



Hospitality Management in Polytechnics, a Mechanism for Female Empowerment in Ghana

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Abstract

In recent years the increased number of women in hospitality education and their underrepresentation in Top Management Positions have made women's status in industry a great concern. The purpose of the study is to examine Hospitality Management in polytechnics as a tool for female empowerment in Ghana. The objectives are to identify the perceived factors that facilitate and constrain women's career advancement and determine if there are any significant differences among them.

The paper also attempts to explain the need for approaching the Hospitality Management programme as mechanism for female empowerment. It also explains the importance and benefits that arise from women empowerment and highlights the essential element of empowerments. The paper concludes that, Hospitality Management in the polytechnic could play an important role in preparing future leaders and create a more equitable environment for women advancement.

A descriptive survey method was employed in order to investigate the role of Hospitality education as a tool for women empowerment in Ghana. The data was generated through interview and documentary analysis. Interview was conducted with staff and students of Tamale polytechnic department of Hospitality Management.

Key words: Hospitality, Management, Empowerment, Polytechnic, Education.

1.0 Introduction: Womenfolk are involved in various aspects of work, as professionals, artisans, chefs, etc. The demand of work on both male and female workers alike in the face of increasing global technological quest requires effective functioning and up- dated knowledge achievable through education. The pressure on women as the weaker sex makes their adjustment to the demand of work related education stronger so that they can be well positioned through awareness of several discrimination rooted in religious sanctions, social and cultural taboos and superstitions, behavioural training, discrimination in food and little decision making power (Adams and Castle 1994). Women generally are negatively impacted upon in illiteracy rate, in labour force participation rate, and in income (Amali, 2007).

However, Since the 1990's women have been identified as key agents of sustainable development and women's equality and empowerment are seen as central to a more holistic approach towards establishing new patterns and processes of development that are sustainable (Femida and Meenaz, 2004). The World Bank has suggested that empowerment of women should be a key aspect of all social development programmes (World Bank, 2001).

1.1 Problem Statement: The increased number of women in the workforce in the past decades is the result of more women enrolment in higher education, which is viewed as a quicker route to the top level of management and the means to remain self-sufficient and independent . The number of women who enrol and graduate from hospitality and tourism programs, business and graduate schools have increased over the years (Yan Zhong, 2006). There is generally low participation of females in the applied science and engineering programmes in Ghana. Majority of female students in Ghana are pursuing programmes in business and management and Hospitality Management (Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2011). Meanwhile, the number of women who choose the hospitality industry as a career also has increased, making women's status in the industry even more of a concern.

Significant strides have been made by women in achieving management positions since the middle of the last century; however, the increasing number of women in both hospitality education programs and in the hospitality industry has not produced a proportional increase in the number of women in higher management positions. Today, the route to the top of most large Ghanaian corporations remains blocked to women partly because of lack of requisite academic qualification and also due to some form of discriminations. It is in the light of this that the paper seeks to exploit hospitality management education in polytechnics as a mechanism for women empowerment.

1.2 Objectives of the Study: The main objective of the study is to examine Hospitality Management in polytechnic as a tool for female empowerment. The specific objectives are:

- (a) Examine the perceived factors that constrain or facilitate women's career advancement;
- (b) Describe ways hospitality educators could better prepare women for career advancement;
- (c) Describe how education programs could help reduce barriers to women's career advancement.

2. Literature Review:

2.1. Polytechnic Education in Ghana: Polytechnics in Ghana are higher educational institutions responsible for training in scientific and technical subjects. The Government of Ghana in 1992 directed Polytechnics to run tertiary programmes in order to increase access to education in the country, since then significant gains have been made in the output of the Polytechnic graduate. The Polytechnics provide the bulk of people with technical education that is relevant, up-to-date in technology, and forward looking in approach. As such polytechnic graduates play a significant role in the development of the nation (Naana, 2006).

The issue of access to quality tertiary education in Ghana remains an important strategic pathway to reduce the high level of poverty, increase average incomes, increase access to health, safe water and sanitation, and to achieve a middle income country status by 2020. Polytechnics are therefore viewed as the strategic institution that will produce the requisite human resource and manpower that will drive the industrialization process of the country to achieve the vision 2020 goal of the country. (Nsiah-Gyabaah , 2011)

The government of Ghana recognizes that human resource development involves the achievement of basic education and increased access to secondary and tertiary education. For many people, tertiary education is development because it creates choices and opportunities for individuals, reduces the burdens of poverty, ignorance and disease and gives stronger voice to the poor and vulnerable in society by empowering them (Ghana Vision 2020; GPRS 2002, GPRS I & II, 2005).

Thus, the philosophy underlying tertiary education in Ghana is the creation of a well-balanced individual with requisite knowledge, technical skills, values and attitudes to enable him/her to contribute to socio-economic development of the country. The provision of tertiary education is seen as an effort to reduce poverty and transform the country into a more scientific and technologically advanced country and to ensure the full utilization of the intellectual capacity of both men and women for socio-economic development of the country (Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2011).

However, in Ghana Women continue to be under-represented in all sectors of the economy. The gender disparity remains a serious challenge in tertiary education because the number of women involved in science and technology education and decision-making positions in tertiary educational institutions is negligible compared with men, although women represent slightly more than half the population of the country (Andam, 2005) as cited in Nsiah-Gyabaah, (2011). Since women have important roles to play in the health and nutrition of children, environment and sanitation, food security, water and energy supply, they should be mainstreamed in the development process by empowering them economically, socially and academically to fulfill their roles effectively. Improved access to education, especially tertiary education, will not only help to improve their income but will empower them to participate actively in decision making and the development process (Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2011).

2.2. Female Enrolment in Tertiary Education Ghana: Although increased participation of women in education is a national policy directive in Ghana, one of the noticeable challenges about the recent increase in demand for tertiary education and increasing student enrolment that needs to be addressed is the gender disparity or low female participation in tertiary education (Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2011). Although women are making great strides in politics and public life in Ghana, there is evidence of

widening gender gap in science and technology education at all levels. In all the tertiary educational institutions, males far outnumber females in most of the programmes.

The average male/female enrolment between 1996 and 2001 was in the ratios of 79:21 for the Polytechnics as against the Education for All (EFA) norm and the expected national norm of 50:50 (UNESCO, 2009). In the 1999/2000 academic year, the gross enrolment rate for females was 49.4% at pre-school, 47.2% at primary, 45.5% at the Junior Secondary School (JSS), and less than 30% in the tertiary educational institutions (Anamuah – Mensah, 2002). Although government’s long-term policy is to achieve parity in enrolment ratio or gender balance at all levels, the ratio has not been achieved. The major factor accounting for this has been the low female enrolment rates at the pre-tertiary level (Anamuah-Mensah, 2002, Adu and Orivel, 2008).

However, in Ghana, because few women are enrolled in tertiary educational institutions compared to men, their participation in technical fields and jobs are considered nontraditional and this explains the female participation being very low. Although, enrolments in the polytechnics are increasing, the gender gap is widening, both in terms of male-female access in applied science and arts programmes offered by males and females. Between 2001 and 2003, the average ratio was 71:29 in the Polytechnics in favour of male enrolments (Adu and Orivel, 2006; 2008). Moreover, between 2005 and 2006 academic year, the male to female enrolment ratio was 70:30 for the Polytechnics (Prah and Verbaken, 2008). In the tertiary educational institutions, a relatively small number of females compared to males are enrolled each year.

The admission and enrolment statistics of Ho Polytechnic in 2003/4 showed that only about one-third of the annual fresh intake were females (Afeti, 2005). According to (Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2011) female enrolment in the other Polytechnics are low compared to male enrolment and that there is low participation of females in the applied science and engineering programmes. Majority of female students are pursuing programmes in business and Hospitality Management studies. Hospitality management programme is seen to be the most favored programme among women in the polytechnic in Ghana. This could be influenced by the fact that most women at the second circle level offer Home economics and therefore find hospitality management as a natural progress. The programme is also seen fitting the perceived role of woman in the Ghanaian society. Data from Tamale polytechnic department of Hotel Catering and Institutional Management indicates that over the years majority of the students who are pursuing the hospitality management programme are women. The female students constitute the majority of the enrolment in all the years since the state of the programme since 2020. The situation is not any different in the other polytechnics that are offering the hospitality management programme.

2.3. Factors Influencing the Low Participation of Women in Tertiary Education: The underlying causes of gender disparity in tertiary education are many and they are deep rooted in customs and tradition, attitudes of parents, social and cultural practices and beliefs about female education which are slow to change. Gender disparity in tertiary education also stems from the disparity in enrolment at the senior secondary school level and high dropout rate of girls (Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2011). In addition, family pressures and rising cost of tertiary education sometimes prevent girls from attaining tertiary education (UNESCO, 2008). In Ghana, several studies have documented reasons why girls tend to have lower enrolment rates than boys, higher dropout and less transition to Senior High School and tertiary level of education. On the whole, the reasons tend to be multifaceted and interrelated with poverty as a common denominator (AED, 2002).

The main factors influencing female participation in education, low enrolment and the increasing gender disparity have been identified as beliefs, tradition and customs, public perception of the role of girls by families, cost of girls education, the risks girls’ face in having to travel long distances to attend classes and the opportunity cost of sending girls to school (Shabaya and Agyeman, 2004).

2.4. Women and Empowerment: Education is recognised as “an instrument per-excellence for effective national development” as well as “a dynamic instrument of change”, it is also the basis for the full promotion and improvement of the status of women. It is a process having personal, economic, social and political dimensions with personal empowerment being the core of the empowerment process.

Education empowers women by improving their living standard. It is the starting point for women’s advancement in different fields of human endeavor. It is the basic tool that should be given

to women in order to fulfil their role as full members of the society (Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, 1985). Empowerment is about transformation of power relations between men and women in societies at four clear levels which are family, community, market and the state. The transformation, though viewed at different levels, includes access to and control over resources which are economic, social, legal and institutional, bringing a measurable change in self-perception and confidence (Akinsanya and Akinsanya 2008).

Sako (1999), defines empowerment as the process of strengthening the existing capacities and capabilities of disadvantaged groups in society so as to enable them perform towards improving themselves, their families and the society as a whole. It involves the provision of enabling environment for their productive and intellectual abilities to be realized. In some societies where some groups have suffered discrimination for a long time, ways have been found to address this problem. However, Fadeiye and Olanegan (2001), viewed women empowerment as a process of enabling women to develop the capacity to actualize their potential. That woman should be looked at as individuals that possess some hidden potential for greatness and so should be encouraged to develop such to the fullest.

Enemuo (1999), quoting Sandbrook and Halfani, viewed empowerment as: a multi-dimensional process involving the transformation of the economic, social, psychological, political and legal circumstances of the powerless. In the specific case of women, empowerment entails not only positive changes in these critical respects but also the dismantling of the cultural norms and traditional practices that devalue, disempower and dispossess women. The process must necessarily also include the expansion of women's access to educational opportunities, facilities for skills acquisition and positions of authority.

The improvement of society could be effected through the development of the potentialities of the women folk. The 1978 General Conference of UNESCO meeting said increasing educational opportunities for women boosts equity and fosters national development. The potential contribution of educated and trained women to labour force and the importance of their education in the improvement of family welfare and planning are factors still underestimated in national development. It is also important to state here that the higher the level of education, the greater the likelihood that a woman will stay in the labour force.

Sako (1999), postulated that empowerment can be defined as the process of strengthening the existing capacities and capabilities of disadvantaged groups in society so as to enable them perform better towards improving themselves, their families and the society as a whole. It involves the provision of enabling environment for their productive and intellectual abilities to be realized.

2.5. Elements and Process of Empowerment: Singh and Titu (1995) identified the relevant elements necessary as conditions for empowerment. These elements include access to skills training; problem solving techniques, best available appropriate technologies and information; participation in decision making processes by all people, particularly women and youth. Lashley (1995), stated four main empowerment initiatives. These are : empowerment through participation , the act of delegation of decision-making in traditional organization in the domain of management, empowerment through involvement of management's concern to gain from employee's experiences, ideas and suggestions, empowerment through commitment - this is through showing commitment to organizational goals and through improvement in employee's job satisfaction, empowerment through delivering -this reducing the number of tiers of management in organization's structure.

2.6. Factors Affecting Women Career Advancement: Gender inequality is manifested in a reality that "women perform 66 per cent of the world's work, produce 50 per cent of the food, but earn 10 per cent of the income and own 1 per cent of the property."(UNWomen, 2013). The reasons for this situation are widespread: women have lower access to land, capital and education than men, women tend to work at home or family enterprises unprotected by law, and women face discrimination and trouble reconciling with work and family life (ILO, 2013).

Bierema & Opengart (2002), identified some factors that impact women's career development. These factors include:

- gender role and social expectations
- women's primary care-giving and homemaking responsibilities
- increasing availability of alternative work arrangements

- Current models that lack diversity
- career patterns that differ from men
- hidden curriculum necessary for success in a male-dominated environment

Fernandez, (1993), as cited in Yan Zhong (2006), postulated that many corporate executives and managers, almost all men, argue that women have not made significant progress because they do not have the required educational backgrounds, skills, and work experiences. These executives view the slow rise of women as an unbiased fact rather than discrimination.

2.7. The Role of Hospitality Management Education in Women Empowerment: The benefits to be derived from education include enhancement of the quality of living, housing, health, clothing, transport, communication, entertainment and gainful use of leisure. (Fapohunda, 2000). The education of women can remarkably enhance their personal development. Education will make Women have more confidence in themselves and provide them with ability to contribute effectively to the socio economic development of themselves and society in general. According to Fapohunda, (2000) education helps in the fulfillment of women's obligation and purpose in life. Educational attainment has been shown to be a major factor in career progression and job mobility in human capital theory (Becker, 1975). The value of educational attainment for career progress within the hospitality industry often has been asserted, particularly in educational textbooks (Chon & Sparrowe, 1995).

Laesecke (1991) asserts that Hospitality education aims to produce individuals who can think, lead and solve problems. The relevance of hospitality education is further emphasized by Ladki (1993) who argues that hospitality education is important as it seeks to achieve some specific responsibilities such as: providing skilled individuals to customers in order to meet their needs and monitor expectations; enabling the graduates with the relative education and preparing them as a strong, competent individuals ; providing the continuing supply of competent employees in the field of hospitality industry , upholding the mission of academic institutions; and providing educated students to society.

In Ghana the number of hospitality management programs has increased with the growth of the hospitality industry. Nine out of the ten polytechnics in Ghana all offer the hospitality management program. This has led to an increased demand for qualified hospitality professionals in the country. However, the issue of experience has been valued in the hospitality industry for a long time, but today, with the complexity of the industry and the fierce competition, the need for diverse and new ideas of doing business is highly appreciated, which makes education even more highly valued (Stutts, 1999). The growth of the hospitality industry in the country and the world at large as well as the need for hospitality professionals have encouraged polytechnics and universities to offer hospitality management programmes with women mostly forming the majority of the student-population.

Esther & Stephen (2013) argued that Education is about change and about choice. The increase of one's knowledge, understanding and skills, produces one's ability to influence the surrounding environment. This ability allows the individual or group to become controllers of change, rather than victims of change (Okeiyi, 1994). Empowerment through education results in committed individuals who bring decision-making skills and enthusiasm (Iverson, 1995). Furthermore, Ivan (2000) postulated that, the greater and varied the skills of the individual the better the person is in terms of personal skills, individuality and use for industry. The hospitality programme is very significant because the completion of a hospitality programme increases the rate of promotions of the individual by 76%-78% (Sparrowe & Popielarz, 1995). This makes the programme much more important for women as women are seriously lagging behind their male counterparts in all top management positions in industry.

The rapidly changing business environment helps those who do not have access to opportunities to learn are deprived of choice and also enables them to contribute to the further development of the industry (Gaiko 1995). According to Gaiko, most governments, including the Ghana government and private bodies, have assisted in the development of formal hospitality and tourism education to equip people with the requisite knowledge to contribute meaningfully to their personal and national development.

3.0. Methodology: A descriptive survey method was employed in order to investigate the role of Hospitality education as a tool for women empowerment in Ghana. The data was generated through interview and documentary analysis. A sample size of 225 students, graduates working in hotels and hotel Management was used. Since the study was directed to review the Hospitality Management in Polytechnics, the stratified random sampling technique was applied to obtain a representative sample size.

Interview was conducted with the hotel management, staff and students of Tamale polytechnic department of Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management. In addition to this source of data, documents and previous studies on education and women empowerment were reviewed. The research, therefore, relied, in addition to the primary sources, on secondary sources of data which include journals, textbooks, seminar papers, magazines, bulletins, newspapers, and periodicals. A qualitative data analysis technique was employed in order to analyze the responses from the unstructured interview and related documents. Conclusions in this study were arrived at using analysis of the existing data and responses from the interviewees.

4.0. Results and Discussions: A review of research and response of staff and student interviewed reveal that hospitality management programme in the polytechnics is predominantly offered by women and could play diverse and inter-related role in providing skill- specific education that makes it easier for women to start their businesses and to advance in their chosen career.

Enrolment figures from the ten polytechnics who offer Hospitality Management indicates females form the majority of students in the 2008/2009 academic year. As depicted in table1, the total number of students in the hospitality management programme in Accra polytechnic was 359 and 234 representing 65.4 % were females; Ho polytechnic had 336 students out of which 302 which are 89.9% were females. Data from the national council for tertiary education as indicated in table1 showed that females form the majority in all the nine polytechnics offering hospitality management in the 2008/2009 academic year except in Takoradi polytechnic where 60.5% of the grand totals of 1861 were males. However it is not only in the 2008/2009 academic year that females form the majority of students, in almost all the years females remained the majority of students in the hospitality management programmes in the country.

The total number of students who enrolled for hospitality management in Tamale polytechnic 2013 was 124 and only 25 representing 20.2% of them males as presented table 2. Data from Tamale Polytechnic department of hospitality management shown in table 2, further indicates that since 2002 when the hospitality management programme was instituted females have always form the majority of students enrolled for the programme. The trend is not any different in the other polytechnics as females usually enrolled for the hospitality management programme in the polytechnics more than the males.

Table 1: Male and female pursuing hospitality management in polytechnics in Ghana (208/209)

INSTITUTION	MALE	%	FEMALE	%	GRAND TOTAL
ACCRA	124	34.6	234	65.4	358
KUMASI	84	30.2	194	69.8	278
CAPE COAST	170	47.1	191	52.9	361
TAKORADI	1,126	60.5	735	39.5	1861
SUNYANI	8	6.0	125	94.0	133
KOFORIDUA	1	1.2	82	98.8	83
TAMALE	8	7.6	97	82.4	105
HO	34	10.1	336	89.9	336
BOLGATANGA	25	48.1	27	51.9	52

Source: National Council for Tertiary Education (2013)

Table 2: Enrollment figures of Tamale Polytechnic Department of HCIM

SL. NO	Year	Total	Male	(%)	female	%
1.	2013	124	25	20.2	99	79.8
2.	2012	91	11	12.1	80	87.9
3.	2011	81	12	14.8	69	85.2
4.	2010	74	10	13.5	64	86.5
5.	2009	51	9	17.6	42	82.4
6.	2008	49	5	10.2	44	89.8
7.	2006	48	3	6.3	45	93.7
8.	2005	16	3	18.7	13	81.3
9.	2004	35	6	17.1	29	82.9
10.	2003	15	3	20	12	80
11.	2002	15	3	20	12	80

Source: department of HCIM Tamale polytechnic (2014)

The data shows clearly that hospitality management is of great interest to female in their quest for education. It remains the only programme where female numbers far outweigh male students. If managed strategically the programme can be used to systematically increase female’s accesses and enrolment in higher education since it is a course that is of greater interest to females.

4.1 Factors that Constrain Women’s Career Advancement: The study further identifies a number of factors that hinder women’s career advancement. The research review and data indicate there are invisible, generally artificial barriers that prevent qualified women, from advancing within their organizations and reaching their full potential. Women over represent in the lower levels of the organizations that they work, but underrepresent at senior levels just because they are women and not because they are incompetent. The issue of glass ceiling is therefore one of the major factors that hinder career advancement.

The respondents and literature indicate gender discrimination and sexual harassment is yet another factor that affects women .More than 80% of the respondents interviewed perceive gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace as an ongoing and major problem.75% of the respondents agree women are not holding top management positions due to gender discrimination or sexual harassment which is manifested in the form of creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment such as repeatedly staring provocatively and making off-color jokes or remarks about women.

The results also indicate that organizational culture forms a barrier for women’s career advancement. Usually people are attracted by an organization or a job due to their personal preferences, and cultural preferences are partly based on experience and personality. Majority of the respondents felt that males are more ambitious than female and are likely to achieve results compared to their female counterpart. This view is supported by Eagly and Wood (1991) who suggest that people who consider themselves very ambitious will probably favor a competitive environment in contrast to people who see themselves as less ambitious and that it seems likely that man will adhere more strongly to a competitive culture than women will.

The study observes that Work and Family Care is another factor that curtails women advancement. The male - female progress gap is an outcome of the female decision making process. Most Women choose part-time jobs that allow them the flexibility to manage their domestic household duties and do not require them to put career above family obligations.

The results further shows the work-family conflict also affects women’s career advancement in the sense that Long hours of work is a significant barrier to seeking promotions for many women in most industries. Progress in industry demands long hours and requires a great deal of sacrifice and problem solving which is perceived to be too stressful for women. It is assumed that women traditionally would be involved in child- care and housework, which are viewed as their responsibility and an expectation from the men’s world.

Religious Constraint is said to be another factor that hinders women. The forces of religion are also partly responsible for the present plight of women’s education in Ghana. None of the three major religions in Ghana, namely: Christianity, Islam and traditional religions, in practice endorses equality

between men and women. Women generally only play a supporting role to men in most religious activities. This attitude and role of women in religion is extended into society in general where women are perceived as fit only to support the man than taking their own initiative.

The data also revealed traditional/cultural factors as hindering women's career advancement. The result shows that culture and traditions of many ethnic groups in Ghana are full of obvious signs of gender stereotyping. Girls' educational right from the very beginning is designed to prepare them primarily to be effective mothers and housewives. The Ghanaian societies bring up women to see marriage as her ultimate goal and ambition. This therefore has an effect on the mindset of women as it reduces their desire to aspire to advance in their career.

Early Marriages in some parts of the country, particularly in the Northern Ghana is yet a factor observed to affect women's career advancement. Girls are given in marriage at the age of between twelve and thirteen years. This condition can lead to serious health hazards and other social deprivations, mostly educational in nature. In this case, the girl's opportunities are destroyed. She then misses the chance of furthering her educational career and reduces her chances of growth and development.

The study identifies negative attitudes by some parents towards women's education, especially illiterate parents who are fond of withdrawing their daughters from school in favour of their sons. Where family resources are scarce most parents choose to sacrifice their female education for the males and this can affect the progress in life.

4.2. Factors that Facilitate Women's Career Advancement: The study has identified some traits as factors that facilitate women career advancement. It reveals a truth about women's career advancement. Women need to work twice as hard as their male counterparts to gain the opportunity to advance to top management position.

Networking and mentoring were also identified as two methods that facilitate women advancement. The study has found that some of the women in high level positions have benefited from networks.

Mentoring was found to be significantly different by gender, with males viewing it more important to women's career development than females.

The findings also indicate significant gender differences on the issue of the importance of effective communication skills, which indicates that females viewed a stronger positive relationship between communication skills and career development than males. Females are also perceived to be good communicators than their male counterparts, a factor which is important in the hospitality industry.

Interpersonal relationship is another factor that facilitates women career advancement. Women are deemed as more affable and outgoing than their male counterpart and are therefore able to bring and retain more clients in the hospitality related businesses than males. It therefore gives the women opportunity for growth and advancement.

5.0. Conclusion: The issue of Hospitality education and women empowerment has been the focus of this paper. It has discussed the concept of polytechnic education, its functions, importance, factors that facilitate and the hindrances of women empowerment in career advancement.

It discussed how hospitality education in polytechnic could empower women development and career advancement. The first step for women empowerment is to enhance their literacy level and uplift their entrepreneurial skill. The hospitality management programme in the polytechnics certainly serves the purpose of enhancing literacy as well as the general level of education for the Ghanaian women.

Finally, it must be emphasized that more improvement is required for absolute women positioning in society, education and labour issues through the cooperation of all, male and female alike.

6.0. Recommendations: The Ghanaian Constitution does not forbid women enrolment in education and in public employment and appointments yet their (women's) percentage in such positions is low. The right of women to education, employment and equal pay for equal work with men is constitutionally guaranteed and reinforced by the 1992 constitution of the republic of Ghana. What is needed is psychological re-orientation to change the mindset. To confront this problem, women must

be better informed and organized in a way that there can be enough interaction between men and women so as to enable women to empower themselves.

6.1. Ways hospitality Educators Could Better Prepare Women for Career Advancement: The use of resource person in the form of female mentor during lectures or seminars will serve as a motivation for females to learn hard and to strive to reach the top. Mentoring has been identified as one of the major tools that motivate women to try and discover their potential to the fullest and will therefore be very useful if the hospitality educators from time to time invite prominent female achievers into the class room or campus to share their experience and advice female students on various aspects of life and how to avoid or face challenges in their chosen career.

Another issue of concern that needs to be addressed by hospitality educators is curriculum formulation for the higher national diploma programmes in the Polytechnic. Over the years curriculum formulation has been predominantly undertaken by male and hence the gender biases often reflected in the examples in textbooks, course contents and examinations. The full involvement of female in the curriculum formulation will help detect and remove possible gender bias that may be in the curriculum of the various programmes.

There is need for educators to organize seminars, workshops and conferences to highlight and showcase successful women leaders as models who are enlightened and are able to know their rights and obligations. Women should be actively appointed and nominated into various positions such as lecturers, student leadership, members of delegation to national and international meetings and conferences.

Financial incentives like special scholarship award, soft tuition loans and other financial grants can be specifically accorded to women in order to prevent talented and promising females from drifting away from education. The hospitality management programme is more expensive as compared to other programmes because the hospitality management programme is practical field oriented and therefore requires extra resources to cater for the practical materials. The provision of financial assistance will enable the female students to pursue the programme with relative ease as the issue of finance has been a major stumbling block that curtails women career advancement.

6.2. How education programs could help reduce barriers to women's career advancement: Education equips women with basic knowledge and skills to improve on their level of awareness, civil rights and arouse their interest and motivation to achieve self-actualization. Women with no education turn to be more vulnerable and susceptible to exploitation. There is a need for formal education through planned workshops and seminars, also a need to create an awareness among women and men too, of importance of education of women in politics and government through campaigns, talks, radio and television broadcasts.

More women are getting enrolled in higher educational programmes in Ghana. The steady increase in women enrolment implies that a greater percentage of Ghanaian women will become more educated in the near future thereby infiltrating the workforce in larger numbers and being placed in a better position to demand for transformation of existing status quo. To address the gender inequalities requires the full implementation of the gender policy in the country. Gender specific measures to address cases of low enrolment in certain disciplines as well as affirmative action with respect to greater participation in higher education will ensure women's visibility thereby providing role models and mentorship for emerging women managers.

In addition, higher education policy makers must have the will to reduce gender imbalance. This should reflect right from the admission policy and enrolment figures. Polytechnic and managements of higher institutions of learning must be concerned with capacity building of both male and females.

Gender balance must be ensured at all levels of the academic structure and particular focus should be on educating females for managerial and leadership positions. The counseling units at the various polytechnics and higher institutions of learning must be developed and made functional to provide much needed counseling for females on issues and problems confronting them and their future.

In addition, concerted efforts should be made by the polytechnics to appoint more female lecturers in all faculties of the institutions who will serve as role models to the female students aside from other females in the society who have excelled in their various careers and therefore could also be role models. Furthermore, the various campuses could be made more conducive to women. Proactive and enforceable policies must be put in place to protect females from sexual harassment, sexual abuse,

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rape, and other social problems that may affect them bearing in mind that women are severe victims of all these vices.

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