." *Gender Work and Organization* 10: 213-238.

Parra Garrido M (2002). La salud de las mujeres trabajadoras en América Latina. In: Messing K, eds. El trabajo de las mujeres: Comprender para transformar. Madrid, Catarata.

Reskin, B. (2012). Retheorizing employment discrimination and its remedies. The new economic sociology: developments in an emerging field M. Guillen, R. Collins, P. England and M. Meyer, Russel Sage Foundation.

Roth, L. (2003). Selling women short: A Research note on gender differences in compensation on Wall Street. *Social Forces, 82,* 783-802.

Rubery, J. (2012). "Gender mainstreaming and gender equality in the EU: the impact of the EU employment strategy." Industrial Relations Journal 33(5): 500-522.

Smulders, A. E. M. (2008) Creating Spaces for Women: Gender Linked Factors in Managing Staff in Higher Education Institutions Paris: UNESCO, International Institute for educational Planning.

Whitehead, S. (2001), Woman as manager: a seductive ontology, *Gender, Work and Organisation*, 8(1), pp. 84-107.

Wirth, L. (1997). *International Labour Organisation Report on Women's Corporate Progress.* Geneva: ILO.