UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CHALLENGES OF WOMEN IN ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS IN

EDUCATION IN THE ADENTA DISTRICT IN THE GREATER ACCRA

REGION OF GHANA

EVELYN HAWA KANCO

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BY

EVELYN HAWA KANCO

Dissertation submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Award of Masters Degree in Educational Administration

MAY 2013

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature:……………………..................Date:………………........

Name: Evelyn Hawa Kanco

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Supervisor's Signature:………………………………… Date:……………........

Supervisor's Name: Mr. S. K. Atakpa

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to find out the challenges of women in administrative positions. The study was also to find out factors that encourage women to aspire for leadership positions in education. Some of the research questions that guided the study included; What are the main challenges of women in administrative positions in the Adenta Municipality? What effective support services are provided for female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality to enhance their performance?

The population was made up of 81 heads and 116 assistants in the in 81 schools in Adenta municipality in the Greater Accra Region. The purposive and random sample methods were used to select 130 respondents.

Lack of financial resources; lack of material resources; role conflict (administration and teaching); thefts at school; family commitments; allocating resources; and heading small, non-prestigious school were found to be the main challenges of women in administrative positions. The study recommended that more women should be involved in leadership to motivate other women who aspire to be leaders.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my mother, Madam Sala Christian, and my loving husband, Bishop S. V.

Kanco.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

This study sought to reveal the specific problems confronting some female school heads in Ghana as they strive to administer their schools efficiently and effectively. It has previously been noted that leadership strategies vary considerably and they depend on the level of the heads effectiveness and situational attributes (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Fiedler, 1967). In a review of 18 studies, Leithwood and Montgomery (1982) observed that the problems leaders confront could best be considered symptoms of more fundamental problems as yet uncovered. They delineated five clusters of problems confronting schools heads as being related to teachers, the principal, those occupying the role of principal, district level administration and the community (parents included).

Leadership has been the central focus of studies in the field of educational administration. Most studies have largely been based on the experience of white males (Glazier, 1991) in the field of school administration. Throughout history, leadership roles were held by men (Sloan, 1999). This social attitude or injustice has made women reluctant to pursue educational and administrative leadership positions (Epp, 1993).

In many fields, research has shown that women fare differently from men in terms of their career patterns. Usually, women experience higher levels of attrition than do their male counterparts. This unequal situation is compounded by the fact that women also tend to receive less compensation than their male counterparts; their rate of advancement in an organization is slower; and generally interrupts their professional careers in order to devote time to raising a family (Gupton & Slick, 1996)

Perhaps Marshall (1985), Johnstone (1986), Dorsey (1989), Irby and Brown (1995) and Hudson and Rea (1996) were correct when they found a link between gender and administrative problems. Marshall (1985)'s study was very explicit when it propounded that because women chose a career post viewed by society as a male domain (principalship) they tended to introduce a deviant pattern in that role since it is viewed as a challenge to sex-roles stereotypes. Stigmas are thus attached to females in this position a problem with which they also have to cope. A later study by Dorsey (1989), argued that the problems females face were partially rooted in "the pattern of gender socialization and belief systems". Dorsey (1989) went further to state that apart from the prejudice and discrimination against women, women themselves develop lower self-esteem that may suppress their achievement motive.

Stemming from the negative societal perceptions, leadership is perceived and portrayed as a masculine construct based on masculine values (Manwa, 2002; Schein, 1994). In the case of Zimbabwe, men dominate in leadership positions while women play a subservient role in most areas of endeavour (Dorsey, 1989;

Gordon, 1996). Peoples' perceptions have thus been attuned to associate leadership with males (Manwa, 2002; Gordon, 1994). This conceptualisation of males as leaders or managers (the masculisation of gender) has resulted in contemporary management theory being criticized for being based on masculine values and concepts (Watson & Newby, 2005).

A related challenge confronting any administrator relates to role conflict (Mutopa, Shumba, Shumba, Maphosa, & Mubika, 2006; Hoy & Miskel, 1991). Bureaucratic expectations and one's social agenda may be incompatible. A female head may, for example, be expected to take her sick child, who is attending school at the school she is heading, to hospital during working hours. She may also be required to discipline the same child for deviant behaviour. Her role as principal and parent may cause conflict. Which of the two takes precedence? The roles of parent, principal and spouse may thus produce conflict for a given administrator (Hoy & Miskel, 1991). Mutopa *et al* (2006) showed the negative effects of the dual role of managing school affairs and teaching among school heads. Teachers perceived the heads as ineffective practitioners since they were mainly engrossed in administrative duties. As such school heads faced problems that militated on their performance (Mutopa *et al.,* 2006). Their study did not delineate the school heads by gender. The head's personality could also be a determining factor. Wolman and Frank cited in Marshall (1985), identified isolation, frustration and ineffectiveness as potential sources, not only of administrative ineptitude but also stress. On promotion, some women are invariably detached and uprooted from their families and this may impact on their administrative prowess as well.

Affirmative action policies, while being hailed as a milestone towards women's emancipation, have brought with them some problems. Renihan (1997) argue that women are appointed to administrative positions when they least expect it. Marshall (1985) cites an example of a scenario of a frustrated female head. Her boss angered a Mrs. Bennis when it was made known to her that her elevation from a classroom teacher to primary school head had been done to meet affirmative action pressures. She was unhappy in her new career for she felt like an outcast among her contemporaries. This may be due to the fact that such administrators are normally inadequately prepared for the post and the demands of that office (Amodeo & Emislie, 1985).

The scenarios presented above are compounded by the fact that most school heads are untrained in school administration on assumption of that leadership role (Renihan, 1997, Gwarinda, 1995, Motsamai, 1994, Ozga, 1993, Laws & Dennison, 1990, Makara-Ntimo, 1985 Marshall, 1985). School heads are, in essence, "senior teachers" who ran schools without pre-service training in headship hence do not possess requisite skills in, for example, supervision, accounting, time-tabling, administration management, and curriculum organization (Gwarinda, 1995; Motsamai, 1994). For them to cope, they resorted to the "sink or swim" principle. Motsamai (1994) study did not however include gender as a variable in the analysis. Because school heads in Zimbabwe run similar schools, one could probably deduce that administrative problems cut across gender.

While the preceding accounts relate problems of heads to their gender roles, as well as policy and institutional aspects, other studies catalogue administrative problems of a general nature, (Batchler, 1981; Stromquist, 1989; Renihan, 1997). Human and material resources (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982) and administrative time (Renihan, 1997) are perceived as inadequate at schools.

Furthermore, school heads do not allocate adequate time to curricular leadership supervision and teaching because they tend to be bogged down by incidentals or unexpected activities. An equally perplexing issue is what has been referred to as multiple expectations (Renihan, 1997). Various interest groups as teachers, groups, the community etc, tend to present a conflict of interest to a school head. The head invariably has to weigh each demand and ultimately all groups may never have their own way.

Statement of the Problem

The turn of the new millennium has witnessed invigorated women participation in educational leadership. Their pronounced representation and participation has brought with it challenges they have to grapple with in positions of authority like primary school leadership. Challenges or obstacles which women face in breaking into school administration are well-documented (Hennig & Jardin, 1977; Zirkel & Gluckerman, 1984; Swiderski, 1988; Mauer, 1994; Thomas, 1997). These challenges include attitudinal, and institutional and social/cultural obstacles. Women are also said to be absent in the upper echelons of organisations as well as specific professions like technical and commercial

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sectors (Evetts, 2000; UNICEF, 1995). While the bulk of the research on women in educational administration concentrates on underrepresentation of, and obstacles faced by, women in educational administration, fewer studies have provided limited insights into the nature of the problems women face in administering schools efficiently and effectively (Ortiz, 1979; Stockard, 1979).

Coupled with the above are prejudices against female and the consistency of male dominance at the top level in society. Culturally, it is tantamount to a taboo for females to form an integral part of the council of elders to make decisions for the way forward in almost every town and village. Male dominance, and the spectre of male interference, continues to be high and eminent even in this modern Ghana, where democracy is becoming an idol. Despite these hindrances, some courageous females in the society have taken up the mantle to occupy high leadership positions. This study seeks to investigate the challenges of women in administrative positions in education within the Accra Metropolis.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to find out the challenges of women in administrative positions. The study was also to find out factors that encourage women to aspire for leadership positions in education. It was also to find out the kinds of support services provided for female administrators to enhance their performance. The study was also to find out how effective are the leadership styles of female administrators.

Research Questions

1. What are the main challenges of women in administrative positions in the Adenta Municipality?

2. What effective support services are provided for female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality to enhance their performance?

3. How effective are the leadership styles of female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality?

4. How effective are the leadership behaviours of female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality?

Significance of the Study

This study will be useful in so many ways, but here are a few reasons. The first importance or benefit of this study is that the findings will contribute to knowledge immensely, especially to the body of literature on women and their involvement in educational leadership or management in Ghana.

The second value obtained by this study is that recommendations and suggestions made could supplement efforts made to eradicate the gender disparities that exist in the occupation of high decision-making positions in the country, particularly in the field of education. The study would serve as a guide or directive to future researchers who are bent on doing the same study in other parts of the country.

Finally, this study will unearths models of female administrators, especially in educational management for the many females of this nation who do not know or have not heard that females can also manage at a higher level various

institutions for national development. It will also encourage potential females who qualified for higher decision-making positions but are constrained by cultural, stereotype information among others.

Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted in the Adenta Municipality in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana on the challenges of women in administrative positions in education. The area had a population of 81 schools.

Limitations of the Study

The study was confined to the Adenta Municipality due to congestion nature of the region. Some of the respondents felt reluctant in responding to the questionnaire as they thought they would be exposing their female heads. In addition, questionnaires were the only instrument for data collection. This means that some vital information could have been left out in the data collected. These could affect the generalizability of the findings of the study.

Organization of the Study

The organization of the study was done in five (5) chapters. The first chapter contains the background to the study, statement of the study, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions and so forth.

Chapter Two is all about review or related literature. It includes both published and unpublished materials, books, journals, and newspapers that were reviewed.

Chapter Three consists of the methodology, which has to do with the population and sample, instruments used in the collection of data, the respective

procedures and analysis of the collected data. The fourth chapter focuses on results and discussion of the data collected. Chapter Five contains the research findings, recommendations and conclusion of the analysed data.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

This investigation is based on Afro-centric theory of leadership and management as well as on the theory of African socialism which emphasizes social change. According to Teffo (2006, p. 28) the Afro-centric theory advocates for the infusion of cultural values in the field of management, industrial and labour relations.

African social ism on the other hand according to emphasizes a belief in sharing resource in a `traditional` African way. Many African politicians and leaders of the 1950s and 1960s professed their support for African socialism. African identity and social ism were of ten intertwined. Some leader s even claimed that Africa had always been `socialist` and appealed to social ism as a unifying cultural element for Africans. Thus social revolution is usually supported by social ism.

Higgs (2006, p. 3) states that proponents of the social construct ion of knowledge acknowledge the role that human beings play in knowledge production. Human beings do so by embedding knowledge in socio-economic, socio-cultural and political contexts. This means that knowledge is ideological in

that it only exists in the context of those who claim to produce it. Therefore that does not have to exclude women.

Thus social change will inform knowledge percept ion as women will view themselves in the right context. This implies that women are to a certain extent solely responsible for the transformation of the mindset of people around them. They will have to reflect on their history, be patient, set goals, work systematically towards change and be committed to their course. They will have to defy capitalist exploitation, whereby women are included in higher position just for window dressing and conformity to Affirmative act ion. Women want to be placed in higher positions because they are capable and not only to be unfairly affirmed.

Zeleza (2006, p. 195) states that African studies – the product ion of African knowledges –has concrete and conceptual, and material and moral contexts which create the variations that are so evident across the world and across discipline. Therefore the Africa studies centers or structures need to be reinforced and supported so that a change in percept ion on women leadership can occur.

Previous post apartheid investigation revolved around leadership issues. Luhabe (2007, p. 4) observed that a constant question that the people ask is the "fitness of Africans including women, to be in leadership positions". She further stated that the media is a threat to democracy and that lack of robust debate by the public about the role of media in building a nation could result in the media assaulting the characters of the African women leaders. Therefore African women

will have to develop a peculiar way of facing the challenges of being undermined and of reconstructing development.

Female Administrators and Role Conflicts

It is a confirmed assertion in many Ghanaian societies that women are never independent, and that it is the man who has to protect the woman. Administration is also considered to be a masculine field (Schein, 1994).

In this modern era, the structuring of the schools as an organization, the top-down hierarchy, favours men. Authorization of leadership is most often the pattern for school administration. Even the public strongly agrees that men are better able to handle discipline than women. In fact, an ancient and pervasive belief in Western thought is that women lack reason and is governed by emotions. A different view was expressed by some writers. Noteworthy is Kottis (1993) who asserted that the need for women to participate in the management of schools is very crucial to the effective development of educational institutions.

The situation has not changed that much in the modern world, but it has seen considerable improvement over the years. Yet, inside and outside the family women are viewed as subordinates. At the workplaces they are expected to fill subordinate occupational roles, which are defined as an extension of women's domestic roles. This rationale has been used to justify and determine the payment of workers. Women are being paid less than the men for doing comparable work (Rebore, 2001, p. 248). The ―natural‖ male dominance also depicts how women are rarely hired in positions of authority (Wolf and Fligstein, 1979).

Female Administrators and Support Services

It is a well-known fact that every organization needs qualified, potential human and material resources to achieve its goals. It is in this light that every organization is expected to make a little investment into the professional development of the individuals, which is in their best interest (Heller, 1999). Hence, the emphasis on training staff or developing their abilities at all organizational levels is vital. In-service training programmes should be an administrative policy. Training affects the quality of productivity and performance. Ukeje et al., (1992) warned that professionals who cease to study cease to be effective professionally.

It has been recognized that managers as well as their subordinates need management and support. The world is dynamic, and so, there is a need to be abreast with time through periodic in-service training.

The issue of accommodation is another proper investment which can enhance performance more. Leaders who live not too far from their workplaces are able to sacrifice time and energy to perform beyond the required. Supervision of work coupled with regularity and punctuality will be evident. Dedication which every organization desires will be visible.

Another issue of much concern here is motivation at workplaces. Heads of institutions or organizations need to be stimulated or influenced to come out with their best in meeting desired goals. Certo (1980) was critical about the motivational process or the steps to be taken. The working conditions, human relations and pay are some critical issues that need to be satisfied. Like teachers,

headmistresses and headmasters morale become low when the environment for learning and working conditions are not conducive. Bame (1991) reiterated that job satisfaction has a positive relationship to the degree of commitment to work. Incentives, rewards and credit facilities should be made available as motivating factors. The respect of any manager or worker in a society goes with the condition of service and provision of incentives they have in place for them. The welfare of workers, whether head or not, should be prioritized by in recent times.

The availability and accessibility of equipments and relevant teaching and learning materials need not be low as in the case of today in Ghana Education Service (GES). The presence of up-to-date textbooks and syllabuses, constant supply of stationery, and a well-equipment office space are the little improvement headmistresses and headmasters are yearning for.

Quality interpersonal relationships can bring about high performance in any organization, and the school is not left out. Spouses, subordinates, associations and friends of female administrators of Senior High Schools need to extend both professional and moral support. The benevolence of relatives, individuals and associations can boost performance.

Female Administrator Leadership Qualities and Styles

Leadership Concept

There have been many different opinions by authorities in the field of management on the concept of leadership. Some of these authorities include Koontze and O'Donnell (1972) who defined leadership ―as interpersonal

influence, exercised in situation and directed, through the communication process toward the attainment of a specific goals or goals. (p. 484)

Knezevich (1976) conceived leadership from three perspectives. Leadership is envisaged as:

i. An attribute of personality: - This is referred to as symbolic leadership, whereby ―leaders are born not made‖.

ii. A status, titles, or position recognized in a formal leadership. Here, the person and position become confused as this recognition may disappear when he or she vacated the status, title, position or office.

iii. A function or role performed in an organized group: This is also referred to as functional leadership. Here, leadership is not viewed as existing in isolation but as related to interpersonal relations and group operations. Leadership, therefore, comes out as a group phenomenon. Thus the fundamental issues in leadership are what the leader does to help the group define its goals, achieve its objectives or maintain its strength as a body.

The authoritative source of leadership and research, the *Handbook of Leadership* defines leadership as:

> An interaction between members of a group. Leaders are agents of change, persons whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. (p. 21)

This definition depicts that the use of influence and interpersonal relationships are included in leadership, which will affect people's behavior and performance in achieving organization's goals.

Musaazi (1985) conceives leadership as a process whereby everyone in the group and the prevailing circumstances need to be understood by the leaders. Some writers talk about the voluntary aspect of the response to leadership to differentiate between authority and power. This is why Katz and Kahn (1978) wrote, the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with routine directives of the organization.‖ (p.528) People are influenced to act on their own volition. Neither is it required of them nor because of the fear of the consequences of non-compliance.

Leadership Qualities

High moral standards and exemplary characters (Afful-Broni, 2001) should be the hallmark of an effective leader. He further asserted that school leadership preparation should include moral and ethical formation. Every leader needs to possess personal and professional qualities as well. Moore (1997) revealed there have been times when the search for school leader placed great emphasis on character as a required ingredient.

Leadership should be able to foster the process of growth, renewal and progress within the community [or organization] (Deal & Peterson, 1999). To do this, unique qualities are needed on the part of the leaders. Every community or organization needs to grow from one level to another; and be renewed from strength to strength.

Starrat (1995) emphasized, "A leader needs the eyes to see, the ears to hear and the mind to know what is. This depicts that every leader should have determined by the nature vision or be a forecaster; be a good listener; and a good thinker.

Another writer or scholar talks about how formal education or training or knowledge should be part of the leader. A leader would need to integrate his [or her] knowledge of what is, with what he [or she] believes to be the essentials of what ought to be. (Sergiovanni, 1993)

Leaders must necessarily be creative, flexible and open to the changing times and needs [of the organization]. Each leader should be conversant with the dynamics of the society or organization he or she governs. Possible adjustments or changes have to be made when and where necessary.

In light of the above stipulation, modern scholars of the study of administration have revealed that effective administration is best done in a collective, co-operative, collaborative manner (Covey, 1990; Starrrat, 1996).

Schools are not shops or offices that require clever and ingenious bits of engineering and scientific inputs to increase productivity and morale, but major social institutions where wisdom and courage are required to infuse practice with our highest hopes. Leaders need to understand group dynamics and have the ability to go through unpleasant times in the life of the organization.

Effective leaders are constantly finding new and more meaningful ways of saying, "I hear you" to their membership--communication needs to be sound and solid; and tolerance has to exist within organizational climate. The absence of this

builds needless tensions, which would be counter-productive to the establishment of the community or school (Blasé et al., 1995). By this leaders would make their attitude clear to their staff; maintain definite standards of performance; work out plans with them; let staff know what is expected of them, and so forth.

It is justifiable to reiterate that organizations exist to provide valuable services for the people. The otherwise makes it superficial. Since leadership occurs in a cultural context, leaders can help shape the culture of an organization by what they pay attention to and reward. Leaders infuse a common set of values, ideals, and principles in their schools. (Hoy et al., 1991). It is therefore obvious that leadership is more than the technical and interpersonal aspects of efficient management. It has a symbolic side. It rests upon meanings as well as actions. Thus, every school or organization has a culture that has to be built, which involves the leadership directly.

It is educative to conclude with this assertion from one renowned writer on leadership: "The effective functioning of social systems from the local PTA to the United States of America is assumed to be dependent on the quality of their leadership." (Vroom). And if quality works have to be done quality leaders have to lead.

Leadership Styles

Early research had indicated that leadership could be characterized under three styles. They are: autocratic, democratic and laissez fare or anarchic leadership (Okumbe, 1998, p. 87, 97; Akabogu et al., 1992, p. 100) According to Owens (1970), five major leadership styles can be identified in any human

organization. They include the democratic, autocratic, laissez- fare, bureaucratic and charismatic styles.

However, Sisk (1977) asserted that leaders have a particular way or set of ways of acting and reacting to fulfill as organization's objectives. Leadership styles, therefore, refers to a particular behavior applied by a leader to enthuse his or her subordinates to work toward an organization objectives.

A brief discussion of the various leadership styles is imperative at this moment. The *democratic leadership style* is where the leader delegates responsibilities to his or her subordinates and ensure that their views are considered in decision-making. There is a balance in the downward and upward trends of communication between the leader and subordinates. The organization functions effectively whether the leader is present or absent. Democratic leadership promotes greater group productivity, and personalities shaped in by this type of leadership are said to be more mature, more capable of objectivity, and less aggressive. A higher degree of staff morale is always promoted with this kind of leadership.

The *autocratic leadership tile* involves the use of force, especially when subordinates grumble about the leader's actions or orders. Group-inspired decisions are not allowed under this style of leadership. The leader alone determines policy and assigns responsibilities to subordinates without consultation. Commonly known as coercive leadership or dictatorship, it is often imposed on the organization. For the autocratic leader, the world is essentially friendless; and therefore strives for power and toughness, become rigid in dealing

with people. One best way to do this is to withhold vital information from the group about how to accomplish task.

Another leadership style, the *laissez-fare,* is the kind of leadership where there are practically no rules in the organization. Subordinates are free to do what they want at the detriment of what the organization wishes to achieve.

The *bureaucratic leadership style* refers to a leader whose style of leading an organization combine characteristics of autocratic, democratic and laissez-fare styles of leadership. (Owen, 1970)

The *charismatic leadership* is another renowned leadership style in the modern era. Shamir et al., (1998) stipulated in the *Academy of Management Journal* that there is no definitive answer to what constitutes charismatic leadership behavior.

Gibson et al. (1982) agreed that charismatic leaders have supernatural gift and attractive powers which followers enjoy, because they feel inspired, correct, and important (p. 309). Though such leaders have gifts or power that couldn't be explained by logical means (Schein, 1995), their effects on their followers are unusually high (House, 1977; p.189-207). House also wrote that such leaders have extremely high confidence, dominance and strong convictions in his or her beliefs. Their characteristics sometimes portray them as being radicals. On the other hand, Conger and Kanungo (1988) study revealed that charismatic leaders are idealist with a strong personal commitment to their goal. This leadership has more to do with ideological approach rather than administrative approach. Usually, these leaders articulate the status quo as unacceptable and their vision as

the best alternative. They are very sensitive to constituents'needs. Some authorities have approached the issue from another outlook altogether. They assert that leadership behavior have gender peculiarity. Powell (1993) is of the view that ―women and men do not differ in their effectiveness as leaders; although some situations favor women and others favor men.

Gray (1993) has observed that the styles of management must show that there is no single ―masculinity or ―femininity in being a leader and no single gender model for managerial behavior. He elaborated that to be a woman or a man is distinct personality without regard to sex stereotyping. However, studies by Gray and Shein depicts that women in leadership position are more democratic and willing to share while male executives are more autocratic and directive.

Women's Participation in Educational Leadership

International research indicates that in educational leadership women are a minority, both in countries that are developing and those that are at advanced levels of development (Celikten, 2005, p. 209). Studies done in various countries, like California (Wickham 2007), the Solomon Islands (Akao, 2008, p. 38), Turkey (Celikten, 2005, p. 207), Uganda (Sperandio & Kagoda, 2010, p. 22) and Papua New Guinea (Vali 2010, p. 1) reveal an under-representation of women in leadership at all levels of the education system, including primary schools, secondary schools, universities and other educational institutions. The researchers documented numerous factors that make it difficult for women to attain leadership positions in education, such as gender discrimination, pressures of family responsibilities, and social-cultural factors, amongst others.

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The Participation of Women in Leadership Promotes Gender Equity

The attainment of gender equity and equality in leadership should be a core development issue and a goal in its own right. Women should have the same access to power and resources as men but, as Syed and Murray (2008, p. 41) indicated, despite a plethora of laws and organizational policies on gender equality, women in general remain disempowered in the workplace. "We will all be better off if women's life experiences, needs and values are fully reflected in decision-making positions", according to O'Connor (in Kellerman & Rhode, 2007, p. 14).

It is important to create opportunities that will enable women to occupy positions of influence, both politically and economically, in order to enhance decision-making. This is because women on the leadership track have unique opportunities and corresponding obligations to promote changes that will make leadership accessible to others: as citizens, women can support policies, politicians and practices that will advance gender equity; as professionals and community activists, women can make equalizing leadership opportunities a priority; as parents, women can model effective leadership, and challenge the child-rearing patterns that work against it (Kellerman & Rhode 2007, p. 26).

When women achieve positions of influence and participate in policy decisions, they have the opportunities to open up access to knowledge and resources to those with less power. Women from all levels of the social hierarchy, not only those occupying official status positions, work to alter the undemocratic culture and structure of institutions and society, improving the lives of those who

have been marginalized or oppressed (Normore & Gaetane 2008). Educated women who enter the labour market earn an income by engaging in productive economic activities. Participation in productive economic activities enables them to attain financial independence, to reduce poverty, and to enhance gender equity and equality (Republic of Kenya 2007, p. 1-2).

Besides enhancing equity, women bring into institutions different ways of leading. If more women are given the opportunity to participate in leadership, society and institutions would benefit from their talented and distinctive ways of handling leadership.

The Distinctive Role of Women Leadership

It is argued that women lead differently to men. Women in general have specific attributes, characteristics and skills that are beneficial to organizations and teams (Syed & Murray 2008, p. 415).

Female heads tend to be more supportive, approachable, sensitive, understanding, nurturing, organized, creative, and receptive than their male counterparts (Adams & Hambright 2004, p. 207). Wickham (2007) observed that women are perceived as being more likely to be collaborative in their working relationships, and tend to use democratic leadership styles and power which, in turn, contribute to achieving high levels of job satisfaction among staff members. She added that women are viewed as change agents who are deeply involved in reform, and who work toward creating common visions of schooling for children, as well as climates conducive to learning. They are regarded as being relational, community sensitive and politically savvy.

According to Jones (2006, p. 29), the language used by female leaders is more likely to express courtesy, gratitude, respect and appreciation. Women show respect for their audience by listening, echoing and summarizing, by using polite speech, electing non-antagonistic responses. They remember more of what is said by all the participants. Women also pick up on emotional and personal issues in conversation. This kind of reaction is likely to encourage community-building.

From a cultural feminist perspective, women value intimacy, and develop an ethic of care for those with whom they are connected (Syed & Murray 2008). Kelly (2008) describes an ethic of caring as an internal commitment to learn about other people in an effort to promote their well-being. An ethic of care, she says, may be characterized by acknowledging multiple perspectives, being open to hearing other's perspectives and valuing collaboration. This view agrees with the leadership style demonstrated by women school leaders in Normore and Gaetane's (2008) study of female secondary school leaders who practiced an ethic of care towards those who worked for and with them. As leaders, the women demonstrated a self-less desire to both serve and prepare others, and simultaneously created an organizational system that was committed to sharing and developing relationships that drove to goodness. In a study by Kelly, Ammon, Chermack and Moen (2010), it was found that women heads expressed concern about knowing where and when employees were working, in a way they called 'monitoring by mothering'. The women heads often asserted that it was common courtesy to tell others when they were working off-site.

Women's unique traits and abilities can especially be observed and experienced from a woman's perspective. Hence there exists a need for aspiring women to observe those who reflect their leadership styles, in order to demystify negative myths on women and leadership, and to encourage more women to desire to attain educational leadership.

Role-Models are Required for Women Aspiring for Leadership Positions

The presence of women in positions of leadership is essential to encourage aspirations in the younger generation and to counter reservations about women's capacity for leadership roles (O'Connor, in Kellerman & Rhodes 2007, p. 14). It is important for women to be included among the public officials, for symbolic reasons as well (Thomas & Wilcox 2005, p. 4-5). The role-modeling of women is important for future generations. If children grow up seeing both women and men in public offices, they will be able to choose from a bigger array of options for their future career.

According to a study by Lockwood (2006, p. 39) from the University of Toronto, the visibility of female role-models is particularly effective for those who are attempting to determine their potential for future achievement. It helps to undermine stereotypes that threaten some career paths. Role-models can serve as talent scouts, and can provide a social network and bonding for newly-appointed and aspiring female administrators. Role models can also provide information about job vacancies, and also administrative strategies (Jones, 2006, p. 19). Lockwood (2006, p. 39) found that men are not differentially affected by the

gender of the role-model, but that females are more inspired by female role-models.

Lange (2006, p. 17) noted that the creation of a knowledge-base that consists of examples showing how notable women rose to greatness, and what it was like for them to move forward in society in order to accomplish their goals, is a way to help females envision their dreams of the future, that could include seeing themselves as leaders. If women aspiring to administrative positions are provided with greater opportunities to connect with practicing women administrators, they may have more opportunities to discuss strategies for successfully juggling both family and school responsibilities (Sherman 2005).

Without a great number of female role-models in the most coveted school leadership positions, women teachers simply do not perceive themselves as potential administrative candidates (Sherman 2005). Hence, it is important for women to be mentored so that they can become the great leaders they have the potential to be.

Factors that Encourage Women to Education Leadership

Certain prevailing factors do or would encourage women to take up education leadership positions. These include policies, organizational motivators, and also women's own motivators.

Policies on Equal Opportunities

Economic and legal developments have benefited women into managerial positions (Priola & Brannan 2009, p. 379). Norris (2000, in Kiamba, 2008, p. 17)

outlines three policies, amongst others, that are used worldwide to enhance women's participation in decision-making positions. He indicates the following:

i. Rhetorical strategies –an informal means of getting women to participate in decision-making structures articulated through political and other public speeches. An example is a 2006 presidential decree in Kenya that aimed at a target of 30% representation of women in the public service.

ii. Affirmative action, which Norris (2007, in Kiamba, 2008, p. 17) describes as meritocratic policies that aims to achieve fairness in recruitment by removing practical barriers that disadvantage women. Affirmative action programmes provide training (on public speaking, for example), advisory group goals, financial assistance, and the monitoring of outcomes. Positive discrimination strategies, which set mandatory quotas for the selection of candidates from certain social or political groups. Quotas can be set at different levels (to indicate proportion of representation), or at different stages of the selection process. Kiamba (2008, p. 17) observed that when quotas are legally specified as part of the constitution, they are more likely to be implemented, and guarantee women's inclusion in leadership.

Academic Credentials

In exploring women's route into leadership, Priola and Brannan (2009, p. 379) noted that education and self-determination are perceived to be at the core of a career in leadership. They mentioned that the increased education attainment and the enhancement of academic credentials of women have subsequently accompanied an increased commitment to professional and managerial careers. A

respondent in Normore and Gaetane's (2008, p. 192) study on the leadership experiences of four female secondary school heads, cited "…a strong knowledge base and value on having attained a doctorate" as a motivator for joining education leadership.

Wickham (2007) studied perceived barriers and successful strategies used to attain the superintendency (sic) in California, and discovered that obtaining a doctorate degree was considered one of the successful strategies. Fifty-two percent of the respondents in the study held a doctoral degree. The academic attainment could be attributed to the fact that, as Mitroussi and Mitroussi (2009) asserted, women need to feel well-prepared before they apply for a leadership position. They choose to become heads when they feel adequate, that is, when they have become competent teachers, and they have their own agenda for headship.

Access to Preparation and Leadership Programmes

The availability of preparation and leadership programmes for aspiring head teachers is also a motivator for women to venture into educational leadership. Preparation for school leadership is concerned with developing the capacity of individuals by means of initial or pre-service preparation, socialization and induction, and opportunities for in-service professional learning development (Sperandio & Kagoda, 2010, p. 22). Formal mentoring and leadership development is one way of promoting and uniting women in education administration, namely by offering them the chance to engage in mentoring

relationships and to network with other practicing leaders and aspirants (Sherman 2005).

Cowie and Crawford (2008) asserted that preparation for headship can help to develop the professional identity of aspiring head teachers, to broaden their outlook, and to develop confidence and self-belief. In their study of school principals in Scotland and England, they noted that working with one another in preparation programmes, helped develop the identity of the principals. Through collaborative activity and networking with colleagues, a sense of trust was developed, allowing the principals to share and to learn from each other's experiences.

Women who participate in aspiring leadership programmes and more formalized types of mentoring, advance to administrative positions more readily than women who do not (Sherman 2005). Nealy (2009) cited the Kaleidoscope Leadership Institute which provides "…through a cultural prism, intensive training, tools for self-analysis and other skills to navigate the academy", and where women leaders go, wanting "…to sharpen their leadership skills, connect with other sisters and to celebrate their successes together". Nealy (2009, p. 9) reported that when these women leave the leadership institute "…they know who they are; they understand what they bring to the table and understand that there is a seat for them at the table".

Women's own Motivators

Some women may be attracted to management by the promise of status and power to influence others, and also themselves. Others may be seduced by the

wish to prove themselves and others that they can do better, and can achieve success in environments which are traditionally male-dominated and highly competitive, or that may represent difficult challenges (Priola & Brannan 2009, p. 387). Some of the reasons cited by women that would or did encourage them to join educational leadership include:

i.   knowing that they could initiate change, and provide the necessary leadership skills to implement those changes; support, encouragement and sponsorship; having a supportive staff (Adams & Hambright, 2004);

ii.   an intrinsic need and a moral responsibility to make a difference in the lives of students and others; a need to empower teachers to make positive decisions about teaching and learning (Normore & Gaetane, 2008);

iii.   to be role models; to improve the schools in terms of their academic performance and student outcomes; having the skills and interest to be successful school leaders; to utilize their talents that have not been exploited as a teacher; to be more useful in the community (Sperandio & Kagoda, 2010, p. 24).

In Kelly's (2008) study of conceptualizations of leadership among five female counselor educators, the participants reported that they had sought out leadership initiatives as they were compelled to do so by an inherent passion for leadership. As they advanced in their careers, their interest to participate in leadership intensified. Through their leadership contributions, they were able to model leadership to others, in the hope of motivating them to become interested in leadership. The participants, however, emphasized that interest alone is not

sufficient, and that leadership is earned by means of the hard work, commitment and dedication of the individual.

Women may be motivated to participate in leadership, but they encounter challenges on their path there. The next section examines some of the perceived hindrances.

<div align="center">**Barriers to Women's Entry into Educational Leadership**</div>

The lack of female leaders in top positions is the result of both internal and external barriers women encounter and have to overcome on their journey to become educational leaders (Jones 2006). Some of the challenges women face include the masculine nature of institutions, women's reluctance to apply for promotion, home-work conflict, stereotypes associated with gender, fear of geographical mobility, lack of role models and mentors, and lack of self-efficacy. Each of these challenges will be examined in detail below. It should, however, be noted that although these barriers have been separated for the purpose of this study, they may have been experienced independently or interdependently with others.

The Masculine Nature of Institutions

The reasons why women do not move into the higher echelons of leadership may be related to pressures inherent in the job situation (Celikten 2005, p. 210). Existing work structures and organizational routines are predominantly male-oriented, which tend to impede women's participation in decision-making roles in organizations (Syed & Murray, 2008). Cultures that exclude or alienate women can possibly be based on masculine activities that are less appealing to

women, and a work environment that might strike women as 'cut-throat' and macho (Eagly, Carli & Sampson, 2009).

Kelly, *et al.* (2010) found that the employees believed that long working hours were an indicator of dedication and productivity. Working long hours was seen as a sign that the employees were readily available and eager to meet other's needs. It further reinforced the perception of the ideal worker- most often a man- who does not have or attend to other pressing commitments outside of work.

Women's Reluctance to Apply for Promotion

Women's under-representation in leadership positions may be attributed to their own decisions not to apply for promotion (Oplatka, 2006). Although it is assumed that teachers are eager to participate in decision-making processes and serve on governance structures, research suggests that they do not jump at the opportunity. Forty percent of the female teachers interviewed in Adams and Hambright's (2004) survey, conducted on the reasons why women teachers seem to lack interest in applying for administrative positions, said that nothing would encourage them to become school administrators. Several of the participants in Eddy's study (2008, p. 52) of community college presidents revealed that they did not have a 'presidential' position in mind when they started working in higher education. They got the position by either being encouraged by search committees to seek promotion, by being appointed by their chancellors, by seeking the position for fear of the alternative, or simply by following the hierarchy, which naturally left presidency as the next logical step in their career (Lange, 2006).

Home-Work Conflict

Women's productive activities are often hampered by the unofficial and private domestic responsibilities that compete for women's labour in terms of time and energy, not to mention the increase in workload and long working hours (Chege & Sifuna, 2006).

The issue of children and/or family is one that deters many women when they have to make the decision to take up a leadership position. The responsibility that comes with a family is a significant barrier to women attaining top jobs. Many mothers feel exhausted and overwhelmed trying to balance paid work commitments with the commitments of being a parent, thus they feel psychologically, intellectually and emotionally drained (Knowles, *et* al., 2009). Women often reduce their hours at work when they have children. Some women even quit work and spend one or more years devoting their efforts to their families (Eagly, Carli & Sampson, 2009, p. 12). Derrington and Sharratt (2009, p. 21) observed that women with children aged between one and nineteen, represented the smallest percentage of superintendents, compared to women with no or grown children.

In their investigation of gendered division of household labour, Cornwall and Legerski (2010, p. 462) noted that women's gender identities were embedded in responsibilities for care that extended beyond mothering young children, and included the care of husbands, adult children and grandchildren. In some cases, women intentionally avoided work outside the home to have time to maintain family relationships. Some of the women in the study who had started college did

not finish, usually dropping out on getting married, or with the birth of their first child. Respondents in Derrington and Sharratt's study (2009, p. 18) maintained that these are 'self-imposed barriers' to leadership. They define *self-imposed barriers* as "…the failure to attain the superitendency (sic) or the decision to avoid it because of family responsibilities". Thus, these women made a conscious choice to put family considerations and responsibilities before those that come with assuming the job of superintendent.

Seelinger (2000) studied Central Appalachian women in school leadership, where the majority of the women interviewed acknowledged that choosing to become administrators necessitated difficult personal accommodations along the way. She reported that they spoke eloquently and sometimes regretfully of the borders they had to negotiate to maintain their primary personal relationships, while doing what was necessary for career advancement. Among the women in her study, three were divorced and had no intent to remarry, and two had not borne any children, and did not regret the decision.

Some women have, however, achieved harmony in the home-work conflict. Derrington and Sharratt (2009) identified them as those who

  i.   have an unwavering resolve to stick to their career goals;

  ii.   have a network of family support, including spouse, mother and siblings;

 iii.   negotiate flexi-time; and

 iv.   set clear boundaries for personal time, and make part of the weekend off-limits to outside commitments.

Some of the women in Seelinger's (2000) study also did not view the integration of family and career as overly problematic, and they maintained that educational leadership was a workable career. The women had willingly timed their careers around the needs of their husbands and children, becoming administrators when their families were grown-up.

Stereotypes Associated with Gender

Female socialization practices inhibit women from attaining leadership positions because women are historically encouraged to develop personality traits and behavior that prevent them from participating in leadership (Kelly, 2008, p. 29). Societal values and traditional roles combine to have a detrimental effect on how women are valued as leaders (Vali, 2010, p. 32). In many societies women are still assigned a secondary position by the prevailing customs and culture (Kiamba, 2008). As a result, role incongruence occurs when a woman exhibits the behaviour expected of leaders (Wickham, 2007). The Role Congruity Theory can help explain how this incongruence occurs and how it affects women's choices of whether to participate in leadership or not.

According to the Role Congruity Theory, the perceived incongruity between the female gender role and the leadership role leads to two forms of prejudice against women leaders (Eagly & Karau, as cited in Hoyt 2005, p. 3). First, the descriptive aspect of the gender stereotype leads people to perceive women as more communal and less agentic, thus perceiving them as less qualified for leadership positions. Second, the prescriptive component of the stereotype suggests that when women leaders successfully demonstrate favourable leadership

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characteristics, they are perceived less favourable, because it is inconsistent with expectations of appropriate (or desired) female behaviour. Together these two forms of prejudice can account for research findings that indicate less favourable attitudes toward female than male leaders, and for the greater difficulty for women to attain top leadership roles, and to be viewed as effective in these roles.

Knowles, *et al*.'s (2009, p. 341) study of four women mother-educators found that it was difficult for them to balance their multiple roles of mother, wife and educator. The goal of the women interviewed was to become better educators and better mothers. They had convinced themselves that they needed to reshape their desires and actions. They held on to the culturally entrenched idea that expected patterns of behavior existed, and that they had to live up to them. Such stereotyping affects the women's self-esteem and confidence because they may come to see themselves as unfit for leadership roles, or unable to perform outside their domestic roles (Vali, 2010, p. 32).

Jones (2006, p. 18) indicated that social stereotypes associated with women at the work-place showed that women are too emotional, not task-oriented, talk too much, are unable to gain control and discipline, or to handle conflict and community issues. Women are often perceived as lacking confidence, as having low aspirations, and a negative self-image. These attributes are viewed as contradictory to the role of headship, and thus may hinder women from being considered as potential school heads.

Fear of Geographical Mobility

Due to the fact that schools are found everywhere in a country, teaching is seen to "…provide many opportunities for women to be employed without it adversely affecting the family situation" (Mitroussi & Mitroussi 2009, p. 511). Conversely, Wickham (2007, p. 29) identified a lack of the willingness to relocate as one of the barriers to the attainment of leadership positions for women, as it involves separating them from their families, or sometimes relocating the entire family. Relocation was considered by 88% of female superintendents in Wickham's study as one of the major barriers for women aspiring to be a superintendent. A respondent in Eddy's (2008, p. 56) study reported that she loved her job but that her priority would always be her family. She continued by stating categorically that if someone offered her a job that would take her away from her family, she "…would not even think about it in a heartbeat".

In her study of factors influencing gender mobility to the top levels of education management in Kenya, Wanyama (2002, p. 49) found that most women preferred staying at their middle ranks for fear of seeking promotion and being transferred up-country to work at district or provincial headquarters, as this would affect their families.

The Lack of Self-Efficacy

Women's self-determination to progress and succeed is fundamental to their career progression (Priola & Brannan 2009), but as Sherman (2005) noted, few women perceived themselves as capable of holding leadership positions in schools. One of the respondents in Normore and Gaetane's (2008) study revealed

that she had never envisioned herself becoming an administrator, and that she was perfectly comfortable in the classroom. Oplatka (2006) identified a variety of reasons that caused women not apply for promotion, such as the lack of the necessary aspiration, a lack of confidence that they will succeed, fear of failure, and a lack of competitiveness. The think-leader-think-male stereotype can also have deleterious effects on women leaders' self-perceptions, as it is associated with decreased performance and a most menacing outcome of stereotype activation on the targets of the stereotype, in that it may have the potential to contribute to women's disengagement from leadership roles (Hoyt 2005).

Nealy (2009) reported that research shows that women in higher education typically have a low self-worth, often being perceived as timid, and preferring to maintain a low profile. No matter how skilled women leaders are, a lack of confidence is a deal-breaker (Santovec 2010, p. 9). Santovec continued to say that confidence spreads to those one is leading, and that if a leader does not have confidence, the followers will not have confidence in the leader. Hoyt (2005) also noted that while cultural stereotypes are likely to impact on women leaders, the level of the leader's self-efficacy for leadership will likely play a role in determining the responses to stereotype activation.

The Lack of Role-Models and Mentors

Eddy (2008) observed that mentors have a critical role to play in the advancement of women in leadership. Support by means of advice, opportunities to acquire diverse experiences and access to leadership development, all provide critical career skills. She added that some women may not consider upper level

positions on their own, adding on to the increased importance of well-placed suggestions by mentors. Fifty-six percent of the women leaders Eddy interviewed had had a mentor, and they recounted how their strong mentoring relationships provided them with resources to draw upon in their first year of leadership.

Sperandio and Kagonda (2010) decried the lack of role-models and mentors in education leadership. They asserted that women in leadership positions may be breaking new ground, and are unable to offer the mentoring and encouragement to other women who may find it necessary to overcome their lack of confidence and self-esteem. They added that others may be so beset with problems created by resentful teachers, both male and female who are unwilling to accept a woman 'boss', that the example they provide does not encourage other women to undertake the same trial by ordeal. Such kinds of leaders are likely not to be effective role models to aspiring women leaders.

Same-sex role-models are crucial for women, but unfortunately there are not enough to go round for all of the aspiring female leaders (Jones 2006, p. 19). When women work in isolated environments (dominated by men), they need those 'who look like them' to reinforce their feelings of self-worth and excellence (Nealy, 2009). It is important then that more women participate in school leadership in order for others to feel encouraged and confident.

Even as there are challenges that are unique to women aspiring to school leadership, school leadership comes with its own challenges, whether the leader is a man or a woman. Some of these challenges are explored below.

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Challenges Faced in School Leadership

School leadership has become a priority on education policy agendas internationally, and plays a key role in improving school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers, as well as the school climate and environment (Pont, *et al.* 2008, p. 1-2). Skillful school leaders influence school and classroom processes that have a direct impact on student learning, thus schools and colleges provide a better education for their students if they are well-managed (Mitroussi & Mitroussi 2009). This means that heads of schools need the appropriate interpersonal professional ability in day-to-day situations that often demand confidence and courage to resolve (Cowie & Crawford 2008, p. 682).

School heads face various personal and organizational challenges in the course of their work. In many countries the men and women who run schools are overburdened, underpaid and near retirement, and there are few people lining up for their jobs (Pont, *et al*. 2008). The work is perceived by many potential candidates as undesirable and/or impossible. Ninety-four percent of persons in a national sample reported working more than fifty hours a week, with forty-eight percent declaring a work-week in excess of sixty hours (Petzko 2008). According to Pont, Nusche and Moorman (2008), potential candidates are often hesitant to apply for the vacancy because of overburdened roles, insufficient preparation and training, limited career prospects, and inadequate support and rewards. Among those who accept the positions, there appeared to be a 45% to 55% attrition rate of

principals during an eight year period, with the highest attrition occurring during the first three years on the job (Petzko 2008).

Slater, Garcia and Gorosave (2008, p. 704) identified the issues faced by newly-appointed principals in the United States of America, The United Kingdom and other parts of Europe as;

i.   feelings of professional isolation and loneliness;

ii.   having to deal with the legacy, practice and style of the previous head teacher;

iii.   dealing with multiple tasks, managing time and priorities;

iv.   managing the school budget;

v.   dealing with (*e.g.*, supporting, warning and dismissing) ineffective staff;

vi.   implementing new government initiatives, notably new curricula or school improvement projects; and

vii.   problems as regards the school buildings, and site management.

These issues pose challenges, and school heads have to deal with a variety of emotions as they deal with the tensions and dilemmas involved in their decision-making. The emotion of headship can be viewed as a process that requires continuous and unconscious management (Cowie & Crawford 2008, p. 682). When the participants in a research study by Jones (2006) described their experiences the adjectives 'stressful' and 'demanding' permeated their stories, and were used interchangeably with the word 'challenging', as they spoke about the issues they faced on a daily basis in their jobs as middle school principals. They cited their main causes of stress as the commitment requirements of the job,

parent grievances that they had to deal with, accountability issues, legislative changes, and lack of support from others.

In Guzman and Guillermo's (2007) study, one of the school heads described her metamorphosis in the course of her school leadership. She started off with a feeling of fear, which initially made her rigid to the policies in place. She subsequently learnt the art of total trust and surrender, which meant that she could then freely delegate, and rid herself of some of the school duties. Being transparent and open led to gaining the trust of many, and openness led to open lines of communication with teachers, students and parents. These experiences are echoed in the feelings of a head teacher in Cowie and Crawford's (2008) study, who is quoted as saying:

> "*My reflections this month are about my health and well-being in relation to leadership. I feel totally exhausted but like many other new heads, you keep going because you do not want to appear to lack the drive needed. It's tiring being the inspirational leader whom everyone is looking towards*".

The above quotation indicates the stress heads have to suffer in the performance of their duties. Considering the fact that women face unique challenges in leadership, they are likely to find it more difficult to enter into and to sustain themselves in school leadership in the face of all these challenges. It is comforting, however, to observe that women are still venturing into leadership, albeit only but a few. These women leaders are in a position to act as models for women aspiring to positions of leadership.

Summary

From the literature study it is clear that the issue of women and leadership is complex. The inclusion of women in educational leadership cannot be taken lightly by stakeholders, as it has been seen to promote equity, create role-models for other women aspiring to leadership, and also bring into leadership a different style of leading. Various theories have impacted on the inclusion of women in leadership, either by enhancing their exclusion, or by affecting their willingness to seek leadership positions.

Women still face certain barriers on their journey to leadership. Although these barriers may affect some women who shy away from leadership, it is encouraging to note that there are many who feel encouraged to lead, with the aim of improving themselves and the school systems which they head.

Most important, when dealing with the issue of women and educational leadership, is the consideration of context, as this differs in different settings. Fitzgerald (2006) reported that gender and ethnicity do matter in educational leadership, and that walking between the two worlds is a complicated, contested and difficult terrain.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of the study was to look at the challenges of women in administrative positions in education. This chapter therefore looks at methods used in conducting the study. The chapter considers the research design used for the study, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, pilot-testing of the research instrument, data collection procedure, and data analysis procedure.

Research Design

The study is a descriptive survey. The quantitative research method was employed. The descriptive survey attempts to measure what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. According to Creswell (2009), a descriptive survey basically inquires into the status quo. It is preferred because of the economy of the design and the rapid turn around in data collection. It is easy to identify attributes of a large population from a small group of individuals.

A survey researcher is one in which the researcher is interested in studying certain characteristics, attitudes, feelings, beliefs, motivation, behavior and opinions of a group of people or items. This group is called population or universe which may be small or large. More often than not, the researcher finds that she cannot possibly study all the elements, subjects or items in the population. Hence

the survey researcher selects and studies a sample from the population using some sampling techniques. This is to ensure that the sample is representative of the universe and the findings generalisable to the whole population. Therefore in reality survey researchers are sample surveys. In survey research, the researcher is interested in studying characteristics of a population. Perception just like attitude is a hypothetical construct. One can only measure perception through its expression in what a person does not.

The descriptive survey was chosen because it has the advantage of producing good amount of responses from a wide range of people. In addition, it provides a meaningful picture of events and seeks to explain perception and behaviour on the basis of data at a point in time. Also, the descriptive survey can be used with greater confidence with regard to particular questions of special interest or value to the researcher. Furthermore, in-depth follow up questions can be asked and items that are unclear can be explained using descriptive design.

Population of the Study

The population was made up of 81 heads and 116 assistants in the in 81 schools in Adenta municipality in the Greater Accra Region.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study was made up of 130 respondents. The respondents were purposively and randomly selected. A list of teachers in the Aadenta district was obtained from the district education office from which female head teachers and assistant head teachers were purposefully selected to be part of the study.

Instrument

A questionnaire was designed for all respondents. The design was guided, to a large extent, by the material acquired from the literature review as well as the research questions. Items on the questionnaire were formulated using the research questions as a guide.

Pilot-testing of the Research Instrument

A district in the Region was selected to be used to pilot test the data collection instruments. This was to expose innate weaknesses in the framing of some questions, which might have blurred the meanings of the responses and offer the opportunity to reshape the items and develop final instrument for the study.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure that good data is obtained, the prepared questionnaire was pilot tested by giving it to colleague staff members to answer and the necessary corrections effected. This helped increase the degree to which the items measured what it was meant to measure. The purpose of this pilot test was to help determine the extent to which the research questionnaire would be effective in collecting data from respondents for the actual study. Cronbach co–efficient alpha was used to calculate the reliability of the instrument through the use of Statistical Package for Social Services (SPSS). The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was found to be .73 which was high enough to be used to collect data for the actual study (Creswell, 2009). This exercise helped to validate the instrument and made it more reliable for use in the main research.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires were then distributed to the respondents for their responses and the questionnaires were collected. However, guidelines and the necessary explanations were given to both heads and the assistants on how and when to complete the questionnaire. The respondents were given three days to complete the questionnaire. There was a 100% return rate as all the distributed questionnaires were received.

Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires were finally scored and values tabulated. The same scores were given items(questions) with the response strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree and items with the response always, often, sometimes and never respectively. For ease of analysis, the responses of strongly agree and agree were combined and strongly disagree and disagree were also combined. Items with "yes" and "no" responses were scored 2 and 1 respectively.

Since the study was purely descriptive, descriptive analysis was used. The main statistical tool that was used for analyzing the data was simple percentages and frequencies. The percentages were used to analyze all the responses. Frequency and percentage tables were used to describe the data that were collected from respondents. The frequency and percentage tables enabled me to have an overall view of the findings, to identify the trends and to display the relationship between parts of the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was to look at the challenges of women in administrative positions in education. This chapter therefore results of the data collected as well as discussions of the results. The results were analysed and presented in according to the research questions of the study.

Research Question One: What are the main challenges of women in administrative positions in the Adenta Municipality?

Many mothers feel exhausted and overwhelmed trying to balance paid work commitments with the commitments of being a parent, thus they feel psychologically, intellectually and emotionally drained (Knowles, *et* al., 2009). On the other hand, some of the women in Seelinger's (2000) study also did not view the integration of family and career as overly problematic, and they maintained that educational leadership was a workable career. The women had willingly timed their careers around the needs of their husbands and children, becoming administrators when their families were grown-up. In response to research question one; views were sought on the various challenges affecting women in administrative positions. Table 1 therefore shows the responses of the respondents.

Table 1: Challenges of Women in Administrative Positions

Challenges	High		Moderate		Low	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Negative attitudes of teachers	17	13.1	90	69.2	23	17.7
Lack of financial resources	96	73.8	15	11.5	19	14.6
Lack of Material resources	95	73.1	8	6.2	27	20.8
Lack of community support	10	7.7	12	9.2	108	83.1
Lack of transport to main centers	10	7.7	97	74.6	23	17.7
Role conflict (administration and teaching)	99	76.2	27	20.8	4	3.1
No executive power to use school funds	11	8.5	19	14.6	100	76.9
Tribalism	26	20.0	14	10.8	90	69.2
Thefts at school	90	69.2	31	23.8	9	6.9
Family commitments	90	69.2	32	24.6	8	6.2
Allocating resources	90	69.2	40	30.8	0	0
Heading small, non-prestigious school	95	73.1	31	23.8	4	3.1
High fees paid by pupils	11	8.5	118	90.8	1	0.8

According to Table 1, 17 (13.1%) of the respondents indicated that negative attitudes of teachers was a challenge to women administrative positions but 90 (69.2%) on the other hand said that though it affects them but it was not the main

challenge. Although it is assumed that teachers are eager to participate in decision-making processes and serve on governance structures, research suggests that they do not jump at the opportunity. Again, 23 (17.7%) support this by saying that the effect of this challenge is very low. However, the major challenges were identified as follows; lack of financial resources by 96 (73.8%); lack of material resources by 95 (73.1%); role conflict (administration and teaching) by 99 (76.2%); thefts at school by 90 (69.2%); family commitments by 90 (69.2%); allocating resources by 90 (69.2%); and heading small, non-prestigious school by 95 (73.1%).

In the same light, 108 (83.1%) did not see lack of community support as a challenge. This indicates that community support both female and male leadership. Lack of transport to main centers was also not seen as a major challenge by 97 (74.6%) as most schools had a means of transport or heads are made to stay closer to the school. Executive power to use school funds, tribalism, and high fees paid by pupils were also not seen as challenges to women in administrative positions.

Research Question Two: What effective support services are provided for female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality to enhance their performance?

The study also intended to find out whether there were any kind of support services available to women in administrative positions and how effective these support services were. The responses of the respondents are therefore shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Support Services Provided for Female Administrators of Schools

Support Services	Yes		No	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Policies on equal opportunities	83	63.8	47	36.2
Support for women education	95	73.1	35	26.9
Access to preparation and leadership programmes	78	60.0	52	40.0
Motivation	75	57.7	55	42.3
Institutions are being made women leadership friendly	32	24.6	98	75.4
Female administrators are sent to places of their choice for the sake of their families	70	53.8	60	46.2

From Table 2, 83 (63.8%) the respondents indicated that policies on equal opportunities have been instituted to help ease tension on female administrators but 47 (36.2%) of the respondents did not support this. Economic and legal developments have benefited women into managerial positions (Priola & Brannan 2009, p. 379). In the same light, 95 (73.1%) of the respondents stated that there were supports for women education to help female administrators advance in education but 35 (26.9%) did not support this. Ukeje et al., (1992) warned that professionals who cease to study cease to be effective professionally. Access to preparation and leadership programmes is a kind of support service that could help female administrators and 78 (60.0%) pointed out that this was available but

52 (40.0%) made it known that this was not significant. Cowie and Crawford (2008, p. 689) asserted that preparation for headship can help to develop the professional identity of aspiring head teachers, to broaden their outlook, and to develop confidence and self-belief. Seventy-five (57.7%) of the respondents said female administrators are usually motivated in various forms to boost their morale but 55 (42.3%) did not seen motivation as a significant support. Certo (1980) was critical about the motivational process or the steps to be taken. The working conditions, human relations and pay are some critical issues that need to be satisfied. Like teachers, headmistresses and headmasters morale become low when the environment for learning and working conditions are not conducive. Bame (1991) reiterated that job satisfaction has a positive relationship to the degree of commitment to work. Rules and regulations and operations of institutions were usually the same whether under the female leadership or male leadership. This was indicated by 98 (75.4%) of the respondents. Finally, 70 (53.8%) of the respondents indicated that female administrators are sent to places of their choice for the sake of their families but 60 (46.2%) said otherwise.

Research Question Three: How effective are the leadership styles of female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality?

Sisk (1977) asserted that leaders have a particular way or set of ways of acting and reacting to fulfill as organization's objectives. Leadership styles, therefore, refers to a particular behavior applied by a leader to enthuse his or her subordinates to work toward an organization objectives. In order to answer research question 3, responses were sought on the form of leadership styles

females used and effective these leadership styles were. The responses of the respondents are therefore shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Leadership Styles of Female Administrators of Schools

Leadership styles	SA		A		D		SD	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Women usually use democratic style of leadership	14	10.8	23	17.7	45	34.6	48	36.9
Women usually use autocratic style of leadership	38	29.2	58	44.6	34	26.2	130	100.0
Women usually use laissez- fare style of leadership	0	0	27	20.8	63	48.5	40	30.8
Women usually use bureaucratic style of leadership	0	0	12	9.2	91	70.0	27	20.8
Women usually use charismatic style of leadership	34	26.2	74	56.9	22	16.9	0	0

From Table 3, 37 (28.5%) of the respondents agreed that women usually use democratic style of leadership but 93 (71.5%)   however disagreed. On the

same issue, 96 (73.8%) of the respondents indicated that women usually use autocratic style of leadership and only 34 (26.2%) disagreed to this statement. On whether women usually use laissez-fare style of leadership, 27 (20.8%) of the respondents agreed but 103 (79.2%) disagreed. Twelve (9.2%) of the respondents agreed that women usually use bureaucratic style of leadership but 118 (90.8%) disagreed. Finally, 108 (83.1%) agreed that women usually use charismatic style of leadership whilst 22 (16.9%) disagreed.

Research Question Four: How effective are the leadership behaviours of female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality?

Kottis (1993) who asserted that the need for women to participate in the management of schools is very crucial to the effective development of educational institutions. It was deemed necessary to find out the leadership behaviours or qualities of female administrators. Therefore responses were sought on the leadership qualities of female administrators and how effective these were. Table 4 shows the respondents' responses.

Table 4: Leadership Qualities of Female Administrators of Schools

Leadership qualities	SA		A		D		SD	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Women leaders have high moral standards and exemplary characters	96	73.8	34	26.2	0	0	0	0
Women leaders foster the process of growth	0	0	62	47.7	68	52.3	0	0
Women leaders bring renewal and progress	73	56.2	44	33.8	13	10.0	0	0
Women leaders are forecasters, good listeners and good thinkers	9	6.9	51	39.2	70	53.8	0	0
Women leaders are creative	130	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women leaders are collective, co-operative, collaborative	12	9.2	67	51.5	26	20.0	25	19.2

It can be seen from Table 4 that all the respondents agreed that women leaders had high moral standards and exemplary characters. High moral standards and exemplary characters (Afful-Broni, 2001) should be the hallmark of an

effective leader. Moore (1997) revealed there have been times when the search for school leader placed great emphasis on character as a required ingredient. The respondents also indicated that women leaders were creative. Again, 62 (47.7%) indicated that women leaders foster the process of growth but 68 (52.3%) disagreed. Leadership should be able to foster the process of growth, renewal and progress within the community (Deal & Peterson, 1999). It was also said that women leaders bring renewal and progress. This was by 117 (90.0%) but 13 (10.0%) disagreed.

Only 60 (46.2%) of the respondents agreed that women leaders are forecasters, good listeners and good thinkers but 70 (53.8%) disagreed. This was in support of Jordanova (1980) who asserted that an ancient and pervasive belief in Western thought is that women lack reason and is governed by emotions. Women leaders were seen by 79 (60.7%) of the respondents as being collective, co-operative and collaborative but 51 (39.2%) however disagreed. In light of the above stipulation, modern scholars of the study of administration have revealed that effective administration is best done in a collective, co-operative, collaborative manner (Covey, 1990; Starrrat, 1996).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to find out the challenges of women in administrative positions. The study was also to find out factors that encourage women to aspire for leadership positions in education. The following research questions guided the study;

1. What are the main challenges of women in administrative positions in the Adenta Municipality?

2. What effective support services are provided for female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality to enhance their performance?

3. How effective are the leadership styles of female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality?

4. How effective are the leadership behaviours of female administrators of Schools in the Adenta Municipality?

The population was made up of 81 heads and 116 assistants in the in 81 schools in Adenta municipality in the Greater Accra Region. The sample for the study was made up of 130 respondents. The respondents were purposively and randomly selected. A questionnaire was designed for all respondents.

Major Findings of the Study

1. The study found that attitude of teacher was not really the main challenge of women in administrative positions. However, lack of financial resources; lack of material resources; role conflict (administration and teaching); thefts at school; family commitments; allocating resources; and heading small, non-prestigious school were found to be the main challenges of women in administrative positions.

2. The study found that there were some kinds of support services available to female administrators to enhance execution of their duties. These include policies on equal opportunities; support for women education; access to preparation and leadership programmes; and motivation. Female administrators are sent to places of their choice for the sake of their families. Rules and regulations and operations of institutions were usually the same whether under the female leadership or male leadership.

3. The found that most female administrators usually use autocratic style of leadership. The study also found that women leaders had high moral standards and exemplary characters and were creative. It was again found that women leaders bring renewal and progress. Women leaders were also found to be collective, co-operative and collaborative.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study concluded that lack of financial resources; lack of material resources; role conflict (administration and teaching); thefts at school; family commitments; allocating resources; and heading small, non-

prestigious school are the main challenges of women in administrative positions. These however, affect their interest in administrative positions. Notwithstanding, the support services available to women leaders help them to urge on.

The style of leadership used by female leaders affect their performance and thereby demotivates them. However, their high moral standards, exemplary characters and creative in leadership are in the right direction.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Practice

The study recommended that;

1. More women should be involved in leadership to motivate other women who aspire to be leaders.

2. Leadership training and workshops for women should be encouraged for them to have knowledge of leadership styles and qualities to be exhibited.

3. More study scholarships should be given to women to help them in their educational advancement.

4. Motivation in the form female leadership bonus should be instituted to encourage more women to be in leadership positions.

Suggestions for Further Studies

This study was to find out the challenges of women in administrative positions. A similar study could also be conducted in other parts of the country.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Section A

Challenges of women in administrative positions

Challenges	High	Moderate	Low
Negative attitudes of teachers			
Lack of financial resources			
Lack of Material resources			
Lack of community support			
Lack of transport to main centers			
Role conflict (administration and teaching)			
No executive power to use school funds			
Tribalism			
Thefts at school			
Family commitments			
Allocating resources			
Heading small, non-prestigious school			
High fees paid by pupils			

Section B

Support services provided for female administrators of Schools in the Adenta

Municipality to enhance their performance

Support Services	Yes	No	Total
Policies on equal opportunities			
Support for women education			
Access to preparation and leadership programmes			
Motivation			
Institutions are being made women leadership friendly			
Female administrators are sent to places of their choice for the sake of their families			

Section C

Leadership styles of female administrators of Schools in the Adenta

Municipality

Leadership styles	SA	A	D	SD
Women usually use democratic style of leadership				
Women usually use autocratic style of leadership				
Women usually use laissez- fare style of leadership				
Women usually use bureaucratic style of leadership				
Women usually use charismatic style of leadership				

Section D

Leadership qualities of female administrators of schools in the Adenta

Municipality

Leadership qualities	SA	A	D	SD
High moral standards and exemplary characters				
foster the process of growth				
renewal and progress				
forecaster; be a good listener; and a good thinker				
Creative				
collective, co-operative, collaborative				